

# Skuld – Huge increase in bunker quality disputes



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Marine insurer Skuld has reported that 2018 saw a huge increase in bunker quality disputes, starting around March/April, with bunkers stemmed in Houston and gradually spreading to different regions and countries.

It also observed that there were widespread predictions that there might be issues regarding fuel quality due to blending in order to provide IMO 2020 Sulphur Cap compliant fuel.

Without discussing specifically either the Houston bunker problems or the 2020 Sulphur cap, Skuld has produced an article for members on the testing of fuel, bringing into focus the need for a proper fuel testing and analysis regime to be in place.



Skuld noted that testing fuel samples on board was possible, but there were limitations as to these findings which generally were limited to density, viscosity, pour point, water content and compatibility. Whilst on-board testing was useful to get early indications of problems, it was not sufficient to test for some of the issues seen in recent times, for example the presence of contaminants such as phenolic compounds. "Increasingly we understand that Owners routinely send bunker samples for laboratory testing for the presence of these compounds", said Skuld.

## Samples

Skuld concluded that there were many potential pitfalls with fuel sampling and testing. "Ideally, issues around sampling and testing should be agreed upon in advance and set out in the charterparty or bunker supply contract and ahead of any issues arising. With limited samples available it's important to get it right the first time", said Skuld.

<https://www.skuld.com/topics/ship/bunkers/analysis-of-fuel-samples/>

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