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FOBAS Alert: High Aluminium + Silicon (Catfines) Levels in Fuels from Singapore

Applicability: All ship owners, operators and charterers

Recently FOBAS tested several residual fuel samples from Singapore that exceeded the 60 mg/kg limit for Aluminium + Silicon as stipulated in the ISO 8217:2010/12 specification. The fuels tested had values of these catfines ranging between 74 to 81 mg/kg. Please note that these results are within the ISO 8217:2005 (table 2) requirement of 80 mg/kg, however the ISO working group, based on operational feedback and data, reduced the limit to 60 mg/kg in subsequent editions of ISO 8217.

If your ships are planning to bunker in Singapore then we suggest that the supplier is asked to provide a certificate of quality of the particular stem to ensure that the Aluminium + Silicon concentration is known at the time of bunkering and within the limits of the stipulated grade. Particular attention should be given to the collection of fully representative drip samples, ensuring all supporting documentation and samples drawn are witnessed and signed for by all parties present.

Reduction of this abrasive material to satisfactorily low levels will largely depend on the capability, effectiveness and management of the onboard fuel treatment plant. Careful monitoring and operation of the fuel treatment plant is needed to reduce the risk of carryover of these abrasive elements to the engine rail which can cause increase in wear of fuel pumps/injectors and cylinder components. This may include operating two separators inline under optimum conditions of flow and temperature.

Furthermore, it is recommended that during onboard treatment, system samples should be drawn and analysed in order to verify system performance if/as required.

If you require any further information about this Bulletin, please contact us at fobas@lr.org or speak to one of our consultants on +44 (0)330 414 1000 (Southampton UK), +44 (0)1642 440991 Redcar (UK), +65 3163 0888 (Singapore), +30 210 4580 874 (Greece).