

## MSF: Safety pins left in fire suppression system – high potential near miss

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The Marine Safety Forum has published Safety Alert 24/07 relating to an incident where a Flag State inspection found that all of the CO2 bottles for the engine room fire suppression system still had their safety pins in place.

### What happened?

The incident occurred following a major refit / dry docking. The vessel departed port and sailed to its area of operation to complete the works and prepare for being commercially available. On arrival, the Flag State carried out an inspection of the vessel and found that all of the CO2 bottles for the engine room fire suppression system still had their safety pins in place. This means that if there had been an engine room fire, the crew would have been unable to set off the suppression system remotely and any deployment of the system would have been seriously hampered and hindered.



### What went wrong?

The safety pins had been put in at the start of the dry dock, as was usual. At the end of the dry dock when the vessel was floated, the fire suppression system was tested by a third party. The safety pins were still in place and the third party left them in situ during testing. After the tests, the third party testing company stated

that the system had been put back into service. However, the pins were not removed and were subsequently missed on any pre-sailing or coming out of dry dock checks.

On investigation it was found that the testing work on the system had been carried out without a Permit to Work in place. Had a Permit to Work been in place, the failure to remove the pins would have been picked up during the inspection to recommission the system and close the Permit.

## Actions

- Appropriate personnel should be fully familiar with the procedures for operating vessel CO<sub>2</sub> fire suppression systems.
- Work on safety critical equipment, including that done by a third party, should be covered under a Permit to Work and should be verified by a deck officer.
- Carry out a check to ensure that safety pins are removed from CO<sub>2</sub> fire suppression systems and indeed any other safety critical equipment after dry docking – ensure such equipment is ready for immediate use.

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