Port Marine Circular on Digital Bunkering
FAQs

Implementation/ Operations

1. **What is the implementation timeline for Digital Bunkering?**

   MPA has announced the implementation of digital bunkering starting 1 November 2023, with a plan to make it mandatory in due course. All MPA licenced bunker suppliers and craft operators are strongly encouraged to adopt digital bunkering early, for the familiarisation of the cargo officers and crew. The Annex of PMC (No. 12 of 2023) provides the guidelines for the use of digital bunkering service for the bunker supplier, bunker craft operator and vessel receiving bunkers.

2. **For suppliers that adopt Digital Bunkering, do they still require to manually update bunker sales volume? If yes, when will MPA stop manual reporting?**

   MPA will work closely with the supplier on the transition to Digital Bunkering to automate the reporting of bunker sales volume. Manual reporting via digitalPORT@SG™ portal will be required for instances where a supply could not be reported via Digital Bunkering. Suppliers are strongly encouraged to adopt digital bunkering early to familiarise the crew/customers well before mandatory implementation and enjoy its benefits.

3. **Will the suppliers be required to submit data for loading and ship-to-ship in addition to delivery operation?**

   There is no need to submit such data at this moment. MPA will work with the bunkering stakeholders to work on the timeline for the submission of loading and Ship-to-Ship data in due course. Nevertheless, the whitelisted digital platforms will have provisions to cater for these data and the suppliers can also utilise the platform to further digitalise their inhouse system.

4. **Who is supposed to procure, install, subscribe, and maintain the digital solutions?**

   It will be the bunker supplier's responsibility to ensure eBDN issuance, including all necessary SS648 bunkering documentation. Monthly bunker sales volume information is also required to be submitted to MPA by the suppliers. MPA will not be a party to any commercial discussions between the suppliers, craft operator, digital solution providers or any other stakeholders.

5. **Which digital bunkering solutions can be implemented in Singapore?**

   Only the MPA-whitelisted digital bunkering solutions can be implemented in Singapore. The list of whitelisted solutions is available at http://www.go.gov.sg/digital-bunkering which will be updated as solutions get whitelisted or delisted.

6. **Can hard copy BDN be issued to vessel?**

   Bunker suppliers can still issue paper BDN until digital bunkering is made mandatory. However, suppliers are strongly encouraged to adopt digital bunkering early to familiarise

the crew/customers well before mandatory implementation and enjoy the benefits. Suppliers that adopted digital bunkering solution will not be required to issue physical BDN. However, if customer insists on paper BDN or where situation necessitate, supplier could use the eBDN as the original record to generate the paper BDN. Bunker suppliers that implemented digital bunkering solutions should encourage and inform their customers on the use of eBDN.

7. Is it required for our Cargo Officer to go onboard the receiving vessel to do the necessary paperwork?

For suppliers that have implemented digital bunkering solution, cargo officers are not required to go onboard the receiving vessel for bunkering paperwork, as the unique link and/or password will be sent to the receiving vessel for the Chief Engineer/Master to complete the bunkering documentation electronically.

8. What is the process of approval for installing digital bunkering solution onboard a bunker tanker?

The digital bunkering solutions are mobile and web-based applications and can be accessed using internet-enabled devices that are secured and patched, i.e., laptop, computer, tablets, handphones, etc. However, barge operators must ensure that installation of any internet devices onboard as necessary must be in accordance with applicable flag/class rules. MPA must be updated on the suppliers and the barges that have been upgraded for digital bunkering and the service provider. No modification of the MFM or the MFM system is normally required for the installation of digital bunkering solution. However, in the event it is required, it must be done only with MPA's approval.

9. What should the supplier/craft operator do in the event where the customer, Master/Owner refuse to accept the eBDN or participate in Digital Bunkering?

The supplier/craft operator shall engage and inform the customer and Master/Owner in advance regarding the conduct of digital bunkering and the issuance of electronic documents. The Port Marine Notice on digital bunkering could be presented to the customer and Master/Owner to inform them on Singapore's implementation of digital bunkering.

10. Would MPA's approval be required for the change of digital solution provider?

MPA's approval is not required for the change of whitelisted digital solution providers. However, MPA should be informed.

11. What are the procedures required for the update/upgrade of the digital system?

Solution providers must inform MPA prior to the update/upgrade of their digital system. The list of system changes shall be provided to MPA for approval.

12. How will the B2G reporting be transmitted to MPA and how will we know that it has been successfully transmitted?

The B2G reporting, along with the status of transmission, will be available via the digital bunkering solution.

13. How will the vessel and surveyor receive a copy of the eBDN?

The eBDN, together with the related bunkering documentations, will be transmitted to the vessel and surveyor via email and/or downloaded directly from eBDN solution.

14. How long must the supplier and receiving ship retain the eBDN?

In accordance with regulation 18 of Marpol Annex VI, the eBDN must minimally be retained for a period of three years after the fuel oil has been delivered on board. Suppliers must also retain the eBDN for at least three years from the date of the delivery. This should form part of the quality management system for the bunker supply chain (QMBS) requirement under SS 524.

15. What are the measures in place to ensure information security?

The digital service provider whitelisted by MPA must have ISO 27001 certification (or equivalent) and conduct cybersecurity assurance testing such as vulnerability assessment and penetration testing (VAPT), that would identify and address cyber security weaknesses within its system. In addition, the digital bunkering solutions offered by the provider must comply with all applicable laws (i.e., the Electronic Transactions Act (Chapter 88)), regulations, standards, and guidelines in Singapore.

