

Title	MSC Circulars / MSC/Circ.326
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IMO

SUBDIVISION, STABILITY AND LOAD LINES

Drainage of Enclosed Cargo Spaces Situated on the Bulkhead Deck

At its forty-sixth session the Maritime Safety Committee agreed that at a suitable time the International Convention on Load Lines, 1966 and the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974 should be amended to make provision, under certain circumstances, for the internal drainage of the above-mentioned spaces.

This provision was considered necessary in view of the dangerous situation that could arise if loose water from leakage, fire-extinguishing water, etc., were present in such spaces except that Administrations may allow a dispensation where it was satisfied that the size or internal subdivision of the cargo space was such that the presence of this loose water would not endanger the ship.

The vehicle space situated on the bulkhead deck of a Ro/Ro ship which extends for a substantial proportion of the ship's length and which is not provided with internal subdivision is a typical example when the need for internal drainage has to be considered.

The amendments to both Conventions will allow the continued provision of the direct overboard drainage through suitable scuppers, valves, etc., in those cases where the freeboard to the bulkhead deck is such that the deck edge is not immersed unless the ship heels more than 5 degrees either way. In those cases where this deck edge immersion occurs at 5 degrees or less the resultant freeboard inhibits effective drainage directly overboard. Therefore drainage of the enclosed cargo space should be led internally to a suitable space, or spaces, of adequate capacity, having a high water level alarm and provided with suitable arrangements for discharge overboard.

In cases where drainage is arranged internally it will be necessary to ensure that:

(a) the number, size and disposition of the scuppers are such as to prevent unreasonable accumulation of loose water;

(b) the pumping arrangements are at least in accordance with Regulation 21 of Chapter II-1 of the 1981 Amendments to the 1974 SOLAS Convention for

passenger ships or cargo ships, as applicable, taking into account the requirements for any fixed water spraying system;

(c) water contaminated with petrol or other dangerous substances is not drained to machinery spaces or other spaces where sources of ignition may be present; and

(d) where the vehicle space is protected by a CO₂ fire extinguishing system the deck scuppers are fitted with means to prevent the escape of the smothering gas.

Bearing in mind that casualty experience has demonstrated the need to amend both Conventions and having regard to the time required to implement these amendments the Committee invites Administrations to take note of the above with the view to implementing this provision for new ships as soon as possible.