

GIBRALTAR MARITIME ADMINISTRATION
(Ministry of Maritime Affairs)



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Shipping Guidance Notice – 020

To: Ship Owners, Operators, Masters, Officers and Classification Societies

Carriage of Medical Oxygen Cylinders.

1. Gibraltar registered vessels carrying dangerous goods should comply with the requirements of Medical First Aid Guide (MFAG) and all other applicable statutory requirements (e.g. IMDG Code, IBC Code, IGC Code).
2. In order for a vessel to comply with the relevant requirements of Column A or B of appendix 14 of MFAG, the following quantities of Oxygen should be available in the ship's hospital for resuscitation purposes:
 - a. 40-litre (at 200 bar) medical oxygen cylinder assembled for direct use, equipped with one flow meter unit with two ports for supplying oxygen for two persons at the same time.
 - b. If more than one non-portable oxygen cylinder is used there must be two flow meter units for supplying oxygen for two persons at the same time.
 - c. One complete portable set with 2-litre (at 200 bar) of oxygen ready for use and a spare cylinder of 2-litre (200 bar).
3. All other vessels that do not have to comply with the MFAG are only required to carry a 2-litre (200 bar) portable oxygen set, and a spare cylinder of 2 litre (200 bar).

Guidance on the Storage of 40-litre Oxygen Cylinders:

4. The 40-litre oxygen cylinder can be stored in either of the following locations;
 - a. Outside the accommodation block, as close to the hospital as is reasonably practicable, in a secure and weather protected cabinet.
 - b. Inside the accommodation block in the hospital beside the bed(s), provided the cylinder is securely locked in a frame connected directly to the steel structure of the ship.

5. The Gibraltar Maritime Administration recommends that the 40-litre oxygen cylinder should be fitted with the following safety device to prevent accidental release of high-pressure oxygen into the hospital:
 - a. The oxygen regulator in the pipe work from the 40-litre cylinder should have a relief valve fitted with a discharge line piped outside the hospital to free air. This ensures that if there is a fault in the system, high-pressure oxygen cannot escape into the low-pressure side of the system, and will be vented outside of the accommodation.
 - b. Be inspected annually onboard by a competent person in compliance with the manufacturer's instructions.

Note: a competent person may be a senior member of the ships staff.
6. Medical oxygen has a limited shelf life of three (3) years and should be sent ashore for re-charging at the expiry date.
7. The cylinders are to be hydrostatically tested every five (5) years, or at an interval specified by the manufacturer, whichever occurs sooner.
8. Oxygen pressure regulators should be serviced at least every five (5) years.
9. Grease or oil should not be used to lubricate high-pressure oxygen fittings.
10. All high-pressure pipes from the cylinder to the regulator should be subject to a pressure test every three (3) years by the manufacturer or approved service agents.
11. The hospital ventilation system should be maintained as per the manufacturers instructions and operating correctly at all times.
12. A warning sign to be posted on the hospital door stating 'high concentrations of oxygen may be present' and IMO symbol signs for compressed & inflammable gas.
13. There should be a sign in the hospital adjacent to the oxygen installation stating 'all system valves to be shut when not in use'.

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Maritime Administrator

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