

## ANNEX 21L

## FIREFIGHTING ASSISTANCE TO OTHER SHIPS

**1. Initial Assessment and Planning**

The following points should be considered during the initial assessment of an incident in another ship at sea, before committing firefighting or search and rescue teams:

- a. Accounting for personnel and casualties.
- b. Establishing an incident boundary and checks of adjacent compartments.
- c. Assessment of the hazards to firefighting or search and rescue (SAR) operations (eg hazardous cargo, fuel, live electrical systems, pressurised systems, smoke-logging, restricted access, sea state).
- d. Informing shore authorities and other ships in the area.
- e. Availability of ships boats for transfer of personnel and stores.
- f. The establishment of a stability datum and the effects of firefighting operations on stability.
- g. The availability of ship systems (eg fire pumps, electrical supplies, ventilation, emergency lighting, fixed firefighting systems, portable equipment, BA).
- h. Compatibility of hose connections ie availability of the International shore connection.
- i. The hazards associated with cargoes containing Toxic Industrial Materials (see BRd 2170(2) Chapter 5).
- j. Prior agreement of the assistance to be provided.
- k. Prioritisation of actions and agreement of the plan (SAR, CASEVAC, containment and firefighting).

**2. Information Sources**

The following information sources should be available to assist with the initial assessment and incident planning:

- a. **Fire Control Plans.** These should be available in either English or French in all merchant ships conforming to IMO conventions. They should be kept, usually in a red container, either on the bridge or at gangway positions. They contain detailed information on ship firefighting equipment, fire lockers, fixed systems, ventilation plans, etc. They may be very complex, requiring assistance from the ships crew to interpret them.
- b. **Dangerous Goods Declaration.** Dangerous cargoes should be identified by IMDG Codes, which are detailed in BRd 2170(2) Chapter 5. In some ships these may not be very accurate, so all cargo should be treated as hazardous until confirmed otherwise.

c. **Cargo Plan/Manifest.** The Manifest gives details of cargo locations and the order in which it has been stowed for unloading. This may also be a complex document, requiring assistance to decode and interpret.

d. **Stability Data.** This may be difficult to find. Consideration should be given to nominating a Stability Officer to monitor and update stability information, using a portable stability board. If normal RN firefighting techniques are used in ships with large deck areas, free surface water could quickly pose a threat to stability. For further stability guidance see [Chapter 29](#), [Chapter 30](#) and [Chapter 31](#).

### 3. **Nomination of Responsible Officers**

Personnel should be nominated as Responsible Officers for the following:

- a. Stability.
- b. Logistics.
- c. Communications.
- d. Safety.
- e. BA Control.
- f. BA Coordination.
- g. Firefighting water supply.
- h. Firefighting operations.
- i. SAR operations.
- j. Casualty handling.