Bunker suppliers/ craft operators should also conduct security risk assessment and due diligence on the selected solution(s) and vendor(s) based on its own operating environment, requirements and specific implementation which vary from company to company.

Standards Development

16. Will digital bunkering be incorporated into Singapore standards for bunkering?

The revision of the existing SS648:2019 Code of Practice of Bunker Mass Flow Metering is being developed by the industry-led Singapore Standards Council to support electronic bunkering documentation and is expected to be completed in 2024. A new Specification for Digital Bunkering Supply Chain documentation is expected to be published in 2024 to enable standards and interoperability across different systems.

Support for Companies

17. What support is available for the adoption of digital bunkering? How do we apply for such support?

MPA is committed to supporting companies seizing this opportunity to transform. We are working with Enterprise Singapore, Workforce Singapore, and National Trades Union Congress to support you on this digitalisation journey.

Career Conversion Programme for Sea Transport Professionals and Associates

Digital bunkering offers you an opportunity to reskill your current workforce who are Singaporeans or Permanent Residents. These could include both officers onboard the vessels, and onshore staff. For instance, cargo officers may need to pick up basic digital skills, perform first-level trouble shooting onsite, and understand cybersecurity concepts to perform their new role competently. Onshore, the reduction in data entry work relating to bunkering can free up administrative personnel to be reskilled to perform other roles in the company.

The Career Conversion Programme (CCP) for Sea Transport Professionals and Associates supports the reskilling of workers to enable technology adoption and accelerate business transformation. It provides salary support for workers for up to 3 months. Depending on the age of the worker, the salary support levels are:

- Standard rate: 70% of monthly salary, capped at S$4,000/month.
- Enhance rate for local trainees 40 years old and above: Up to 90% of salary, capped at S$6,000/month.

You can visit https://www.wsg.gov.sg/home/individuals/attachment-placement-programmes/career-conversion-programmes-for-individuals for more information on eligibility criteria and application guidelines.

NTUC Company Training Committee Grant

The NTUC Company Training Committees (CTCs) grant supports companies to implement transformation plans that would lead to better worker and business outcomes. Both unionised and non-unionised entities can work with NTUC to form a CTC.

Companies can engage NTUC's e2i at www.e2i.sg/ctcqueries on their project applications, and the exact areas of support, before submission.

Please visit https://www.ntuc.org.sg/uportal/programmes/company-training-committee-grant for more information on eligibility criteria and application guidelines.

Enterprise Development Grant

Finally, companies can also tap on whole-of-government funds to support their adoption of digital bunkering solutions. The Enterprise Development Grant (EDG) is one such resource. EDG supports projects that help businesses upgrade, innovate, grow and transform, and funds up to 50% of eligible costs for local small and medium enterprises (SMEs).

Company must have at least 30% local equity held directly or indirectly by Singaporean(s) and/or Singapore PR(s), determined by the ultimate individual ownership; is financially ready to start and complete the project (Commonly used financial indicators, such as the

current ratio, will be used for assessment.); and the business entity must be registered and operating in Singapore.

Projects must be new, have not commenced, and are not generating any revenue at the point of grant application. In addition, only the first digital solution deployment per vessel is eligible for grant consideration.

Please visit https://www.enterprisesg.gov.sg/financial-support/enterprise-development-grant for more information on eligibility criteria and application guidelines.

18. What is the deadline to apply for the funding support?

Funding support is aimed at driving early adoption of the solutions.

All applications for EDG must be submitted in full by 31 Mar 24. This means that submissions must be complete, where all fields are correctly filled, and all relevant and necessary supporting documents have been submitted. As funding support is limited, applications will be considered on a first-come-first-served basis.

For CCP – Job Redesign Reskilling (JRR), this is an ongoing programme and companies are required to have their applications approved before they can commence On-The-Job Training. Therefore, companies are encouraged to send in their applications to WSG at least 1 to 2 months before the targeted commencement date.

19. Is the funding support guaranteed?

Each grant application will be assessed by the respective funding agency. Companies can check with the respective funding agency directly for their grant application status.

20. Can I apply for the funding support more than once?

At the vessel-level, funding support under EDG is applicable only for the first solution installed for each vessel. Companies intending to install more than one digital bunkering solution on your vessel will have to bear full cost for any additional installations on the same vessel.

At the fleet-level, funding support is capped at 10 vessels per company. Similarly, funding support is also limited to the first solution installed for each vessel.

Companies should only apply to EDG once for digital bunkering. If the solution installed across your fleet is different, companies must include the details of their various installations in a single application for EDG.

For the CCP – JRR, companies can apply for the funding support more than once, so long as the employees in each application are different.

21. How long will it take to process my grant application?

It is subject to the processing turnaround time of each funding agency. Typically, grant application review can commence once the funding agency have received a complete grant application form with all supporting documents properly furnished.

We recommend that you study the application requirements of each grant carefully before submitting your grant application.

22. I have already signed a contract with my solution vendor. Am I still eligible for any support?

Support under CCP and NTUC's CTC grant can be tapped on for the upskilling needs of your workforce relating to digital bunkering.

For ESG Enterprise Development Grant (EDG), it only applies to new projects that have not commenced prior to grant application i.e., no contractual agreement was signed before submitting an application.

Nonetheless, digital bunkering has further phases in the pipeline. MPA will continue to explore availability of support for future implementation, such as the NTUC CTC Grant.