Risk Assessment Solutions

"Prevent, Don't Cure"

Circular 03/02/15

Subject: Lifeboat Engine failure in extreme cold conditions – Important Port State Control issue!

Case: Recently, it has been reported that a cargo vessel in the Atlantic Canada area faced difficulties during a Port State Control inspection when the lifeboat engine was tested and found to be inoperative. It was proven that the lifeboat engine's lubricating oil viscosity broke down due to extremely cold temperatures and as a result the lifeboat engine failed to operate. Finally, the vessel received the following deficiency:

"Code 17: Inoperative lifeboat engine"

In connection to the above and in order to assist our Clients by providing the necessary clarifications, kindly be informed that the IMO LSA Code reads:

LSA Chapter IV, § 4.4.6 Lifeboat propulsion:

§4.4.6.2 *"The engine starting systems and starting aids shall start the engine at an ambient temperature of – 15 ° C within 2 min of commencing the start procedure unless, in the opinion of the Administration having regard to the particular voyages in which the ship carrying the lifeboat is constantly engaged, a different temperature is appropriate."*

Furthermore and in order to avoid possible deficiencies or PSC detentions during severe winter conditions, we would like to recommend to our clients the following:

- The lifeboat fuel tank to be filled with appropriate (eg. wax free) diesel
- The heating elements on the lifeboat engine and in the lifeboat space should be kept heated (whenever possible)
- The Engine lube oil to be changed to synthetic oil (available in the market)
- Ideally the lifeboat engine has to have at least 50 running hours using mineral oil for lubrication prior to the change to synthetic oil
- In frequent time intervals during winter months the ship's engineer should sample the lube oil to ensure any loss of viscosity
- The person in charge to be aware of the cold weather precautions described in the lifeboat engine manufacturer's operation and maintenance Manual.
- The SMS/ PMS for lifeboat and rescue boat engine could be reviewed and revised, as necessary in order to enclose the necessary precautionary actions.

[Source: DNV]

Our company is offering a wide range of 'deficiencies', case studies, clarification on the PSC deficiencies through our PSC seminar which is delivered on regular intervals in our office or in-house at client's request.

To assist further, we offer our clients the service of assessing onboard or through "Distance Assessment" if a vessel is in conformance with the MLC 2006 or PSC requirements or conducting inspections equivalent to PSC/Flag/Rightship inspections to detect and prevent unpleasant occurrences!

For any further information we remain at your disposal.

Prevention at Sea

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