

U.S. COAST GUARD MARINE SAFETY CENTER PLAN REVIEW GUIDELINE



REVIEW OF USE OF COMBUSTIBLE MATERIALS

Procedure Number: SOLAS-47

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Purpose

This Plan Review Guideline (PRG) describes 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.

Contact Information

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

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1. Applicability

This PRG is applicable to SOLAS passenger ships carrying more than 36 passengers.

2. References

SOLAS II-2/5.3.2 (previously II-2/34)
SOLAS II-2/6

3. Reference Text

SOLAS II-2/5.3.2.1: *General*

3.2.1.1 In passenger ships, “A”, “B” or “C” class divisions in accommodation and service spaces and cabin balconies which are faced with combustibile 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 combustibile materials*

Combustibile 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.

4. Background

The wording of SOLAS II-2/5.3.2.2 refers to class divisions in accommodation spaces, service spaces, and cabin balconies faced with combustibile 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 45 MJ/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.

5. Guidance

Based upon language in prior versions of SOLAS II-2/5.3.2.2, 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.

6. 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 MSC, the unit responsible for implementing this guidance.