



# Technical Circular

No.: 056/2021

Date: 24<sup>th</sup> November 2021

## **Subject: Incident & Casualties reported due to Fire – lessons learned.**

1. In the recent past, several fire incidents have been reported on ships including following:
  - a) While undertaking repair work on bunker line, fuel oil spilled onto the hot surface resulting in outbreak of fire. In this case, the bunker line was not drained prior undertaking the repair work and necessary precaution were not taken against oil spillage on to hot surface.
  - b) In another incident, an explosion occurred while undertaking repairs involving hot work on deck next to a fuel oil tank. The workers were unaware that the tank contained residual hydrocarbon liquid and vapour. The tank was not cleaned or purged before work began. An explosion occurred, blowing the end of the ship off.
  - c) Short circuit in personnel electrical equipment in crew's cabin causing fire in accommodation.

Above incidents caused major damage to ships and even loss of life in some cases.

2. These incidents provides an opportunity to re-look at Safe Working Practices and Safety Management System implemented by the Ship Management Companies.
3. Few effective ways to prevent similar incidents includes following:
  - a) Safe working practices are to be followed at all times.
  - b) Risk Assessment is to be carried out and mitigation measures are planned prior undertaking repair / maintenance work.
  - c) Critical operations such as bunkering and hot work are undertaken on ships in accordance with established SOPs/ Checklists as per the safety management system of the ship.
  - d) Adequate control measures to monitor usage of personal electrical items & its maintenance on board ships, such as Electrical Kettles, electrical shavers, chargeable torches, chargeable battery packs, etc. These items are easily available in the commercial market and may not be of the requisite quality, are a potential fire hazard on-board. Items going on-board the ship and their usage thereafter may be incorporated in the SMS of the ship.

4. Ship Owners/ managers and masters are advised to be guided by above and ensure compliance.

**Enclosure:**

1. Nil.

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