



Asbestos onboard Ships

Summary

Purpose:	2
Reference:	2
Introduction.....	2
Requirement.....	2
Persisting Challenges	2
SOLAS restriction and prohibition of asbestos	3
Ships built before 1 July 2002.....	3
Ships built between 1 July 2002 and 1 January 2011.....	3
Ships built after 1 January 2011	4
Recommended actions.....	4
Review of SOLAS Reg. II-1/3-5 and Guidance MSC.1/Circ. 1374:.....	4
ISM Code SMS Manuals and Procedures:	4
Validation of 'Asbestos Free/Compliance' Certificates:.....	4
Obligations and responsibilities	4



Asbestos onboard Ships

Purpose:

Notice to Agents, Shipowners, other interested parties about the prohibition of asbestos onboard ships.

Reference:

- [IMO MSC.1/Circ.1426/Rev 1 | 24 November 2016](#)
- [IMO MSC.1/Circ.1374 | 3 December 2010](#)
- [IMO MSC/Circ. 1045 – Guideline for Maintenance and Monitoring of onboard materials containing asbestos | 28 May 2002](#)
- [International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea \(SOLAS\), 1974 | The December 2000 amendments; Adoption: 6 December 2000; Entry into force: 1 July 2002](#)
- [IMO Resolution MEPC.268\(68\) | 15 May 2015 | Guideline for the development of the Inventory of Hazardous Materials.](#)
- [C162 - Asbestos Convention, 1986 \(No. 162\) \(International Labour Organization\)](#)
- [BIMCO | Safe Removal of material containing asbestos onboard ships](#)
- [Regulation \(EU\) No 1257/2013 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 20 November 2013 on ship recycling and amending Regulation \(EC\) No 1013/2006 and Directive 2009/16/EC \(Text with EEA relevance\)](#)

Introduction

Asbestos is a hazardous substance that, when inhaled, can lead to severe health effects, including the development of diseases such as asbestosis, pleural diseases, lung cancer, and mesothelioma. **After exposure occurs, asbestos can't be removed from the lungs.**

Asbestos on ships have been controlled since 2000 and as soon as asbestos are removed from ships, owners need to issue an Asbestos Free Declaration where they need to indicate that the ship is free of this material.

Requirement

Since 1 January 2011, the installation of any items containing asbestos on board ships has been strictly prohibited.

Persisting Challenges

Despite these stringent control measures, asbestos-containing materials (ACM) are still found on board ships, particularly those installed before 1 January 2011. In many cases, this pertains to gaskets located between pipe flanges and valves.



Asbestos onboard Ships

During inspections of ships in service, asbestos has regularly been found in such places as fire blankets, joints and insulation materials, some types of sealants, friction material of brakes, wall and ceiling coverings, cords, gaskets, and electric fuses. Exposure to asbestos fibers in the air can cause a range of serious diseases.

SOLAS restriction and prohibition of asbestos

The IMO have recognized the danger of asbestos to ship crews and shipboard visitors through amendments made to SOLAS. Shipboard compliance is mandatory, regardless of national law relating to non-marine asbestos use ashore. An outline of the relevant SOLAS regulations and their application is provided below.

The December 2000 amendments to SOLAS Reg. II-1/3-5, in force since 1 July 2002, are as follows:

Ships built before 1 July 2002

Ships built before 1 July 2002 may contain asbestos, but it must be managed properly. Guidance is contained in MSC.1/Circ. 1374. An extract appears below:

“Ships built before 1 July 2002 are allowed to have Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs) on board. However, the ACMs are only allowed as long as they do not pose a risk to the crew’s health. The crew should be aware of the dangers of asbestos and should know how to deal with asbestos in case disturbance of the ACMs cannot be avoided.”

Ships built between 1 July 2002 and 1 January 2011

Ships built during this period are prohibited from the new installation of materials which contain asbestos except for:

- *Vanes used in rotary vane compressors and rotary vane vacuum pumps;*
- *Watertight joints and linings used for the circulation of fluids when, at high temperature (in excess of 350°C) or pressure (in excess of 7 x 10⁶ Pa), there is a risk of fire, corrosion or toxicity;and,*
- *Supple and flexible thermal insulation assemblies used for temperatures above 1000°C.*
-

NOTE: This restricted use exception has now been effectively negated by the 2009 amendments referred to below. As such, any new (post 1 Jan 2011) installations (including replacement or repair) of the asbestos containing equipment referred to above are no longer permitted. Guidance is contained in [MSC.1/Circ. 1426](#).

The Dec 2000 amendments to SOLAS were further amended by the 2009 amendments which came into force in 2011.



Asbestos onboard Ships

Ships built after 1 January 2011

The 2009 Amendments to SOLAS, in force 1 Jan 2011, prohibit all new installation of asbestos onboard all ships and without exception.

NOTE: MM's use of the terms Category 1, 2 and 3 is to assist reader understanding only and do not form a part of SOLAS rules or guidance.

Recommended actions.

Review of SOLAS Reg. II-1/3-5 and Guidance MSC.1/Circ. 1374:

Instruct your ship managers to thoroughly review the content of the amended SOLAS Reg. II-1/3-5 and Guidance MSC.1/Circ. 1374.

Assess and implement applicable measures based on the vessel's build date and category within your fleet.

ISM Code SMS Manuals and Procedures:

Verify the content of your ISM Code Safety Management System (SMS) manuals and procedures for each vessel. Ensure they incorporate the necessary asbestos identification and hazard management guidelines as mandated by SOLAS Regulations and Guidance.

Validation of 'Asbestos Free/Compliance' Certificates:

Confirm the reliability and validity of any 'Asbestos Free/Compliance' certificates issued by **Flag State Recognized Organizations (ROs)**, shipbuilders, or other entities.

Certificates accepted by Port State Control (PSC) should be issued by specialist surveyors accredited to ISO 17020:2012 (Conformity Assessment System)) and ISO 17025:2017 (General requirements for the competence of testing and calibration laboratories.) quality standards.

Obligations and responsibilities

The IHM preparation shall be carried out by qualified HazMat experts from approved companies and the resultant IHM inspection report requires RO approval.

IHM certificate and Statement of Compliance (SoC) will be issued by RO with maximum five years validity in harmonization with the ship's main class renewal date.