

SUB-COMMITTEE ON CARRIAGE OF
CARGOES AND CONTAINERS
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Agenda item 8

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**UNIFIED INTERPRETATION OF PROVISIONS OF IMO SAFETY, SECURITY AND
ENVIRONMENT-RELATED CONVENTIONS**

Draft unified interpretation of paragraph 9.4.4 of the IGC Code

Submitted by IACS

SUMMARY

<i>Executive summary:</i>	This document provides a draft unified interpretation that has been developed with a view to facilitating the global and consistent implementation of paragraph 9.4.4 of the IGC Code
<i>Strategic direction, if applicable:</i>	6
<i>Output:</i>	6.1
<i>Action to be taken:</i>	Paragraph 6
<i>Related document:</i>	BLG 15/10

Introduction

1 The International Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships Carrying Liquefied Gases in Bulk (IGC Code), as amended by resolutions MSC.370(93) and MSC.390(93), provides an international standard for the construction of ships carrying liquefied gases in bulk.

2 IACS Members, acting as recognized organizations, have discussed how to implement the requirements of the revised IGC Code, and have found some instances where further clarification is needed to facilitate the global and uniform implementation of these mandatory provisions.

Discussion

3 The second sentence of paragraph 9.4.4 of the IGC Code refers to a "removable spool piece" as a means of separating inert gas plants located in machinery spaces or other spaces outside the cargo area, from the cargo system, i.e.

"9.4.4 Arrangements to prevent the backflow of cargo vapour into the inert gas system that are suitable for the cargo carried, shall be provided. If such plants are located in machinery spaces or other spaces outside the cargo area, two non-return valves or equivalent devices and, in addition, a removable spool piece shall be fitted in the inert gas main in the cargo area. When not in use, the inert gas system shall be made separate from the cargo system in the cargo area except for connections to the hold spaces or interbarrier spaces."

4 In a technical consideration of the issue by IACS members, various views were expressed. For example:

- .1 the location and arrangement of backflow prevention measure to be taken, in addition to non-return valves, need to be different depending on the feature and the purpose of the spaces to which each line branching off from the inert gas main is connected;
- .2 it is unclear whether "inert gas main" includes nitrogen supply lines or not. A spool piece is not adequate for nitrogen systems as a means of separation even in branch lines, because of the frequency of its use;
- .3 it is unclear whether the provisions of paragraph 9.4.4, which is part of Chapter 9 of the IGC Code entitled "Cargo Containment System Atmosphere Control", also cover the inert gas systems for gas consumers arrangements (annular space of a double-walled pipe); and
- .4 the "revised" IGC Code is basically constructed based on the idea that the Code should no longer provide prescriptive standards (as recognized in paragraph 5 of document BLG 15/10). In this regard, paragraph 9.4.4 appears to be too prescriptive.

5 To clarify the issues discussed above, IACS has prepared the following draft unified interpretation regarding paragraph 9.4.4 of the IGC Code:

- .1 for the inert gas main which has branch lines, each of such branch lines in the cargo area may be fitted with a removable spool piece in lieu of that in the common inert gas main; and
- .2 "a removable spool piece" may be replaced by "a double block and bleed valve"; or, for supply lines to the system such as insulation spaces or annular spaces where the feeding of nitrogen is maintained under normal operating conditions, other equivalent means of isolation.

Action requested of the Sub-Committee

6 The Sub-Committee is invited to consider the discussion in paragraphs 3 and 4 and the draft unified interpretation provided in paragraph 5; and take action, as appropriate.