

UNITED STATE COAST GUARD

COMMANDANT
U.S. COAST GUARD
WASHINGTON, DC.

NVIC 2-62
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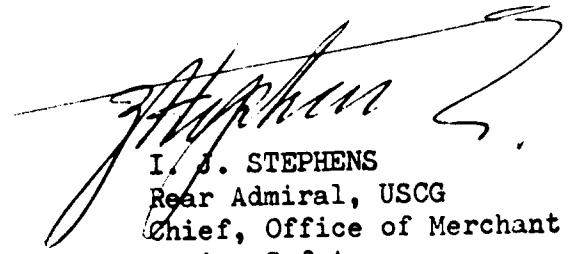
NAVIGATION AND VESSEL INSPECTION CIRCULAR NO. 2-62

Subj: Watertight Bulkheads In All Inspected Vessels Maintenance of Watertight Integrity

1. Purpose. To advise inspection personnel, vessel operators, and others concerned as to the need for maintenance of integrity of watertight bulkheads.
2. Discussion.
 - (a) Within about the last 18 months, two tankers have been lost as a consequence of failures in the propelling plant installation resulting in machinery space flooding. In both of these cases, eventual loss was apparently caused by extension of initial flooding through relatively minor openings in bulkheads which were otherwise watertight. Although there was no loss of life in either of these instances, the fact that such loss might have occurred under more unfavorable circumstances cannot be disregarded. When it is realized that in many cases such losses can be prevented by simple inexpensive measures without any adverse effect on the vessel's operation, the wastefulness of not taking such measures becomes apparent.
 - (b) The Coast Guard regulations applicable to passenger vessels are the only regulations containing specific requirements for watertight subdivision. In the case of such vessels, maintenance of watertight integrity is a requirement for certification. In the case of some non-passenger vessels of special type, compliance with watertight subdivision may also have been a condition of original approval. In such cases, maintenance of watertight integrity is also required.
 - (c) For application to remaining vessel type:, reference is made to Section 12 of the Rules For Building and Classing Steel Vessels of the American Bureau of Shipping. This section recognizes the need for water-tight bulkheads and prescribes, based on the vessel's length, the minimum number of watertight bulkheads which ordinarily should be fitted. However, much latitude is permitted in applying this section, and the specified number and location of bulkheads is not related to any specific degree of floodability. For this reason, the provisions of this section are not regarded as forming a basis for mandatory enforcement of bulkhead watertight integrity by the Coast Guard under the provisions of the Law and Regulations making reference to the American Bureau of Shipping Rules.
3. Action.
 - (a) In the case of passenger vessels, maintenance of watertight integrity of all bulkheads, including any flat forming a part of bulkhead steps or recesses, originally so constructed and approved, is mandatory for continued certification. This is also the case for special type vessels, where in compliance with watertight subdivision was a condition of original approval.

- (b) In the case of other vessels, inspectors will note all exceptions to watertight integrity and will recommend their correction. Completion of such corrective action will not be a mandatory requirement for certification but any such exceptions shall be included in the inspection records for the vessel and the owner or operator, as the case may be, shall be advised thereof in writing.
- (c) Nothing herein shall be taken as countenancing violations of integrity in the case of tanks or in other portions of a vessel where such integrity is specifically required by the regulations. Violations of water-tight integrity resulting from excessive structural wastage or from other causes which adversely affect the seaworthiness of a vessel as related to its normal operating conditions shall be required to be corrected.

4. Effective date. Upon receipt.



I. J. STEPHENS
Rear Admiral, USCG
Chief, Office of Merchant
Marine Safety

Dist. (SDL No. 74)

- A: None
- 3: n(35); c(10); e(5); l(3); bdp(1)
- C: m(4); o(2); gh(1)
- D: k(2); gim(1)