

Commonwealth of Dominica**Office of the Maritime Administrator**

TO: ALL SHIPOWNERS, OPERATORS, MASTERS AND OFFICERS OF MERCHANT SHIPS, AND RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS

SUBJECT: Prohibition of "Hot Work" in Tankers and Combination Carriers

PURPOSE: This Circular prohibits entirely the practice of carrying out of any "hot work" in Dominica registered vessels that are carrying or have carried flammable liquid cargoes except under the conditions specified below. This prohibition results from investigations into losses of tankers and combination carriers.

APPLICABILITY: This prohibition applies to all work within the cargo area as defined in SOLAS Regulation II-2/3.32. This includes that part of the ship that contains cargo tanks, slop tanks and cargo pump-rooms including pump-rooms, cofferdams, ballast and void spaces adjacent to cargo tanks and also deck areas throughout the entire length and breadth of that part of the ship over the above-mentioned spaces.

REQUIREMENTS:**1.0 Definition**

The term "hot work" applies to all work involving welding, burning or an open flame and work with tools, which may generate sparks such as grinding machines or chisels.

2.0 Permissible Conditions

2.1 Relaxation of this prohibition is permitted in cases where any vessel has been thoroughly gas freed, cargo tank sludge and residues substantially removed, and a gas free certificate has been issued by a qualified chemist which specifies the location and period of validity. The area in which work is taking place shall be constantly monitored for the presence of gas preferably by a qualified chemist but in any case by a responsible senior officer of the ship. All work shall cease immediately if the gas content rises to 1% Lower Explosive Limit/Lower Flammable Limit (LEL/LFL).

2.2 Where a Gas Free Certificate cannot be obtained, the Master and only the Master may use allow, as an acceptable alternative, work in way of an inert cargo tank, or tanks that had been thoroughly washed and flooded with clean ballast water, after the oily mixtures and washing residues collected during the tank washing have been transferred to tanks outside of the intended work area and its adjacent spaces. Under such circumstances the Master may issue a gas free certificate as long as such action is consistent with company policy.

3.0 Safety Precautions

- 3.1 Masters and officers are advised and warned that it should never be assumed that a ship will remain gas free even in cases where a gas free certificate previously has been issued.
- 3.2 Masters and officers are advised that rigorous control should be exercised over repair parties carrying out repair or retrofit work at sea. Such personnel should be placed under the jurisdiction of a designated senior officer of the ship who will be responsible for supervising the work program and the manner in which it is carried out.
- 3.3 Care should be taken to blank off common vent lines. Cargo lines should be flushed and blanked off, and vents from other tanks terminating in the intended work area are to be blanked or led well clear by temporary arrangements.

4.0 Spaces Adjacent to Cargo Areas

Work carried out in spaces adjacent to the cargo area, such as main or auxiliary machinery spaces, boiler rooms or accommodation spaces, may be permitted subject to stringent safety precautions being taken and a positive determination of gas free atmospheres in both the intended work space and in all spaces adjacent to the work space.

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