



Antigua and Barbuda
Maritime Administration

SOLAS Circular
No. 2012-011
Rev 3
25 January 2024

SUBJECT: Maintenance and Inspection for Fire Fighting Appliances and Equipment

REFERENCE:

- a) *International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) Chapter II-2*
- b) [MSC.1/Circ. 1432](#) *Revised Guidelines for the maintenance and inspection of fire protection systems and appliances*
- c) [MSC.1/Circ.1318/Rev.1](#) *Revised Guidelines for the maintenance and inspections of fixed carbon dioxide fire-extinguishing system.*
- d) [IMO Resolution.A.951\(23\)](#) *Improved Guidelines for Marine Portable Fire Extinguishers.*
- e) [MSC.1/Circ.1312](#) *the Revised Guidelines for the performance and testing criteria, and surveys of foam concentrates for fixed fire-extinguishing systems*

TO: Ship-owners, operators, masters and officers of Antigua and Barbuda flagged ships, service providers and recognized organisations.

1. PURPOSE

This Circular provides information on the availability of IMO guidelines when performing maintenance, testing and inspections in accordance with SOLAS Chapter II-2 of fire protection systems and appliances in ships.

2. APPLICATION

This Circular applies to all Antigua and Barbuda flagged ships.

3. BACKGROUND

1. SOLAS Chapter II-2 Regulation 14 on Operational readiness and maintenance requires that at all times while the ship is in service, the fire protection systems and fire-fighting systems and appliances shall be maintained in good working order and readily available for immediate use.
2. Maintenance, testing and inspections shall be carried out based on the guidelines developed by the IMO in a manner having due regard to ensuring the reliability of fire-fighting systems and appliances.
3. The Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) deals with all matters related to maritime safety and maritime security which fall within the scope of the IMO, covering both passenger ships and all kinds of cargo ships. This includes updating the SOLAS Convention and related codes, such as those covering dangerous goods, life-saving appliances and fire safety systems.

4. From time to time the MSC issue and revise guidelines for the maintenance and inspection for firefighting appliances and equipment as required by the *International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) Chapter II-2*.
5. [MSC.1/Circ. 1432](#) Revised guidelines for the maintenance and inspection of fire protection systems and appliances supersede the guidelines provided by circular MSC/Circ.850 and take into account the latest advancements in fire protection systems and appliances.
 1. These guidelines apply to all ships and provide the minimum recommended level of maintenance and inspections for fire protection systems and appliances. This information may be used as a basis for the ship's onboard maintenance plan required by SOLAS regulation II-2/14. These Guidelines do not address the maintenance and inspection of fixed carbon dioxide systems or portable fire extinguishers.
6. [MSC.1/Circ.1318/Rev.1](#) Revised guidelines for the maintenance and inspections of fixed carbon dioxide fire-extinguishing system supersedes the guidelines provided by circular MSC.1/Circ.1318.
 1. These revised guidelines provide the minimum recommended level of maintenance and inspections for fixed carbon dioxide fire-extinguishing systems on all ships and are intended to demonstrate that the system is kept in good working order as specified in SOLAS regulation II-2/14.2.1.2. These Revised Guidelines are intended to supplement the fire-extinguishing system manufacturer's approved maintenance instructions. Certain maintenance procedures and inspections may be performed by competent crew members, while others should be performed by persons specially trained in the maintenance of such systems. The onboard maintenance plan should indicate which parts of the recommended inspections and maintenance should be completed by trained personnel.
 2. From 1 January 2022 onwards, Antigua & Barbuda registered ships are to carry out the hydrostatic test of all its high- pressure CO₂ cylinders on or before their 20th and 30th year anniversary, and every 10th year anniversary thereafter.
 3. For ships that had completed the maintenance requirements during its 20th anniversary in accordance with MSC.1/Circ.1432, i.e. another 10% of its CO₂ cylinders have been subjected to an internal inspection and hydrostatic test during its dry docking prior to 1 January 2022, the administration will take into consideration the need for a pragmatic implementation and that a hydrostatic test of these CO₂ cylinders would usually be carried out during the ship's dry-docking. These ships are to carry out the hydrostatic testing of all its CO₂ cylinders at its 30th anniversary and every 10th anniversary thereafter.

4. For ships that had completed the maintenance requirements on its 30th year anniversary in accordance with MSC.1/Circ.1432 prior to 1 January 2022, they are to carry out the hydrostatic testing of all its CO₂ cylinders by their next scheduled dry docking, but not later than 1 January 2027.
5. In addition, from 1 January 2022 onwards, whenever the CO₂ cylinders are removed for hydrostatic testing, they shall be replaced such that the quantity of fire-extinguishing medium continues to satisfy the requirements of 2.2.1 of chapter 5 of the FSS Code, subject to SOLAS regulation II-2/14.2. The exception applies if these CO₂ cylinders are removed for hydrostatic testing during the ship's dry docking.
7. [IMO Resolution.A.951\(23\)](#) the Improved Guidelines for Marine Portable Fire Extinguishers revokes resolution A.602(15).
 1. These guidelines have been developed to supplement the relevant requirements for marine portable fire extinguishers of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea 74, as amended, the International Code for Fire Safety Systems (FSS Code) and the 1993 Torremolinos Protocol relating to the Torremolinos International Convention for the Safety of Fishing Vessels, 1977. The Guidelines are offered to Administrations to assist them in determining appropriate design and construction parameters. The status of the Guidelines is advisory. Their content is based on current practices and does not exclude the use of designs and materials other than those indicated in the circular.
8. [MSC.1/Circ.1312](#) the Revised Guidelines for the performance, testing criteria, and surveys of foam concentrates for fixed fire-extinguishing systems supersedes MSC/Circ.582 and Corr.1, and MSC/Circ.799.
 1. These Guidelines apply to the foam concentrates used for fixed deck foam fire-extinguishing systems required for tankers by SOLAS regulations II-2/10.8 and chapter 14 of the International Code for Fire Safety Systems (FSS Code), and chemical tankers as specified by SOLAS regulation II-2/1.6.2.1.2 and the International Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships Carrying Dangerous Chemicals in Bulk (IBC Code). These Guidelines also apply to foam concentrates for fixed foam fire-extinguishing systems in machinery spaces according to chapter 6 of the FSS Code and to portable foam applicators according to chapter 4 of the FSS Code. These Guidelines do not apply to foam generating equipment, only the foam concentrate.

4. OBLIGATIONS AND RESPONSIBILITES

1. The IMO Guidelines apply to all Antigua and Barbuda ships. For the full text of the IMO Guidance in each case, reference is to be made to the latest revision of the relevant IMO document.
2. The Antigua and Barbuda flag State administration expects the ship owners, operators, masters, service providers, recognized organisations and other parties concerned to apply the IMO guidelines when carrying out maintenance and inspection for fire fighting appliances and equipment. There are no additional requirements from the flag State.

Issued by

Antigua and Barbuda
Department of Marine Services and Merchant Shipping
(ADOMS) St. John's