

South African Maritime Safety Authority



Marine Notice No. 8 of 2010

South African requirements for the maintenance of Fire Extinguishers

TO DOTFAS SERVICE STATIONS, SHIP OPERATORS, MASTERS, SHIPS' AGENTS AND
PRINCIPAL OFFICERS

Summary

This Marine Notice relates to the Servicing of Fire Extinguishers carried on board South African vessels. It seeks to bring the requirements of SAMSA in line with those of the South African National Standards which are Published by the South African Bureau of Standards. The Notice will bring in line the Maritime requirements for fire extinguishers with those of the land based industries.

Introduction

It has always been an issue of contemplation as to the requirements of SAMSA (DoT) with regards to the hydrostatic testing of fire extinguishers used in the South African maritime industry. Some companies and organisations have claimed that the industry requirements are different to those ashore. SAMSA has decided to clarify the matter and bring to the attention of the industry that, despite being a unique industry, certain shore based regulations and standards apply equally onboard as they do ashore.

Background

- Regulation 118(3) of the MS (Life-Saving Equipment) Regulations, 1968, require that
 - (3) "All fire-fighting appliances shall be serviced at intervals not exceeding 12 months...."
- SOLAS Chapter II-2, Regulation 10(3) (3.1) requires that Portable Fire extinguishers comply with the requirements of the Fire Safety Systems Code (FSS Code). The FSS Code requires that fire extinguishers should be subject to periodical inspections and be serviced at intervals not exceeding 1 year.

Periodic Inspections and Tests

- Periodic inspections and tests must be carried out by an approved DOTFAS Station as published in the marine notice "Code of Practice for Marine Fire Service Stations -Approved DOTFAS Stations". The approval certificate for these stations indicates the work that they are approved to carry out. Ship owners, Masters and Agents should verify with the stations whether they are approved for the work which they are undertaking.
- The table below indicates the maintenance and inspection to be carried out on fire extinguishers. The following meanings apply:
 - Inspection- Carried out onboard by a designated officer at period not exceeding those specified in the table or by the manufacturer
 - Maintenance- Annual inspection and test as required by the relevant local and international standards

- Extended Maintenance and Overhaul- Includes hydrostatic pressure testing of cylinders, overhauling of parts and where required, replacing of extinguishing mediums.

Type of Fire extinguisher	Inspection (onboard)	Maintenance	Extended Maintenance
Foam, Water and Water Based	1 month	1 Year	Every 5 years
Powder	1 month	1 Year	Every 5 years
CO ₂	1 month	1 Year	Every 10 years
45kg CO ₂ Cylinders (for fixed systems)	1 month	1 Year ¹	Every 10 Years

¹ Where applicable, this may be done onboard using appropriate methods, i.e. Isotoping

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