



# UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

U.S. Department of Homeland Security

## MARINE SAFETY ALERT

### Inspections and Compliance Directorate

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Washington, DC

Safety Alert 10-24

## **DON'T GET CAUGHT IN THE DARK: KNOW YOUR ELECTRICAL PLANT'S RESTORATION PROCEDURES!**

This Safety Alert highlights the critical need for engineering personnel to be thoroughly familiar with, and trained on, the functionality of onboard electrical generation systems and emergency procedures to effectively manage a blackout. Sector Delaware Bay recently responded to an incident involving a ship that suffered a loss of their main power supply while operating in a restricted waterway. As a result, the ship was forced to rely solely on its emergency generator for more than an hour. The extended power loss arose because the crew lacked familiarity and training in main power restoration procedures.

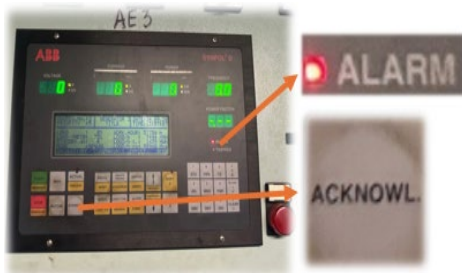


Figure 1 - Generator Control Panel

Even after the emergency generator connected, multiple bridge and engine control room alarms diverted operator attention from critical navigation and ship handling tasks. It is crucial to swiftly restore a ship's main power following a power loss and to reestablish operation of critical ship systems.

In this case, a non-audible alarm at the generator control panel required acknowledgement before the ship service generators could be restarted. This alarm was not integrated within the ship's machinery monitoring system, causing it to be easily overlooked. The crew's unfamiliarity with the control panel delayed their ability to identify and acknowledge this alarm, prolonging the restoration of the main power supply. The Coast Guard strongly **recommends** that owners, operators, and vessel officers:

- Consider developing and implementing new Safety Management System procedures or evaluating the effectiveness of existing procedures relative to crew familiarity, training on electrical power systems, and emergency procedures, including restoring the ship's main power supply following a loss of power.
- Train crew members on the proper steps for restoring the electrical plant to minimize response times during blackouts.
- Conduct blackout and reset drills under safe operating conditions to ensure emergency procedures are effectively applied.

This Safety Alert is provided for informational purposes only and does not relieve any domestic or international safety, operational, or material requirement. Developed by Sector Delaware Bay and distributed by the Office of Investigations and Casualty Analysis. Questions may be sent to [HQS-SMB-CGINV@uscg.mil](mailto:HQS-SMB-CGINV@uscg.mil).