

THE VALUE OF IMO CERTIFICATES FOR SEWAGE TREATMENT PLANTS

A Guide for Ship Owners and Builders

The green conscience is one reason for using high quality and efficient solutions for processing sewage. The other not negligible part is the high risk of being caught with no or false records and losing high value of the vessel.

■ CHALLENGE

This will not become a general discussion about the development of standards in the maritime industry. Even though it is not a discussion about technical aspects or the efficiency of sewage treatment plants in detail. It is also well known to us, that specific STP's are just on board without any relevant usage over years. Nevertheless, from our point of view it is an absolute must to protect the (maritime) environment with appropriate measures.

International standards have often been the smallest possible compromise for processes and procedures. However, in case of IMO with its MEPC standards for sewage treatment, we can look back on a long history and development, which leads us to the actual challenge to become as efficient and effective as land based plants.

For one or the other, this is definitely overshoot the target. Nonetheless, what are international rules worth, when people ignore them or, even worse, try to manipulate authorities and their own customers to gain profit or to reduce own

effort? This cannot be a win situation for anybody at the end.

The point is, that nearly all people related to the maritime (sewage) industry are very confident with the actual certification requirements, but astonishingly only few people have the skills to recognize a valid certificate. To demonstrate the dilemma, you will find two figures on the next page.

■ WHAT DOES AN IMO CERTIFICATE LOOK LIKE?

Fig. 1 shows an official IMO certificate related to MEPC.227 (64) for our plant HL-Cont Plus 10. Fig. 2 is just a type approval which belongs to the same type of plant but is needed in a totally different context and proves totally different aspects of the plant. There are very different kinds of official type approvals imaginable and none of them can replace an IMO certificate.

■ WHAT ARE THE DIFFERENCES?

At first sight, many people would say, that the second picture shows a more official document and would automatically declare it as an IMO certificate.

In fact, there are vendors, pronouncing to be IMO certificated, well knowing that they are only type compliant. Within the official certificate, the vendor proves intake and effluent values of treated water and

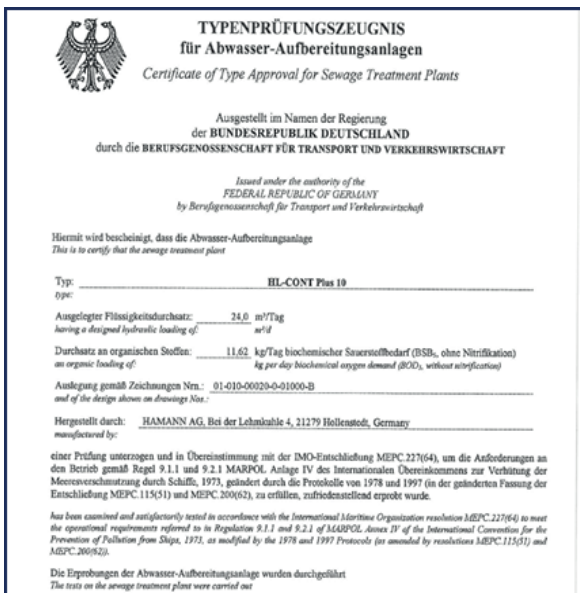


fig. 1: IMO certificate issued in Germany



fig. 2: Type approval issued in Germany

additionally shock- and climate resistance. The typical type approval is based on vendor-own-documents and declares in summary that the vendor has the right rules in mind, but it does not declare that these rules have been applied.

many of them do not have the expected entry in this list. This means, some vendors are operating with (simple) type approvals instead of expected full compliant IMO certificates.

Too many owners, designers and authorities are not familiar with these differences. This results in believing to talk about IMO compliant plants, but this is definitely a mistake.

SUMMARY

In general, it is quite easy to check, if a certain plant is IMO certified. There is even no need to have a close look at the certificate itself. You simply have to check, if the vendor is listed with this particular plant according to a certain standard (MEPC.159(55), MEPC.227(64) or MEPC.227(64)-special area) in GISIS (Global Integrated Shipping Information System; <https://gisis.imo.org>).

In general, many people and authorities are not aware of the above-described dilemma. Even worse, many players are aware of this and trying to gain benefit. What does it matter to use something different like an IMO certificate? It saves much money and opens a market without proving standards. Moreover, consequences? Actually nearly none. Nevertheless, this will hopefully change soon. The remaining question is who will have to take the consequences? Of course the ship owners. They will have to pay penalties and will experience a lower resale revenue.

Nearly all relevant vendors are listed, but

Follow us!



HAMANN  AG

Bei der Lehmkuhle 4
21279 Hollenstedt
Germany

Phone: +49 (0) 4165 22 11 -0
E-Mail: info@hamannag.com

www.hamannag.com