

US faces dry bulk capacity crunch

- Thursday 23 March 2017, 13:19
- by [Helen Kelly](#)



Gkonis: “Who is going to meet the trade demands of the United States?”

CMA 2017: Bulkiers to fall short of US ballast water management regulations

THE US dry bulk market is facing down a severe shortfall of vessels as ballast water management regulations start to take effect.

Some 9,000 dry bulk vessels will need to be retrofitted with ballast water technology ahead of the US deadline, Intercargo secretary-general Kostas Gkonis warned an industry audience at CMA 2017.

“There will not be enough dry bulkers compliant with US legislation. Who is going to meet the trade demands of the United States?” he said.

Dr Gkonis provided some Intercargo data from BWM systems manufacturers to show how few systems have been installed to date.

Manufacturer 1 had retrofitted 28 systems with five more on order. It had an annual capacity for retrofitting all vessel types, not just bulkers, of 1,000 vessels.

Manufacturer 2 had retrofitted one dry bulk vessel and had none on order. It had an annual capacity of retrofitting all vessel types of 500 vessels.

Manufacturer 3 provided no data.

“Even though the IMO ballast convention dates from 2004, and the US legislation since 2012, for us time zero is now... Because now we know how complex and onerous are the technical challenges for shipowners, now we know the power requirements,” Dr Gkonis said.

He urged the new administration in Washington to take into account these factors in granting further BWM extensions to dry bulk vessels entering US waters.

The US Coast Guard has recently adopted more [stringent requirements](#) for granting extensions permitting the use of unapproved ballast water managements systems in US waters, after granting type approval to three systems since December 2016.

Article from Lloyd's List

<https://www.lloydslist.com/ll/sector/dry-cargo/article552378.ece>

Published: Thursday 23 March 2017

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