

Republic of the Marshall Islands

MARITIME ADMINISTRATOR

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MARINE SAFETY ADVISORY No. 38-16

To: Owners/Operators, Masters, Nautical Inspectors, Recognized Organizations

Subject: CHEMICAL TANKER SAFETY

Date: 18 November 2016

The Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) Maritime Administrator (the “Administrator”) has recently completed a marine safety investigation into a very serious marine casualty of a fire and explosion that occurred on board an RMI registered chemical tanker. The investigation determined that Toluene migrated through leaking cargo manifold valves into the gas freeing line. Accumulated Toluene flowed into the gas freeing line and then flowed toward the gas freeing fan and associated ducting, which passed through the Bosun’s Stores. An undetermined quantity of Toluene entered and accumulated within the Bosun’s Stores through a supply air vent fitted within the air duct on the suction side of the gas freeing fan. The flammable vapors ignited and resulted in one fatality, serious injuries to other crew and damage to ship structures and equipment.

Based on the conclusions of the Administrator’s marine safety investigation, the Administrator recommends that owners and managers of RMI registered chemical tankers inspect the cargo supply line on the gas freeing system on their ships for potential losses of gastight structural integrity (openings) into the accommodation, service and machinery spaces, and control stations. If any openings are found, then the supply duct should, in consultation with the ship’s Classification Society, be refitted to ensure there is a gastight boundary between the supply duct and the space where it is located.

The report of the marine safety investigation is available at: <http://www.register-iri.com/userfiles/files/Republic%20of%20the%20Marshall%20Islands%20ROYAL%20DIAMOND%207%20Casualty%20Investigation%20Report.pdf>.

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