

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Earlier this year, the International Association of Classification Societies (IACS) announced the development of eight measures aimed at further improving the safety of bulk carriers.

One of these relates to earlier implementation of SOLAS Chapter XII requirements for some existing bulk carriers 150 m Length, and above, carrying solid bulk cargoes with a bulk density of 1.78 t/m³, and above, subject to the requirements of IACS Unified Requirements:

1. UR S19, "Evaluation of Scantlings of the Transverse Watertight Corrugated Bulkhead between Cargo Holds Nos. 1 and 2, with Cargo Hold No. 1 Flooded, for Existing Single Side Skin Bulk Carriers", and
2. UR S22, "Evaluation of Allowable Hold Loading of Cargo Hold No. 1 with Cargo Hold No. 1 Flooded, for Existing Bulk Carriers".

This measure is being implemented by revision 3, March 2002 of IACS UR S23, "Implementation of IACS Unified Requirements S19 and S22 for Existing Single Side Skin Bulk Carriers".

ABS supports this, and the other IACS measures to increase the safety of bulk carriers. This letter is to update you on the revised compliance schedule of UR S23 and its effect on the required compliance date for one or more of the ships you own or operate.

The objective of the change is to bring forward the reinforcement of the corrugated transverse bulkhead between No.1 and No.2 holds and the double bottom of No. 1 hold. Compliance is now required as follows:

- i) for ships which were 20 years of age or more on 1 July 1998, by the due date of the first intermediate, or the due date of the first special survey to be held after 1 July 1998, whichever comes first;
- ii) for ships which were 15 years of age or more but less than 20 years of age on 1 July 1998, by the due date of the first special survey to be held after 1 July 1998, but not later than 1 July 2002;
- iii) for ships which were 10 years of age or more but less than 15 years of age on 1 July 1998, by the due date of the first intermediate, or the due date of the first special survey to be held after the date on which the ship reaches 15 years of age but not later than the date on which the ship reaches 17 years of age;
- iv) for ships which were 5 years of age or more but less than 10 years of age on 1 July 1998, by the due date, after 1 July 2003, of the first intermediate or the first special survey after the date on which the ship reaches 10 years of age, whichever occurs first;
- v) for ships which were less than 5 years of age on 1 July 1998, by the date on which the ship reaches 10 years of age.

Please note that:

1. Completion, prior to 1 July 2003, of an intermediate or special survey with a due date after 1 July 2003, cannot be used to postpone compliance;
2. However, completion prior to 1 July 2003, of an intermediate survey the window for which straddles 1 July 2003, does not violate this requirement;
3. For these purposes and on the attached list, the "due date" of an intermediate survey is taken as the 3rd anniversary date;
4. For intermediate surveys, the three months following the due date of the third annual survey may be used to complete the survey;
5. For special surveys, the three months following the due date may be allowed subject to the terms/conditions for extension of a special survey.

Please also note that:

1. Bulk carriers which are subject to compliance with UR S19 and UR S22 are required, when loaded to the summer loadline, to be able to withstand flooding of the foremost cargo hold in all loading conditions and remain afloat in a satisfactory condition of equilibrium, as specified in SOLAS XII/4.2 to 4.6.
2. A ship having been built with an insufficient number of transverse watertight bulkheads to satisfy this requirement may be exempted from the application of UR S19, UR S22 and this requirement provided the ship fulfills the requirement in SOLAS XII/9.

Vessel statuses will be updated to show the revised compliance dates for the bulk carriers affected.

For further information or to arrange for the necessary engineering assessment or surveys to verify compliance, please contact your local ABS office.

Very truly yours,

Gus Bourneuf,
Vice President / Chief Surveyor
American Bureau of Shipping

Cc: Assistant Chief Surveyors
Cc: Vice Presidents for Engineering

Ship Name Class ID number IMO number New Due Date for Compliance under Revised UR S23