



ISM  
Technical Notice  
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**SUBJECT:**  
IMO REVISED RECOMMENDATIONS FOR  
ENTERING ENCLOSED SPACES ABOARD SHIPS

**IMO REVISED RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENTERING  
ENCLOSED SPACES ABOARD SHIPS**

Date of entry into  
force

**01 January  
2015**

Relevant  
Resolutions  
**A.1050(27)**  
**MSC.1/Circ.1401**

Annexes to this TN:

[A.1050 \(27\)](#)  
[MSC.1/Circ.1401](#)

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) has published Revised Recommendations for **Entering Enclosed Spaces Aboard Ships** (IMO Resolution **A.1050 (27)**) coming into force on **01.01.2015**.

IMO has also agreed to introduce new requirements for **enclosed space entry and rescue drills**, and for the carriage of **oxygen meters**.

IMO has been revising its guidance on enclosed space entry on board ships, to try to **combat the ongoing problem of confined space incidents**. The Revised Recommendations for Entering Enclosed Spaces Aboard Ships have been published as IMO Resolution A.1050(27). These **replace** the previous Recommendations (IMO A.864(20)).

The recommendations have been expanded, and include additional guidance on **training and on safety management**, more examples of potential enclosed spaces, and greater emphasis on assuming spaces are unsafe to enter until proved otherwise.

**The main changes** are as follows:

**Definition of enclosed spaces**

The list of examples of enclosed spaces has been expanded, and there are new references to **adjacent connected** spaces, which may share the same atmospheric characteristics as the enclosed space.

**Oxygen enriched atmospheres**

The revised guidance also applies to spaces with an oxygen enriched atmosphere, and not just toxic or oxygen deficient spaces.

### Safety management

New section on safety management for entry into enclosed spaces, including the need to establish procedures for appropriate **training and drills**.

### Assessment of risk

New guidance on periodic risk assessment and new references underlining the need to assume that a space should be considered to be hazardous until positively proved to be safe for entry.

### Training

Additional guidance (under the section on General Precautions) on minimum training for personnel assigned the duties of entering enclosed spaces or functioning as attendants or as members of rescue teams. Crew members should be trained, as appropriate, on enclosed space safety, including familiarization with onboard procedures for recognizing, evaluating, and controlling hazards associated with entry into enclosed spaces.

### Drills

Enclosed space entry and rescue drills are required **at least once every two months** to ensure that crewmembers are familiar with the actions to be taken.

The drills shall include the following items (SOLAS III, Reg. 19.3.6):

- checking and use of personal protective equipment,
- checking and use of communication equipment,
- checking and use of instruments for measuring the atmosphere,
- checking and use of rescue equipment,
- instructions in first aid and resuscitation techniques

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### General precautions

New advice on procedures for preventing accidental entry to enclosed spaces.

### Testing the atmosphere

Expanded guidance on atmosphere testing, including on provision of gas detection equipment, and additional precautions regarding changing conditions and the possible impact of internal structures and residues and coatings on the results of atmosphere testing.

### Precautions related to the use of nitrogen as an inert gas

The revised recommendations incorporate a cross - reference to the IMO Guidelines on tank entry for tankers using nitrogen as an inerting medium (MSC.1/Circ.1401), which were adopted in 2011. Although these Guidelines are specifically for tankers, they may also be relevant for offshore support vessels using nitrogen blankets for methanol cargoes, for example.

For entry purposes, steady readings of the following should be obtained:

1

**21% oxygen** by volume by oxygen content meter;

2

**not more than 1% of lower flammable limit (LFL)** on a suitably sensitive combustible gas indicator, where the preliminary assessment has determined that there is potential for flammable gases or vapours, and

3

**not more than 50% of the occupational exposure limit (OEL)** of any toxic vapours and gases

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If these conditions cannot be met, **ventilation should be added** to the space and **re-testing** should be conducted after a suitable interval. Any gas testing should be carried out with ventilation to the enclosed space stopped, in order to obtain accurate readings.

Owners are required to take account of IMO's revised guidelines and ensure that their **Safety Management System (SMS) procedures and checklists** for entering enclosed spaces **are amended** to reflect the new recommendations. **Internal audits** by the Owners of the ship's safety management system should verify that the established procedures are complied with in practice.

Comparable regulations are included in the:

- HSC-Code,
- MODU-Code and
- DSC-Code

also coming into force on 01.01.2015.

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