

USE OF DIESEL ENGINE STARTING AIDS CONTAINING FLAMMABLE MIXTURES

**Notice to shipowners, Fishing Vessel Owners, Engine Builders, Masters, Skippers and
Engineer Officers**

A serious accident occurred recently on a small diesel-engined vessel, not of United Kingdom registry, as a result of which one man died and three others suffered severe burns. When the engine, arranged for compressed air starting, was being started an explosion occurred in one of the cylinders. The explosion smashed the cylinder and caused a severe fire in the engine room. The fire was fed by diesel oil from the broken fuel main and intensified by escaping compressed air.

The primary cause of the explosion was determined by the investigating authority to have been the introduction into the air intake manifold, by aerosol spray, of an excessive quantity of a fluid sometimes used for assisting the starting of diesel engines.

All persons concerned with the operation of diesel engines are advised to bear in mind the dangers that arise from the use of volatile, low flash point starting fluids in engines, particularly those which are started by admission of compressed air to the cylinders.

Regardless of the engine starting arrangements, such fluids should always be used in accordance with makers' instructions but never at the same time as cylinder or manifold heater plugs are being used, or when the engine is hot.

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