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# OPINION: Accurate Scrubber Wash Water Monitoring will Protect Shipowners Investing in Scrubbers

by Elizabeth Paull, Managing Director, Chelsea Technologies

Monday April 13, 2020

With the implementation of the IMO's 0.5% sulphur cap regulation in full swing, the shipping industry is currently undergoing one of the biggest regulatory changes in maritime history. The Exhaust Gas Cleaning Systems Association (EGCSA) has estimated that nearly 4,000 vessels have installed scrubbers as a route to compliance, resulting in long waiting lists at some shipyards for scrubber installation.

As the debate around the potential long term environmental effects of scrubber wash water continues, it is highly likely that stringent wash water monitoring guidelines will be ratified in the near future. For this reason, it is becoming increasingly important for those with systems installed, or those looking to install scrubbers as a route to compliance, to futureproof against potentially onerous regulatory developments.

With the clock ticking and the IMO yet to align all signatory states on one unified policy approach, it is becoming essential for those who have invested in scrubbers to take preventative action to protect their significant investments and the marine environment; both the vessel owners who have paid for and installed systems, along-side scrubber manufacturers who are required to provide reliable proof that their systems work as advertised. A crucial part of this preventative action is the ability to accurately measure and monitor wash water effluent, which will significantly reduce risk to both owners and manufacturers, enabling investors to remain one step ahead of regulation and future-proof operations.

What makes this difficult is the current lack of definition and clarity over what should be measured and how. While the IMO has provided guidelines for methodology and monitoring across almost all aspects of wash water effluents, there is currently no guidance, for example, on the measurement regime for polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons (PAH). With the environmental compliance of wash water relying on thorough and accurate monitoring, the lack of methodological standards for monitoring PAH levels is a recognised issue and one that challenges the industry's ability to safeguard compliance. This is further complicated by the fact that PAH is arguably the most crucial part of wash water monitoring for determining compliance



Elizabeth Paull, Managing Director, Chelsea Technologies. Image Credit: Chelsea Technologies

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	\$/mt	+/-	\$/mt	+/-
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<a href="#">Rotterdam</a>	230.00	6.00	284.50	7.50
<a href="#">Houston</a>	261.00	5.00	297.50	14.50
<a href="#">Fujairah</a>	254.50	4.50	437.00	6.50
<a href="#">Global 20 Ports</a>	272.00	2.50	351.50	1.50
<a href="#">Global 4 Ports</a>	252.00	7.50	329.50	0.00
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and without this agreed standard, shipowners and operators are unable to make an informed decision on where to invest their capital. In order to combat this, scrubber manufacturers need to ensure that an accurate, consistent monitoring solution is integrated in order to protect their clients from falling foul of evolving regulation.

For this reason, owners looking for monitoring systems should ensure that their system of choice performs the full regulatory analysis, as required by the IMO, including PAH, pH, turbidity (to ISO 7027: 1999) and temperature, to enable robust and accurate measurements are made in accordance with regulatory requirements.

Installed in over 250 vessels and certified by DNV-GL and ClassNK, Chelsea's Sea Sentry Provides users with a full-range PAH measurement using a proven and highly-accurate sensing technique.

In addition, combined with its technical expertise, Chelsea is also working closely with leading global scrubber manufacturers to offer owners and operators a package solution designed to safeguard their confidence in the system. This includes ongoing research and development and an in-depth knowledge of the stringent standards imposed by regulators.

Accurate wash water monitoring provides peace of mind and assurance to those making the decision to invest in scrubbers, as well as giving scrubber manufacturers the opportunity to offer confidence in the reliability and accuracy of their systems to their customers. Therefore, providing shipowners and operators with the ability to take action before significant issues arise, affords them the opportunity to mitigate the risk associated with non-compliance, including fines and the costs associated with unexpected delays, whilst also allowing them to make a sound investment decision regarding scrubber technologies that will help them protect their bottom line.

**Ship & Bunker News Team**

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