



LP Bulletin

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Bulletin 618 - 1/09 - Ventilation closures for fixed gas fire extinguishing systems- Worldwide

The United States Coast Guard has issued Marine Safety Alert 13-08 addressing the importance of ensuring proper operation of ventilation closure devices, for spaces protected by fixed gas fire extinguishing systems on small passenger vessels.

Properly operating ventilation closures ensure the effectiveness of the vessel fire-fighting systems and minimise the spread of fire to other areas of the vessel. Recent vessel casualty investigations conducted by the US Coast Guard and the National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), into fires aboard small passenger vessels, have raised awareness for the need to properly inspect and test ventilation closures for spaces protected by fixed gas fire extinguishing systems.



The Alert is specific to small passenger vessels, and refers to requirements according to regulations governing American-flagged vessels. However, important information in the Alert is relevant to all vessels fitted with fixed gas fire extinguishing systems.

Where there are supply duct cowls or scoops and exhaust duct discharge openings in spaces protected by fixed gas extinguishing systems, all closure devices must be readily available and mounted in the vicinity of the vent.

As part of each annual inspection, attending marine inspectors should ensure the adequacy and serviceability of these closure devices. While observing fire drills in spaces covered by fixed gas systems, marine inspectors should ensure the vessel crews are familiar with these devices and ensure they are utilised properly during the conduct of the drill.

The US Coast Guard strongly recommends that owners and operators, as well as marine inspectors, ensure the adequacy and test the operation of all ventilation closures for spaces protected by a fixed fire extinguishing system including both manual and automatic devices. Automatic closures should be tested and serviced by a qualified servicing facility in conjunction with the servicing of the fixed fire extinguishing system.

Examples of ventilators and their closing devices in poor condition

Vessels should include in their planned maintenance schedule the maintaining and checking of all ventilators and closing devices on board. In the following examples it can clearly be seen that the closing devices are defective, and crew will be hindered in their efforts to efficiently close off a protected area in the event of fire.



Source of information: UK P&I Club Loss Prevention Department
Tel: +44(0) 20 7204 2217
Email: lossprevention.ukclub@thomasmiller.com
http://www.ukpandi.com/ukpandi/infopool.nsf/HTML/Homepage_LP