

Alert on detainable deficiencies

Following a recent Port State Control (PSC) inspection, several deficiencies have been imposed that resulted in the detention of the vessel. URACOS wishes to draw attention to these detainable deficiencies to avoid re-occurrence.

Notice to: Ship Owners/ Managers/ Operators | Surveyors/ Auditors

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ECHO SOUNDER

During the PSC Inspection, it was noted that *the echo sounder has been found inoperative.*

Under normal propagation conditions, the echo sounder should be capable of measuring any clearance under the transducer between 2 meters and 400 meters. Additionally, it should provide a minimum of two range scales one of which, the deep range, should cover the whole range of depth, while the shallow range one should cover one-tenth thereof.

In the cases where the echo sounder might be inoperative, the Owners / Managers should contact URACOS Head Office to obtain a dispensation letter issued by the ship's Flag Administration for a specific timeframe.

COVERS

Another deficiency imposed was that *the hatch cover gasket of cargo hold no.03 has been found to be out of its rail and not properly maintained.*

Hatch cover maintenance routines should be drawn up following the manufacturer's recommendations and the ship's crew should be familiar with these requirements. Before the ship leaves any port, all the weather deck hatch covers should be properly closed, and all locking devices secured. Regular checks should be carried out on the

security of the hatch covers whilst at sea and this is even more important when heavy weather is expected, as it may not be possible once the weather has deteriorated.

Only qualified personnel should operate the hatch covers, who should be well-trained and aware of the manufacturer's procedures for the safe operation of the hatch covers that have been fitted to their ship.

Once opened, hatch covers should be secured properly, using the chain stoppers, chocks or other devices recommended by the manufacturers. Hatch openings should be well-illuminated and if there are guard rails and stanchions fitted, these need to be fixed into place. Special care and attention should be paid to opening and closing of the hatch covers when the ship has an excessive trim or list. This is due to the possibility of the covers "running away" when in motion.



Continuous monitoring of the condition of the hatch covers and their sealing arrangements is best done when the covers are being opened and closed during operations.

GENERAL MAINTENANCE LIST*

1. Before closing the hatch covers, ensure that the hatch coamings and double drainage channels are swept clean of any cargo debris. This will ensure that the coaming drain non-return valve remains clear and free as well as ensuring that no damage occurs to either the hatch cover rubber packing or the compression bar. It will also ensure that there is no obstruction to the correct and proper sealing of the hatch cover.
2. Whilst cleaning, check for any damage to the coaming area, paying particular attention to the compression bars, wheels, wheel tracks and landing pads. Record details of any damages found for urgent or future remedial repairs as required. If temporary repairs are required, it must be ensured that these temporary measures are such that the ship's cargo worthiness will not be affected for the entirety of the voyage. Ensure that the moving parts (wheels, cross joint hinges, hydraulic ram bearings etc.) are greased at regular intervals.
3. If the hatch cover design is such that the cover side panels and end plates are in 'steel to steel' contact with the hatch coaming tops when in the closed position, check whether the coaming tops are free from grooving or wear. This would indicate worn hatch sealing rubbers.
4. Hatch cover landing pads should be always maintained in a good condition, ensuring that any corrosion is dealt with in a timely manner and that the pads are greased regularly.
5. **Grooved, corroded or worn-down landing pads are to be either built up with welding and ground back to original dimensions or cropped off and replaced in their entirety.**
6. Check for any rust streaks on the inside of the coaming which would indicate water ingress from leaking hatch cover seals. Take immediate action and repair the seal and clean off the rust streaks.
7. Check and clean the surface of the seals. When cleaning the seals, check for signs of permanent deformation.
8. Hold access hatches and ventilation covers need to be scrutinized in the same manner as the hatch covers themselves, for signs of damage to the sealing areas, securing arrangements etc.
9. Cleats and their snugs should be inspected for any damage, ensure the rubber washer is intact and not perished and the tightening nut is free to move. Standard adjustment of the hatch cleats is to tighten the nut hand tight

against the steel washer and then to further tighten by 360 degrees.



10. Hauling wires/chains need to be inspected for correct adjustment and tension to avoid uneven seating and hatch cover distortion when closed.



Two different vessels and their differences

Act now

Surveyors / Auditors must take note of the above detainable deficiencies and give special attention during forthcoming class and statutory surveys and audits, irrespective of scope.

Shipowners / Managers / Operators are kindly requested to pay special attention to those deficiencies, note the regulations' requirements, and to inform Masters on taking corrective actions, if and where necessary.



*Source: P&I Britannia

