

MSC Guidelines for Review of the Use of Combustible Materials

Procedure Number: SOLAS-47

Revision Date: 02/29/2012



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Purpose

The purpose of this Plan Review Guide is to describe the acceptable uses for combustible materials on commercial vessels. This information is used to determine the acceptable fire loading of particular spaces aboard commercial vessels.

References

SOLAS 2004 Cite: II-2/5.3.2; II-2/6

SOLAS 2001 Cite: II-2/34

Contact Information

If you have any questions or comments concerning this document, please contact the Marine Safety Center by e-mail or phone. Please refer to Procedure Number: **SOLAS-47**.

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Reference Text

“*3.2.1 General*

3.2.1.1 In passenger ships, “A”, “B” or “C” class divisions in accommodation and services spaces and cabin balconies which are faced with combustible materials, facings, mouldings, decorations and veneers shall comply with the provisions of paragraphs 3.2.2 to 3.2.4 and regulation 6.

3.2.2 Maximum calorific value of combustible materials

Combustible materials used on the surfaces and linings specified in paragraph 3.2.1 shall have a calorific value not exceeding 45 MJ/m² of the area for the thickness used. The requirements of this paragraph are not applicable to the surfaces of furniture fixed to linings or bulkheads.”

The wording of SOLAS II-2/5.3.2.2 refers to class divisions in accommodation spaces, service spaces and cabin balconies faced with combustible materials and veneers. Originally, industry had requested an increase to the 1.5mm allowable thickness of veneers used in corridors (for increased durability). By limiting the calorific content to 45MJ/m² on exposed surfaces in these areas, the safety risk was mitigated. As the initial intent was to allow for veneer thickness to be increased, it is our interpretation that SOLAS did not intend to extend the limitations on calorific value to exposed deck surfaces.

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Guidance

This guidance applies to exposed surfaces in accommodation spaces, service spaces and on cabin balconies on passenger vessels subject to SOLAS Chapter II-2. Based upon language in prior versions of paragraph 3.2.2, the requirement for a maximum calorific value of 45 MJ/m² is intended to be applied to veneers, mouldings, decorations and facings and does not apply to carpeting or other deck coverings.

Disclaimer

This guidance is not a substitute for applicable legal requirements, nor is it itself a rule. It is not intended to nor does it impose legally-binding requirements on any party. It represents the Coast Guard's current thinking on this topic and may assist industry, mariners, the general public, and the Coast Guard, as well as other federal and state regulators, in applying statutory and regulatory requirements. You can use an alternative approach for complying with these requirements if the approach satisfies the requirements of the applicable statutes and regulations. If you want to discuss an alternative, you may contact The Marine Safety Center, who is responsible for implementing this guidance.
