



COLONIAL COMPLIANCE SYSTEMS, INC.
MARITIME REGULATORY CONSULTANTS

January 21, 2019

CSI Notice to Clients 01-2019

Subj: Firefighter Radios

The requirement to have at least two explosion-proof and intrinsically safe portable radiotelephone apparatus for each fire party for fire-fighter's communication is in effect for most vessels (SOLAS Chapter II-2, Regulation 10.10.4). For ships built before July 1, 2014, requirement date was due by the first Safety Radio Survey after July 1, 2018. For new ships built after July 2, 2014, this rule was effective upon becoming operational.

During a recent inspection, we found a vessel that did not have firefighter radios. On another vessel, crewmembers were not familiar with the use of the radios. For example, a fire team member removed his glove and SCBA mask during a fire drill to use the radio while in the mock fire area. Doing this in a Port State Control (PSC) examination would likely result in a failed drill and could possibly lead to an IMO Detention. Doing this during an actual fire would obviously have more dire results.

Since the compliance date for all vessels to have these radios onboard is in full effect, we expect PSCOs will begin to focus on the equipment and how the crew intend on using the radios during the drill. There are different types of radios and microphones available for firefighters that meet the specifications; therefore, the fire parties onboard should actively conduct training to ensure the radios are effective during a drill.

Should you have any questions regarding the firefighter radios or the IMO Resolution MSC.338(91), please do not hesitate to contact Colonial Compliance Systems, Inc. at csi@compliancesystemsinc.com or +1 (912) 233-8181.