

Republic of the Marshall Islands

MARITIME ADMINISTRATOR

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MARINE SAFETY ADVISORY No. 02-23

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

Subject: FIRE-FIGHTING OUTFITS – PROTECTIVE CLOTHING

Date: 10 February 2023 (renewed 10 February 2024)

Port State Control (PSC) deficiencies are being issued by some Paris Memorandum of Understanding Member States for fire-fighting outfits. The findings are as follows:

- Not a fire entry suit;
- Not suitable for fire entry; or
- Outfit with buttons or latches piercing the suit allowing heat to be conducted to the inner side of the suit and causing burns to the wearer.

The Code 17 deficiency being cited is: “may not provide the wearer sufficient thermal protection from the radiated heat if entering an enclosed space.”

The deficiency is being issued even though the subject fire-fighting outfits are certified or approved in accordance with the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) or Fire Safety Systems Code (FSS Code). This is because PSC Officers are utilizing European close-proximity standards for fighting fires within enclosed spaces in addition to international standards.

Code 17 deficiencies are also being issued when the outfits as outlined above are used during enclosed space fire-fighting drills, or when the crewmember is not aware of the outfit’s limitations.

The Republic of the Marshall Islands Maritime Administrator advises that the fire teams should be aware of the outfit limitations during onboard familiarization (SOLAS Chapter II-2, Regulation 15). These limitations should also be included in the ship-specific training manual-and the record of fire-fighting drill should not conflict with the limitations.

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is evaluated annually by the Administrator and expires one year after its issuance or renewal unless otherwise noted, superseded, or revoked.