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SYDNEY PORTS - WORK PERMITS

INFORMATION FOR MASTERS, SHIPPING COMPANIES AND THEIR AGENTS

The attention of Masters, Shipping Companies and their Agents is drawn to the strict guidelines that have been enacted to carry out various repair work onboard vessels under Australian Standard (AS 3846-1998). Shipping Australia Limited has been granted permission by Standards Australia to publish extracts (shown in *italics*) from AS 3846-1998.

A completed notification for work onboard a vessel is to be provided to the Sydney Ports Corporation prior to the commencement of the work. This notification is completed on-line on Sydney Ports' computerised Harbour Management System (ShIPS) and, except in the case of emergency breakdown repairs, should be provided at least 24 hours prior to arrival or before close of business prior to a weekend or public holiday. Where short notification is provided contact should be made with Sydney Ports to ensure the work request is approved in sufficient time for the work authorisation to be placed on board before the work commences.

The general requirements for carrying out repair work onboard vessels as per Section 11 Repair Work in AS 3846-1998 **and Section 4 where class 1 goods are involved** are as follows (definitions as per Section 1):

IMMOBILISATION

While a ship is berthed, its boilers, main engines, steering machinery and other equipment essential for manoeuvring shall be maintained in a condition that will permit the ship to clear the berth at short notice.

Repairs and other work, which may immobilise the ship, shall not be undertaken at a berth without the prior consent of the Port Authority. Certain conditions may have to be met before permission can be granted.

As required in AS 3846-1998 and by Sydney Ports a vessel may not handle dangerous goods of Class 1 (except class 1.4) or Class 7 (except goods of low specific activity – LSA) whilst its engine(s) are immobilised. Where such goods are carried for import they must be unloaded before immobilisation occurs and for export goods they must not be loaded until the engine is fully operational. Additionally if such goods are being carried on board in transit there must be no movement of cargo over or around those goods' storage location whilst the vessels' engine(s) are immobilised.

CLASSIFICATION OF REPAIRS

Repairs shall be classified in accordance with the following definitions. A completed notification for work onboard a ship is to be provided to the Port Authority prior to the commencement of the work. The work activities addressed on the notification shall be discussed with the ship's Master and the berth operator.

Hot Work- *is defined as the use of open fires and flames, power tools, hot rivets, grinding, soldering, burning, cutting, welding or any repair work involving heat or creating sparks, which may lead to a hazard because of the presence or proximity of dangerous cargoes.*

Cold Work - *is defined as any work that is not Hot Work. A permit to undertake 'Cold Work' in a hazardous area shall be issued and displayed next to the worksite.*

Hot Work

*Prior to commencing 'Hot Work', a 'Hot Work Permit', shall be issued by a responsible person and displayed next to the worksite. **Responsible Person** – is defined as a person appointed by a shore side employer or the Master of a ship empowered to take all decisions relating to his specific task, having the necessary current knowledge and experience for that purpose and, where required, is suitably certificated or otherwise recognised by the regulatory authority (IMO).*

The ship's Master and the berth operator shall be advised of any permit issued, which might impact on their areas of responsibility.

As required in AS 3846-1998 and by Sydney Ports a vessel may not undertake hot work whilst dangerous goods of Class 1 (except class 1.4S) are on board or being handled. Where such goods are carried for import they must be unloaded before the hot work occurs and for export goods they must not be loaded until the hot work has been completed.

Activities involving 'hot work' must be carried out as per AS 1674.1 and AS 1674.2.

Fire Precautions – *when undertaking "Hot Work", adequate precautions shall be taken to prevent the occurrence of a fire or explosion. No person shall, within 25m of any place where flammable dangerous cargoes are present, or any tank or space, which has previously contained liquid flammable dangerous cargoes, or within a hazardous or restricted area: -*

- a) Create, use or install an ignition source, or use any instrument or tool in such a manner as to create an ignition source without a 'Hot Work' permit; or*
- b) Have in their possession any matches, lighters, mobile phones, pagers, spark generating equipment or other ignition source.*

Where precautions against fire are in force, the area shall be clearly marked by conspicuous notices, which shall be illuminated at night. The responsibility for providing, maintaining and lighting the notices would normally rest with the Master or Berth Operator as appropriate.

