

# GF20 Arrangements of fuel tanks in methyl/ethyl alcohol fuelled vessels

(June  
2024)

**Paragraph 5.3 of MSC.1/Circ.1621, the Interim guidelines for the safety of ships using methyl/ethyl alcohol as fuel state:**

## *5.3 General provisions*

*5.3.1 Tanks containing fuel should not be located within accommodation spaces or machinery spaces of category A.*

*5.3.2 Integral fuel tanks should be surrounded by protective cofferdams, except on those surfaces bound by shell plating below the lowest possible waterline, other fuel tanks containing methyl/ethyl alcohol, or fuel preparation space.*

*5.3.3 The fuel containment system should be abaft of the collision bulkhead and forward of the aft peak bulkhead.*

*5.3.4 Fuel tanks located on open decks should be protected against mechanical damage.*

*5.3.5 Fuel tanks on open decks should be surrounded by coamings and spills should be collected in a dedicated holding tank.*

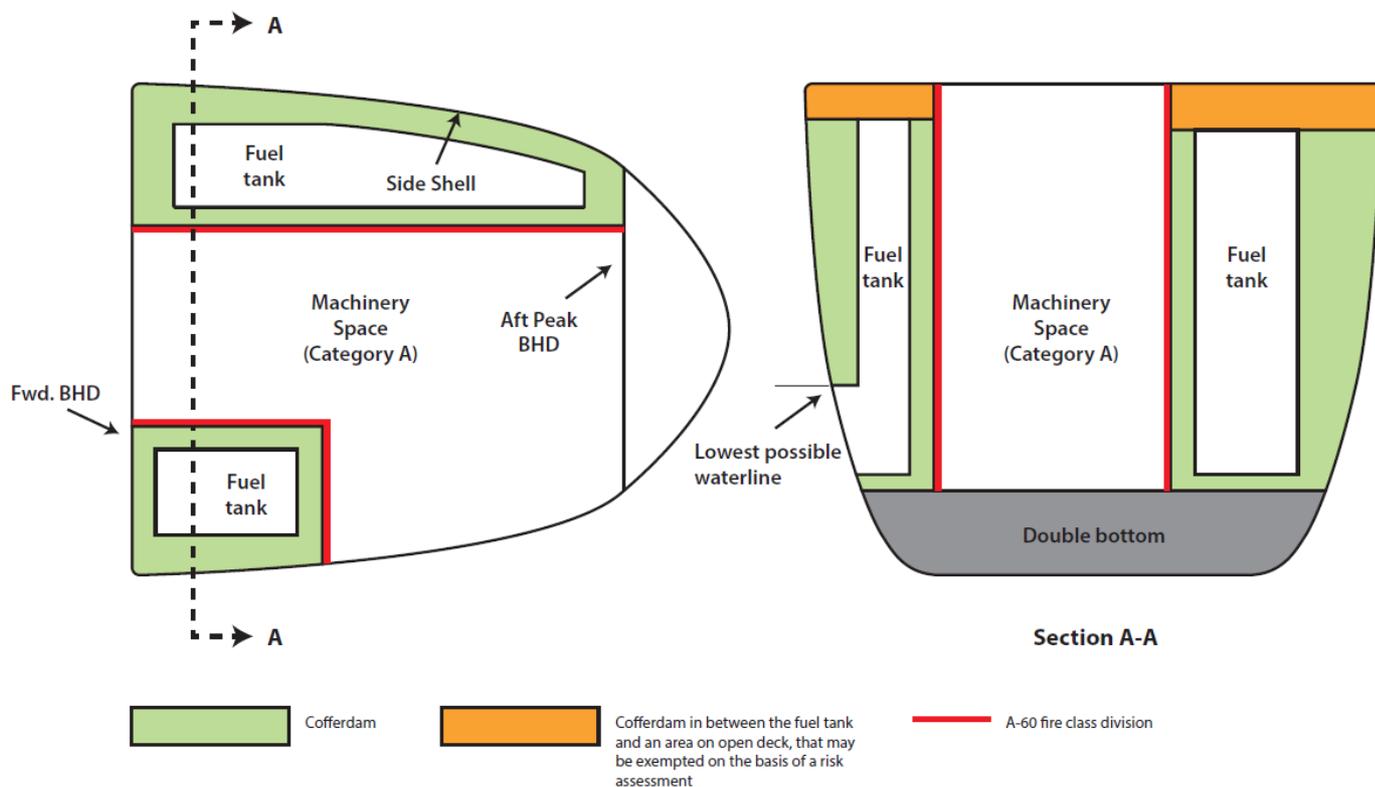
*5.3.6 Special consideration should be given to chemical tankers using methyl/ethyl alcohol cargoes as fuel.*

## **Interpretation**

1. With regard to para 5.3.1 of MSC.1/Circ.1621, integral methyl/ethyl alcohol tanks may be placed between the aftmost and foremost boundaries of the machinery spaces of Category A, provided that a cofferdam of at least 600mm width with A60 insulation is fitted between the tank and the machinery space. Integral Tanks arranged according to this UI are not regarded as being within Machinery Space of Category A.
2. With regard to para 5.3.2 of MSC.1/Circ.1621, it is possible to exempt the arrangement of cofferdams between the fuel tank and an area on open deck. Exemption would be permitted, provided the arrangement has been considered by the risk assessment as per paragraph 4.2 of MSC.1/Circ.1621 taking into account the use of the area, fire, toxicity, and possible additional construction and survey requirements.
3. With regard to para 5.3.6 of MSC.1/Circ.1621, methyl/ethyl alcohol fuel tanks in cargo area of chemical tankers are not required to be surrounded by protective cofferdams, however the compatibility of cargo in the adjacent cargo tanks is to be considered by the risk assessment.
4. Typical acceptable arrangements of fuel tanks in methyl/ethyl alcohol fuelled vessels are shown below.

## GF20

(cont)



## Note:

1. This Unified Interpretation is to be uniformly implemented by IACS Societies on ships contracted for construction on or after 1 July 2025, to which the administration has required the application of MSC.1/Circ.1621.
2. The “contracted for construction” date means the date on which the contract to build the vessel is signed between the prospective owner and the shipbuilder. For further details regarding the date of “contract for construction”, refer to IACS Procedural Requirement (PR) No. 29.

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