

Installation Positions of Fire Main Isolation Valves in Tankers

Amended Guidance

Guidance for the Survey and Construction of Steel Ships Part R

Reason for Amendment

SOLAS regulation II-2/10.2.1.4.4 requires that isolation valves are to be fitted on fire mains at the poop front in a protected position for tankers. Furthermore, MSC.1/Circ.1456, the unified interpretation for the aforementioned regulation, specifies more specific details regarding the installation positions of these valves. ClassNK has already amended its Rules based upon this unified interpretation.

MSC.1/Circ.1456 specifies that such isolation valves are to be located at least 5 *m* aft of the aft end of the cargo tank when installed on the open deck. If this is impracticable, then such isolation valves may be located within 5 *m* aft of the aft end of the cargo area provided that they are protected by a permanent steel obstruction.

This above interpretation, however, was problematic when applied to tankers whose aft ends of cargo areas were located more than 5 *m* from the aft ends of their aftmost cargo tanks. Even though it required such isolation valves installed on open decks within 5 *m* aft of the aft end of the cargo area to be protected by permanent steel obstructions, it also allowed for the possibility of the same isolation valves unprotected by permanent steel obstructions to be installed on open decks within the cargo area.

As a result of a review of this interpretation by the IMO, amendments to this unified interpretation which prohibit such an installation location of the isolation valve was approved at the 94th Session of the IMO Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 94) held in November 2014 and circulated as MSC.1/Circ.1492.

Accordingly, all relevant requirements were amended based upon MSC.1/Circ.1492.

Outline of Amendment

- (1) Specified that the isolation valves for fire mains are to be located aft of the cargo area when said valves are located on the open deck.
- (2) Specified that such isolation valves are to be located at least 5 *m* aft of the aft end of the aftermost cargo tank, or if this is not practical, within 5 *m* aft of the aft end of the aftermost cargo tank provided they are protected by permanent steel obstructions.