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*Miriam Malek and Wendy Wells*

### New ISO specs for IMO 2020 compliant fuel expected mid-2019: IMO official

Fujairah — New ISO standards for IMO 2020-compliant marine fuel are expected to be issued by ISO by the middle of 2019, Edmund Hughes, head of air pollution and energy efficiency at IMO, told delegates at Fujcon, a conference being held in Fujairah.

The ISO:8217 standards are used by the shipping industry when sourcing bunker fuel and cover a variety of parameters and specifications allowed in the fuel.

The current ISO:8217 standard covers marine fuels. The most commonly used is ISO:8217 RMG 380 CST which is for fuel oil with a 3.5% maximum sulfur fuel oil. IMO 2020 will cut the sulfur content allowed in marine fuel to a maximum of 0.5% sulfur, with implementation touted for January 1, 2020.

"Categorically there will be no delay in implementing this rule; I would urge [shipowners] to get ready now," Hughes said.

Hughes was bullish on the supply outlook for IMO-compliant fuel oil and said that the organization's forecasts look to be accurate.

"I'm pleased that some of the estimates we made are coming to fruition," Hughes said. "A lot of that analysis was done on predicting the demand and looking at supply expansions in Asia, for example."

But regulating ships and ensuring a high level of compliance will prove crucial to the sector, he said.

"There needs is a level playing field and certainty that if shipowners are spending money on compliant fuel oil that their competitors are also spending money," Hughes told delegates.

-- Miriam Malek, [miriam.malek@spglobal.com](mailto:miriam.malek@spglobal.com)

-- Edited by Wendy Wells, [newsdesk@spglobal.com](mailto:newsdesk@spglobal.com)