

Republic of the Marshall Islands

MARITIME ADMINISTRATOR

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MARINE SAFETY ADVISORY NO. 23-20

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

Subject: ENCLOSED SPACE ENTRY INCIDENTS

Date: 24 June 2020

This Marine Safety Advisory (MSA) supersedes MSA No. 21-19.

The Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) Maritime Administrator (the “Administrator”) reminds all managers of RMI-registered vessels the need to maintain vigilance with regards to enclosed space entry and rescue training. In 2019, two seafarers died and two were seriously injured in an enclosed space entry incident on an RMI-registered bulk carrier. The continued loss of life due to improper enclosed space entry and rescue serves as an unfortunate reminder of the dangers associated with the improper entry into shipboard enclosed spaces.

The Administrator has noted some similarities between enclosed space entry incidents, including:

- the lack of awareness by crewmembers of the potential hazards posed by the improper entry into enclosed spaces;
- senior crewmembers failing to ensure that ship management’s enclosed entry procedures are adhered to prior to directing junior crewmembers to enter an enclosed space; and
- the Master of the ship not being notified that an enclosed space was going to be entered.

Safe entry into enclosed spaces has been the focus of extensive industry discussion and crewmember training recently. However, shipboard incidents relating to the improper entry into enclosed spaces continue to occur. This highlights the need to increase the awareness of all seafarers in the recognition of enclosed spaces, the hazards posed by improper entry, and the procedures for safe enclosed space entry.

The Administrator strongly recommends that ship managers review and amend, if necessary, their enclosed space entry procedures to ensure they comply with the requirements outlined in RMI Marine Notice [7-041-1](#) and are adequate to ensure the safety of crewmembers.

This MSA is evaluated annually by the Administrator and expires one year after its issuance or renewal unless otherwise noted, superseded, or revoked.

The Administrator also strongly recommends that ship managers send a notice or bulletin to all ships in their managed fleet addressing:

- the dangers of improperly entering an enclosed space;
- how to recognize an enclosed space and examples of the different types of enclosed spaces a seafarer might encounter while performing their day-to-day shipboard tasks;
- that all seafarers, regardless of rank, must not enter an enclosed space without permission and then, only in accordance with ship management's established procedures;
- who on-board is authorized to permit entry into an enclosed space; and
- that the best way for a seafarer to assist a fellow seafarer in trouble inside an enclosed space is to immediately raise the alarm so that an organized rescue can be conducted in accordance with ship management's established procedure.

The Administrator also strongly recommends that Masters:

- hold a special safety meeting to review the notice or bulletin issued by ship management and share the information provided in this MSA, with particular emphasis on enforcing the responsibility that all seafarers have to prevent enclosed space entry related incidents and the need for crewmembers to resist their natural urge to immediately enter an enclosed space in order to try to assist a fellow crewmember in trouble;
- review the ship's enclosed space entry procedures with the ship's officers and crew and then conduct enclosed space entry training; and
- conduct an enclosed space rescue drill.

Enclosed is a poster intended to provide a visual reminder to seafarers that they should not enter an enclosed space without proper authorization. This poster can be downloaded from the Marine Accident Investigators' International Forum (MAIIF) website in [PDF format](#) for printing and distribution, and in [JPG format](#) for computer desktop use. Ship managers are encouraged to use the poster and/or computer desktop image as part of their efforts to reduce the potential for future confined space incidents.

Enclosed Space Entry

STOP

You must not open or enter an ENCLOSED SPACE unless authorized by the master or the nominated responsible person and unless the appropriate safety procedures laid down for the particular ship have been followed

THINK

Before entering an ENCLOSED SPACE, you must have a Permit to Enter completed by the master or responsible person and by any persons entering the space

ASK

Have I received instructions or permission from the master or nominated responsible person to enter the enclosed space?

IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A PERMIT TO ENTER AND HAVE NOT RECEIVED INSTRUCTIONS OR PERMISSION FROM THE MASTER OR NOMINATED RESPONSIBLE PERSON, THEN **DO NOT ENTER ANY ENCLOSED SPACE**

What is an ENCLOSED SPACE?

ENCLOSED SPACE means a space which has any of the following characteristics: limited openings for entry and exit; inadequate ventilation; and is not designed for continuous worker occupancy.

Adapted from, and in support of, IMO Resolution A.1050(27) – Revised recommendations for entering enclosed spaces aboard ships.



A Marine Accident Investigators' International Forum project, sponsored by: Bahamas Maritime Administration; Republic of the Marshall Islands Maritime Administrator; Norwegian Maritime Directorate; St. Kitts & Nevis International Ship Registry; South African Maritime Safety Authority; Swedish Transport Agency; United States Coast Guard; and supported by The Nautical Institute