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Revised recommendations for entering enclosed spaces aboard ships MSC.581(110)

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

C25070 | 23 December 2025

At its 110th session, the IMO Maritime Safety Committee adopted **Resolution MSC.581(110)**, which provides revised recommendations for entering enclosed spaces aboard ships. These revised recommendations supersede and revoke Resolution A.1050(27) and enter into effect on **3 December 2025**.

The recommendations emphasize the use of portable gas detection equipment, including CO₂ measurement, and the maintenance of a formal register of enclosed spaces onboard.

These measures aim to enhance crew safety by identifying potential hazards, such as oxygen deficiency or toxic/asphyxiant gases, prior to entry into confined spaces.

Points to Note

Companies and vessels should ensure:

Portable Gas Detection Equipment

- Portable gas detectors are available and capable of measuring CO₂ as well as other relevant gases, properly calibrated, and maintained.
- Crew and Surveyors entering enclosed spaces are provided with personal, portable gas detectors capable of continuously monitoring:
 - Oxygen (O₂)
 - Carbon dioxide (CO₂)
 - Flammable gases or vapours (LEL/LFL)
 - Toxic gases (including CO)
 - Any other gases identified in the risk assessment

- Verify existing detector capability; replace or supplement as needed.
- Update SMS training, familiarization, maintenance, and calibration records.

Enclosed Space Entry Criteria

- Single-person entry is not permitted.
- Entry doors/access hatches must be secured unless the space has been risk-assessed, ventilated, atmospherically tested, and declared safe.
- Entry is only allowed when stable atmospheric readings confirm that all parameters are within acceptable limits:
 - $O_2 \geq 20.9\%$ by volume
 - $CO_2 < 0.5\%$ by volume (5,000 ppm)
 - Flammable gases/vapours $< 1\%$ of LFL
 - Toxic gases/vapours $< 50\%$ of applicable OEL
- Proper illumination, communication, PPE, attendant, rescue/resuscitation equipment, and entry permit issuance.

Enclosed Space Register

- Establish and maintain the Enclosed Space Register onboard and ashore, ensuring it is regularly reviewed and updated based on cargo operations, structural changes, or hazard re-assessment.
- Include all connected and adjacent spaces in the register and risk assessments.
- Ensure these spaces are tested and ventilated as part of entry preparation.
- Assume connected and adjacent spaces are hazardous until proven otherwise.

Emergency Response and Risk Assessment

- Develop/update ship-specific Enclosed Space Emergency Response Plans, detailing rescue roles, equipment, communication, and procedures.
- Conduct regular rescue drills and ensure all rescue equipment is functional and accessible.
- Strengthen SMS risk assessment procedures, documenting hazards, residual risks, and mitigations before permitting entry.
- Distribute cargo hazard information and incorporate it into risk assessments.

Entry Permit, Signage, and Equipment

- Enclosed Space Entry Permits must have a maximum validity of 8 hours.
- Emergency Escape Breathing Devices (EEBDs) are only for escape, not entry.
- Access points should be clearly marked as SAFE or UNSAFE for entry, and signage updated as space status changes.

Act Now

Ship Owners / Managers / Operators/ Surveyors/ Auditors should review onboard equipment and procedures to ensure compliance with the revised recommendations for enclosed space entry. **Dromon auditors will verify compliance during the first company-level or shipboard audit.**

For further guidance, companies may refer to the IMO [Resolution MSC.581\(110\)](#).