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MSC.1/Circ.1559  
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**UNIFIED INTERPRETATIONS OF THE IGC CODE  
(AS AMENDED BY RESOLUTION MSC.370(93))**

1 The Maritime Safety Committee, at its ninety-seventh session (21 to 25 November 2016), with a view to providing more specific guidance for the application of the relevant requirements of the International Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships Carrying Liquefied Gases in Bulk (IGC Code), approved unified interpretations of the IGC Code (as amended by resolution MSC.370(93)) prepared by the Sub-Committee on Carriage of Cargoes and Containers, at its third session, as set out in the annex.

2 Member States are invited to use the annexed unified interpretations as guidance when applying relevant provisions of the IGC Code (as amended by resolution MSC.370(93)) and to bring them to the attention of all parties concerned.

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## ANNEX

### UNIFIED INTERPRETATIONS OF THE IGC CODE (AS AMENDED BY RESOLUTION MSC.370(93))

#### **1 Closing devices for air intakes (paragraph 3.2.6)**

1.1 The closing devices that need not be operable from within the single spaces may be located in centralized positions.

1.2 Engine-room casings, cargo machinery spaces, electric motor rooms and steering gear compartments are generally considered as spaces not covered by paragraph 3.2.6 and, therefore, the requirement for closing devices need not be applied to these spaces.

1.3 The closing devices should give a reasonable degree of gas tightness. Ordinary steel fire-flaps without gaskets/seals should not be considered satisfactory.

1.4 Regardless of this interpretation, the closing devices shall be operable from outside of the protected space (SOLAS regulation II-2/5.2.1.1).

#### **2 Application of fire safety requirements in SOLAS chapter II-2 to cargo machinery spaces and turret compartments (paragraphs 3.3.1 and 11.1.1.1)**

The sentence "for the purpose of prevention of potential explosion according to SOLAS regulation II-2/4.5.10" in paragraph 3.3.1 does not require application of the aforementioned SOLAS regulation. SOLAS regulation II-2/4.5.10 does not apply in accordance with paragraph 11.1.1.1.

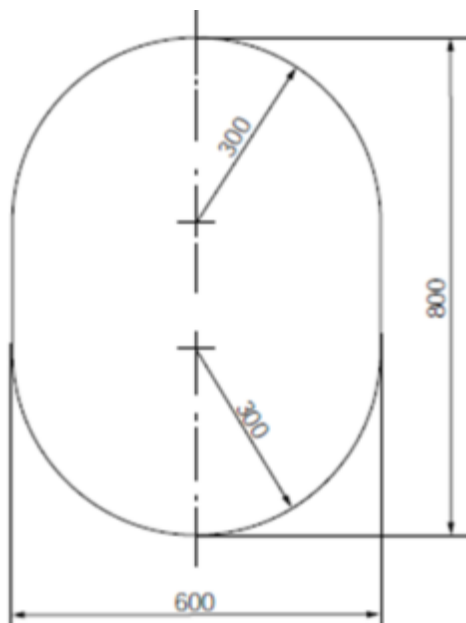
#### **3 Cargo tank clearances (paragraphs 3.5.3.1.2 and 3.5.3.1.3)**

*Access through horizontal openings, hatches or manholes*

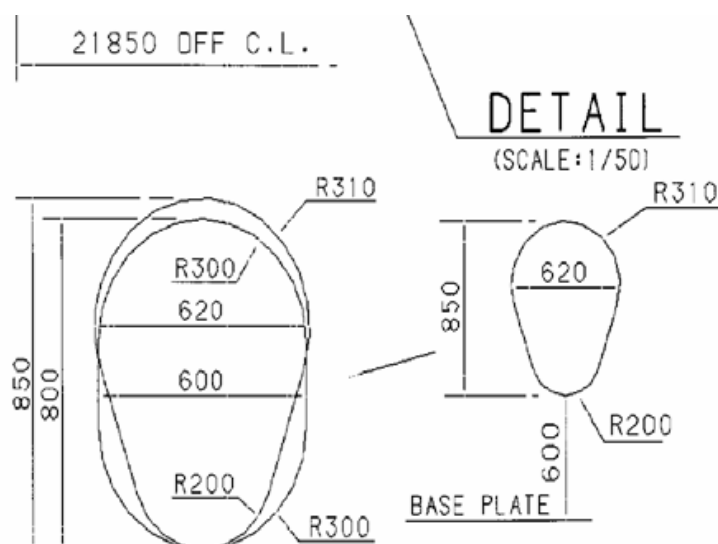
3.1 The minimum clear opening of 600 mm x 600 mm may have corner radii up to 100 mm maximum. In such a case where as a consequence of structural analysis of a given design the stress is to be reduced around the opening, it is considered appropriate to take measures to reduce the stress such as making the opening larger with increased radii, e.g. 600 mm x 800 mm with 300 mm radii, in which a clear opening of 600 mm x 600 mm with corner radii up to 100 mm maximum fits.

*Access through vertical openings or manholes providing passage through the length and breadth of the space*

3.2 The minimum clear opening of not less than 600 mm x 800 mm may also include an opening with corner radii of 300 mm. An opening of 600 mm in height x 800 mm in width may be accepted as access openings in vertical structures where it is not desirable to make large openings in the structural strength aspects, i.e. girders and floors in double bottom tanks.



3.3 Subject to verification of easy evacuation of an injured person on a stretcher the vertical opening 850 mm x 620 mm with upper half wider than 600 mm, while the lower half may be less than 600 mm with the overall height not less than 850 mm is considered an acceptable alternative to the traditional opening of 600 mm x 800 mm with corner radii of 300 mm.



3.4 If a vertical opening is at a height of more than 600 mm steps and handgrips should be provided. In such arrangements it should be demonstrated that an injured person can be easily evacuated.

#### **4 Pump Vents in Machinery Spaces (paragraph 3.7.5)\***

The requirement of "Pump vents shall not be open to machinery spaces" applies only to pumps in the machinery spaces serving dry duct keels through which ballast piping passes.

#### **5 Safe means of emergency isolation of pressure relief valves (paragraph 8.2.9)**

The "safe means of emergency isolation", as required by paragraph 8.2.9, should be provided so that a PRV can be isolated on a temporary basis to reseal or repair the valve before putting the PRV back into service. Such means of emergency isolation should be installed in a manner that does not allow their inadvertent operation.

#### **6 External surface area of the tank for determining sizing of pressure relief valve (paragraph 8.4.1.2 and figure 8.1)**

*For prismatic tanks*

6.1  $L_{min}$ , for non-tapered tanks, is the smaller of the horizontal dimensions of the flat bottom of the tank. For tapered tanks, as would be used for the forward tank,  $L_{min}$  is the smaller of the length and the average width.

6.2 For prismatic tanks whose distance between the flat bottom of the tank and bottom of the hold space is equal to or less than  $L_{min}/10$ :

A = external surface area minus flat bottom surface area.

6.3 For prismatic tanks whose distance between the flat bottom of the tank and bottom of the hold space is greater than  $L_{min}/10$ :

A = external surface area.

#### **7 Back-flushing of the water-spray system (paragraph 11.3.6)**

The last sentence of paragraph 11.3.6, i.e. "In addition, means shall be provided to back-flush the system with fresh water", should be understood to mean that arrangements should be provided so that the water-spray system as a whole (i.e. piping, nozzles and in-line filters) can be flushed or back-flushed, as appropriate, with fresh water to prevent the blockage of pipes, nozzles and filters.

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\* The interpretation also applies to the requirement of "Pump vents should not be open to machinery spaces" in paragraph 3.7.4 of the IGC Code, as amended by resolution MSC.103(73).