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MSC.1/Circ.1582
16 June 2017

UNIFIED INTERPRETATIONS OF CHAPTER 15 OF THE FSS CODE

1 The Maritime Safety Committee, at its ninety-eighth session (7 to 16 June 2017), with a view to providing more specific guidance on requirements related to inert gas systems on tankers, approved Unified interpretations of chapter 15 of the FSS Code, prepared by the Sub-Committee on Ship Systems and Equipment, at its fourth session (20 to 24 March 2017), as set out in the annex.

2 Member States are invited to use the annexed unified interpretations as guidance when applying paragraphs 15.2.2.2.2, 15.2.2.3.2.2, 15.2.2.4.1 and 15.2.2.4.5 of chapter 15 of the FSS Code, and to bring the unified interpretations to the attention of all parties concerned.

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ANNEX

UNIFIED INTERPRETATIONS OF CHAPTER 15 OF THE FSS CODE

CHAPTER 15 – INERT GAS SYSTEMS

Paragraph 15.2.2.2.2

The automatic shutdown of the inert gas system and its components should involve the following:

.1 shutdown of fans and closing of regulating valve for the following:

.1 high water level in scrubber (not applicable for N_2);

.2 low pressure/flow to scrubber (not applicable for N_2); or

.3 high-high temperature of inert gas supply.

.2 closing of regulating valve in the event of:

.1 high oxygen content (in excess of 5% by volume); or

.2 failure of blowers/fans or N_2 compressors.

.3 activation of double-block and bleed arrangement upon:

.1 loss of inert gas supply (for ships with double block and bleed replacing water seal); or

.2 loss of power.

Paragraph 15.2.2.3.2.2

Unambiguous information regarding the operational status of stop valves in branch piping leading from the inert gas main to cargo tanks means position indicators providing open/intermediate/closed status information in the control panel required in paragraph 15.2.2.4. Limit switches should be used to positively indicate both open and closed positions. Intermediate position status should be indicated when the valve is in neither open nor closed position.

Paragraph 15.2.2.4.1

The operational status of the inert gas system should be based on indication that inert gas is being supplied downstream of the gas regulating valve and on the pressure or flow of the inert gas mains upstream of the non-return devices. However, the operational status of the inert gas system as required in paragraph 15.2.2.4.1 should not be considered to require additional indicators and alarms other than those specified in paragraphs 15.2.2.4 and 15.2.3.2 or 15.2.4.2, as appropriate.

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Paragraph 15.2.2.4.5.3

The term "alarm system independent" means that a second pressure sensor, independent of the sensor serving the alarms for low pressure, high pressure and pressure indicator/recorder should be provided. Notwithstanding the above, a common programmable logic controller (PLC) should, however, be accepted for the alarms in the control system. The independent sensor should not be required if the system is arranged for the shutdown of cargo pumps. If a system for shutdown of cargo pumps is arranged, an automatic system shutting down all cargo pumps should be provided. The shutdown should be alarmed at the control station. The shutdown should not prevent the operation of ballast pumps or pumps used for bilge drainage of a cargo pump room.