

The 2010 HNS Convention An Overview

International Oil Pollution
Compensation Funds



The 2010 HNS Convention

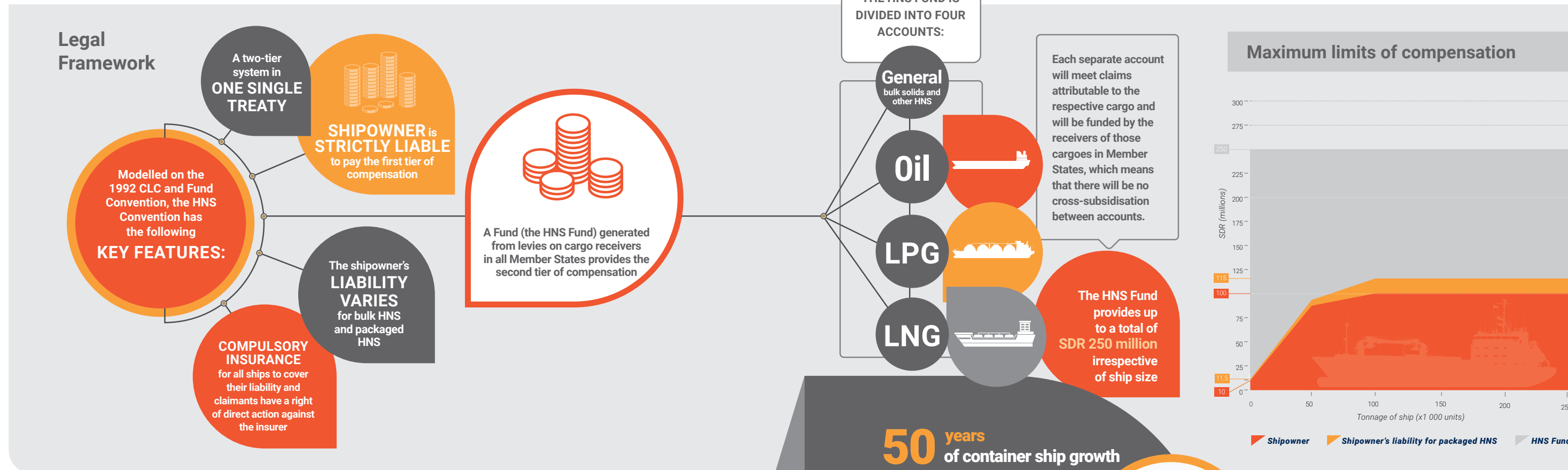
The International Convention on Liability and Compensation for Damage in Connection with the Carriage of Hazardous and Noxious Substances by Sea, 2010 (2010 HNS Convention) is modelled on the highly successful international liability and compensation regime for oil pollution damage. When it enters into force, it will establish an international regime for HNS damage, the cost of which will be shared between shipowners and HNS cargo receivers.

The transport of HNS by sea is a major trade. Chemicals and other products underpin many manufacturing processes and IMO regulations ensure their safe transport. However, incidents can occasionally occur and the 2010 HNS Convention is needed to ensure that those who might suffer any damage will have access to a comprehensive and global liability and compensation regime, similar to that available to those affected by oil spills.



Types of claims

- Property Damage/ Economic Loss
- Reasonable measures to reinstate the environment
- Clean-up activities and Preventive measures
- Loss of life or Personal injury



What are HNS?

Hazardous and noxious substances covered by the HNS Convention are defined by references to various IMO Conventions and Codes. These include:

- Oils
- Other liquid substances defined as noxious or dangerous
- Liquefied gases
- Dangerous, hazardous and harmful materials and substances carried in packaged form or in containers
- Solid bulk materials defined as possessing chemical hazards
- Substances which are harmful to marine life

50 years of container ship growth

1968 *Encounter Bay* 1,530 teu

2006 *Emma Maersk* 11,000+ teu

2021 *HMM Algeciras* 24,000 teu

Container-carrying capacity has increased by around 1500% since 1968 and has almost doubled over the last decade.

Entry into force conditions

The 2010 HNS Convention will enter into force 18 months after the date on which:

- 12 STATES HAVE RATIFIED**
- There are 4 Contracting STATES each with no less than 2 MILLION units of gross tonnage each
- The general account's contributing cargo volume is at least **40 MILLION tonnes**

Status of the Convention

The adoption of the Protocol to the HNS Convention in 2010 was intended to overcome some of the obstacles to ratification, but progress towards entry into force continued to be slow. However, in recent years, the Secretariats of the IOPC Funds and IMO have made significant efforts to facilitate the entry into force and implementation of the Convention, producing technical and educational materials, delivering workshops, liaising with States and industry and offering assistance with implementation and reporting issues.

With the support of a number of States who are committed to the Convention, there has been an increase in momentum and positive steps by several other States towards ratification.

In 2024, Belgium, Germany, the Netherlands and Sweden expressed commitment to accede to the 2010 HNS Protocol during 2025. These States have long been working in close cooperation with the aim of ratifying at the same time to ensure a more equitable sharing of the costs of contributions when the treaty enters into force.

Contracting States as at 1 March 2025:



Norway (21/04/2017)



Canada (23/04/2018)



Türkiye (23/04/2018)



Denmark (28/06/2018)



South Africa (16/07/2019)



Estonia (10/01/2022)



France (23/10/2023)



Slovakia (20/11/2023)

Amongst the criteria for the Convention's entry into force, at least 12 States are required to ratify or accede to the Protocol, four of which must each have a merchant shipping fleet of no less than 2 million units of gross tonnage. Of the eight States so far, five of them do meet that requirement. Regarding the total quantity of at least 40 million tonnes of HNS cargo that would be contributing to the general account, the total figure provided by the eight Contracting States received in 2023 was 19 243 371 tonnes.

Role of the IOPC Funds

The 1992 Fund Secretariat was assigned to carry out the administrative tasks necessary to set up the HNS Fund on the occasion of the international conference which adopted the 2010 HNS Protocol.

Want to check whether a substance should be reported or whether it is covered by the Convention?

Use the HNS Finder. It enables users to determine whether a substance is contributing cargo that must be reported and whether it qualifies for compensation under the Convention. It is updated annually in May and includes an archive facility for access to previous years' lists of substances.

Have a question or comment about the HNS Convention?

Refer to the Hot Topics section of the website. Issues raised and questions asked by States and other interested stakeholders are addressed and explained here. All interested parties are urged to raise any key points of interest to the Secretariat. Sharing issues and experiences in implementing the Convention can particular benefit and widen knowledge of the subject for others considering acceding to this treaty.

Require assistance?

Contact either the IOPC Funds or the IMO. Assistance is offered to both Contracting States and to those States considering acceding to the Convention, in verifying contributing cargo data and the accuracy of reports before they are submitted. National or regional workshops can also be delivered in person or remotely to widen understanding of the Convention and assist with implementation issues.

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International Oil Pollution Compensation Funds (IOPC Funds)

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