ABS REGULATORY NEWS
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LETTER TO INDUSTRY: DEWATERING VALVES FOUND IN CLOSED POSITION

This notice summarizes recent observations on bulk carriers where non-compliance with the requirements of SOLAS Chapter XII, Regulation 13.1 was identified in the forecastle space dewatering system manually operated suction valves.

REQUIREMENT

On bulk carriers and in accordance with SOLAS Regulation XII/13.1, MSC/Circ.1069 and IACS UI SC179, the arrangements for draining and pumping ballast tanks located forward of the collision bulkhead and the bilges of any dry space extending forward of the foremost cargo hold, shall be capable of being brought into operation from a readily accessible enclosed space. This enclosed space shall be accessible from the navigation bridge or the propulsion machinery control position without the need to walk across open-deck areas (i.e. exposed free board or superstructure decks).

KEY NOTES

- Forecastle space dewatering systems manual suction valve should be kept in open position at all times.
- Closing this valve or placing warning notices that contradict SOLAS may result in non-compliance findings.

References:

- SOLAS XII/13.1
- MSC/Circ.1069
- IACS UI SC179 Rev3

FINDINGS FROM INSPECTIONS

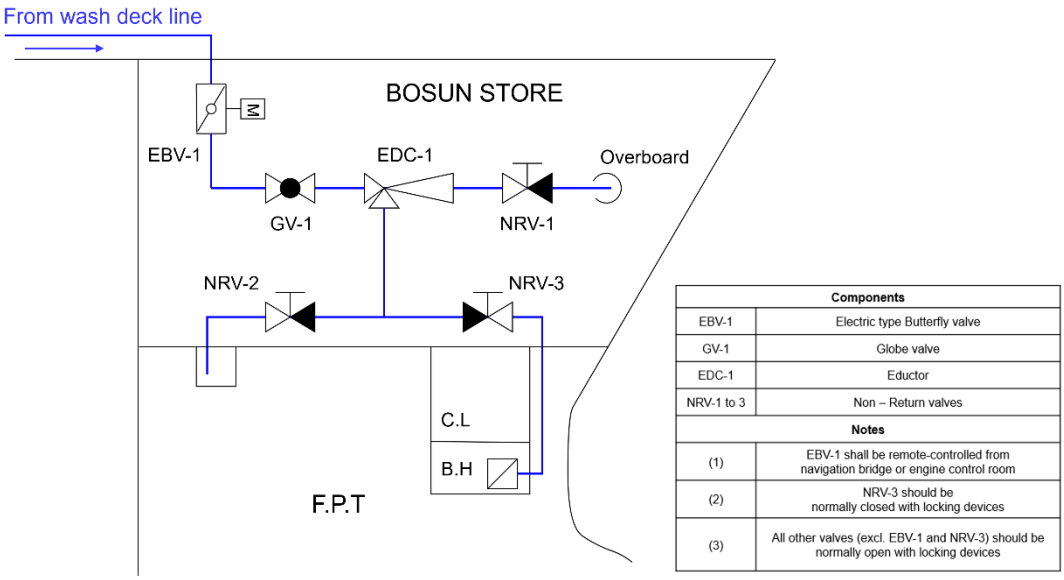
During recent inspections on two different bulk carriers from different Owners/Managers, the following cases in forecastle dewatering system manually operated suction valves were observed:

- 1st Case: The suction valve was found in the closed position with a warning sign instructing the crew to keep it closed while in port to avoid accidental discharges.
- 2nd Case: A label above the dewatering valve stated: “DO NOT OPEN WITHOUT CHIEF OFFICER’S PERMISSION”.

ABS comment: Both cases violate the intent of SOLAS XII/13.1 as they restrict immediate operation of the dewatering system when needed. The valves must remain open at all times.

TYPICAL ARRANGEMENT EXPLANATION

As shown in the typical dewatering arrangement (Figure 1), the forecastle space dewatering system is operated through a remotely controlled valve (e.g. EBV-1) and an eductor (e.g. EDC-1) using deck wash/fire pump. Hence, accidental overboard discharge in port is prevented unless the remotely controlled eductor drive valve is intentionally opened while the deck wash/fire pump is running.



Components	
EBV-1	Electric type Butterfly valve
GV-1	Globe valve
EDC-1	Eductor
NRV-1 to 3	Non – Return valves
Notes	
(1)	EBV-1 shall be remote-controlled from navigation bridge or engine control room
(2)	NRV-3 should be normally closed with locking devices
(3)	All other valves (excl. EBV-1 and NRV-3) should be normally open with locking devices

Figure 1: Typical Arrangement for Dewatering System

EXAMPLES OF GOOD AND BAD PRACTICES

Below are typical examples of manual suction valve signage in forecastle dewatering systems:



A warning notice indicating that the manually operated suction valve must always remain open
CORRECT PRACTICE



Instruction provided above the dewatering valve “DO NOT OPEN W/O CH/OFF PERMISSION”
INCORRECT PRACTICE

ABS RECOMMENDATION

The manually operated suction valve of the forecastle space dewatering system must remain in the open position at all times. A clearly visible and appropriately worded warning notice should be posted in the vicinity of the valve.

REFERENCES

Document	Title
SOLAS XII-13.1	Availability of Pumping Systems
MSC/Circ.1069	Interpretation of SOLAS Regulation XII-13
IACS UI SC 179 Rev.3	Dewatering of forward spaces of bulk carriers (Resolution MSC.188(79))

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