ENTRY PERMIT

An Entry Permit shall be issued and conspicuously displayed prior to any person entering a tank or space, or undertaking any work in or near a tank or space. The Entry permit shall be provided for; shore contractors, by a competent person in accordance with AS 2865; or for ship's crew in accordance with MSC Circular 744 "Recommendations for Entering Enclosed Spaces Aboard Ships".

For confined space entry, and in particular any tank entry, a clearance certificate is to be issued showing the details of the testing of the atmosphere inside the confined space and the type of work approved to be undertaken i.e. personnel entry only or hot work. In the case of shore contractors being used to carry out the work, this atmosphere testing and the issue of a clearance certificate must be undertaken by a shore based competent person (eg chemist). For work being undertaken by only the ship's crew this clearance certificate may be issued by a competent member of the crew in accordance with MSC Circular 744.

PAINTING

Painting of a vessel's hull, deck or superstructure where there may be the potential for spilt paint to enter port waters is regarded as work and requires the issue of a work authorisation from Sydney Ports. Old paint and rust scraped or chipped from the vessel will be regarded as polluting port waters if it is allowed to enter the water. Any paint spilt must be reported immediately to Harbour Control (phone 9296 4001 or channel 13) as it is an offence not to do so.

It is imperative that the conditions placed on the 'Work Permit' by the issuing Ports Authority are strictly adhered to, including:

- a) Reporting of time of commencement of work to Harbour Control
- b) Reporting of time of completion of work to Harbour Control
- c) Copies of 'Work permits' to be placed on board. The Master or his delegate must produce the permit to the Sydney Ports Port Officer on request
- d) Conditions of 'approval' must be communicated to the crew or personnel carrying out the work
- e) Work is to be supervised by the vessel's master or his delegate
- f) Work must not be commenced before approval is given or without an application for work having been made.
- g) Harbour Control must be informed if the work is not carried out and the permit is not required, after it has been issued.

Attention of Masters, Shipping Companies and their Agents is drawn to the fact that Sydney Ports Corporation (SPC) is **authorised** to impose Penalty Infringement Notices under the NSW Dangerous Goods Act 1975 /Dangerous Goods (General) Regulations of 1999, which legislates the application of AS 3846-1998 in New South Wales, for non-compliance with the above procedures and regulations.

The Sydney Ports Corporation conducts random audits of compliance with work authorisation conditions.

In the interest of protecting the environment and controlling pollution of port waters, vessels must ensure that:

1. Care is taken when scraping, chipping or painting of the shipside to ensure that no flakes or paint falls into the water.
2. Care is taken when testing lifeboats to ensure that no oily water is accidentally discharged into the water.
3. In the event of any spills into the water these must be reported immediately to Harbour Control phone 9296 4001 or VHF Channel 13.

Where pollution of port waters is considered to have occurred as a result of a vessel carrying out work, this matter will be discussed with the Master/Duty Officer/Master's Representative by a Sydney Ports' Port Officer provided the incident is detected whilst the vessel is still at its berth. For such an incident the Agent will be asked to sign an undertaking accepting service of notice on behalf of the vessel's owners.

BUNKERS

Prior to any bunkering operation, including the discharge of slops, an application must be made to the Sydney Ports Corporation for permission to carry out the bunkering operation. This application is completed on-line on Sydney Ports' computerised Harbour Management System (ShIPS).

The Sydney Ports Corporation has a policy of preferential daylight bunkering and whilst exceptions are made for tanker operations and availability of bunkering providers, it is expected that appropriate forward planning will be utilised to maximise the use of access to daylight hours for bunkering operations.

Where bunkering during darkness is necessary early AM hours are preferred to PM hours and it is required that adequate deck lighting be available and that all overflows, vents and manifolds be continuously monitored. At some locations which are more exposed to weather conditions such as the Bank Anchorage, Point Piper Buoy and Kurnell No. 3 Submarine Berth bunkering is only permitted during daylight.

The Agent ordering bunkers on behalf of the Master, should inform the Master that:

1. The bunkering operation must be carried out in accordance with all the conditions specified by Sydney Ports
2. Bunkering operations are not to be commenced until the Sydney Ports Bunkering Checklist is completed and the Sydney Ports Port Officer, has approved pumping to commence.
3. Any spills into Port waters or on deck are to be reported immediately to Harbour Control phone 9296 4001 or VHF Channel 13.

4. When bunkering is from/to a roadtanker the driver is to advise Harbour Control approximately 30 minutes prior to arrival at the berth.

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