

ENHANCING FIRE PROTECTION

Container fires continue to be a critical hazard for all containership operators.

As vessels and stack heights continue to grow, the task of container deck firefighting is becoming even more challenging. ABS is at the forefront of this issue, publishing its Guide for Fire-Fighting Systems for On-Deck Cargo Areas of Container Carriers (FOC Guide). By applying this enhanced standard, containership owners and operators can take advantage of a clearly defined system of firefighting resources dedicated to cargo deck protection. This optional, enhanced criteria builds on the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) regulations leading to better preparation for potential

incidents that threaten the safety of the ship, crew and cargo.

To demonstrate capabilities in excess of IMO requirements and to help owners navigate risks based on the unique characteristics of container fires, ABS has developed four optional notations:

- FOC (Fire-fighting On-deck Container)
- FOC-R (Fire-fighting On-deck Container - Restricted)
- FOC+ (Fire-fighting On-deck Container Plus)
- FOC-R+ (Fire-fighting On-deck Container - Restricted Plus)

The FOC notation provides a comprehensive approach to assessing the firefighting system pressure and capacity, and recognizes enhanced container deck firefighting capability beyond what is required by the IMO. The FOC Guide supports enhanced fire-main piping arrangements and increased water supply by outlining requirements for additional equipment and arrangements that improve the vessel's firefighting capability.

The FOC-R notation has similar requirements to the FOC notation, but with modified water capacity criteria making its application practical for container carriers constructed either



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before January 1, 2016 (designed to carry any number of container tiers on deck) or built after January 1, 2016 (designed to carry four or less tiers of containers on-deck) and that provide on-deck firefighting arrangements that exceed the SOLAS requirements applicable to those vessels.

The FOC+ and FOC-R+ notations invoke additional requirements addressing the protection of the hatch covers.

By applying the FOC Guide, owners and operators can demonstrate a commitment to safety and fire protection that supports more secure operations.



Sakarín Sawasdinaka © 123rf.com

POINT OF CONTACT

Matthew Tremblay
Vice President | Containerships
P 1-281-877-6777 | mtremblay@eagle.org

WORLD HEADQUARTERS

16855 Northchase Drive | Houston, TX 77060 USA
P 1-281-877-6000 | F 1-281-877-5976
ABS-WorldHQ@eagle.org | www.eagle.org