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MSC.1/Circ.1434
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UNIFIED INTERPRETATIONS OF SOLAS CHAPTER II-2

1 The Maritime Safety Committee, at its ninetieth session (16 to 25 May 2012), with a view to providing more specific guidance for the application of the relevant requirements of the 1974 SOLAS Convention, approved the unified interpretations of SOLAS chapter II-2 prepared by the Sub-Committee on Fire Protection, at its fifty-fifth session, as set out in the annex.

2 Member Governments are invited to use the annexed unified interpretations as guidance when applying relevant provisions of SOLAS chapter II-2 for ships constructed on or after 21 May 2013 and to bring them to the attention of all parties concerned.

ANNEX

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Regulation II-2/3.2.3 – Definitions

Insulated "A" class bulkheads and decks used on board ships, including the means of affixing the insulation to the "A" class structural members, should be consistent with the materials, details and arrangements used during, and documented in the test reports issued for, the approval test for that insulating material.

Regulation II-2/5.2.1.1 – Closing appliances and stopping devices of ventilation

- 1 Battery room ventilators should be fitted with a means of closing whenever:
 - .1 the battery room does not open directly onto an exposed deck;
 - .2 the ventilation opening for the battery room is required to be fitted with a closing device according to the Load Line Convention (i.e. the height of the opening does not extend to more than 4.5 m (14.8 feet) above the deck for position 1 or to more than 2.3 m (7.5 feet) above the deck in position 2; or
 - .3 the battery room is fitted with a fixed gas fire-extinguishing system.
- 2 Where a battery room ventilator is fitted with a closing device, then a warning notice stating, for example "This closing device is to be kept open and only closed in the event of fire or other emergency – Explosive gas", should be provided at the closing device to mitigate the possibility of inadvertent closing.

Regulation II-2/19.3.4 – Ventilation

- 1 If adjacent spaces are not separated from cargo spaces by gastight bulkheads or decks, then they should be considered as part of the enclosed cargo space and the ventilation requirements should apply to the adjacent space as for the enclosed cargo space itself.
- 2 Where the IMSBC Code requires:
 - .1 two (2) fans per hold, a common ventilation system with 2 fans connected is acceptable; and
 - .2 continuous ventilation, this does not prohibit ventilators from being fitted with a means of closure as required for fire protection purposes under SOLAS regulation II-2/5.2.1.1, provided the minimum height to the ventilator opening is to be in accordance with regulation 19.3 of the 1966 International Convention on Load Lines (4.5 m for position 1 and 2.3 m for position 2).

Regulation II-2/20.3.1.4.1 – Closing appliances and ducts

- 1 Access routes to the controls for closure of the ventilation system "permit a rapid shutdown" and adequately "take into account the weather and sea conditions" if the routes:
 - .1 are clearly marked and at least 600 mm clear width;

- .2 are provided with a single handrail or wire rope lifeline not less than 10 mm in diameter, supported by stanchions not more than 10 m apart in way of any route which involves traversing a deck exposed to weather; and
- .3 are fitted with appropriate means of access (such as ladders or steps) to the closing devices of ventilators located in high positions (i.e. 1.8 m and above).

2 Alternatively, remote closing and position indicator arrangements from the bridge or a fire control station for those ventilator closures is acceptable.
