

Plastic cover on smoke detector

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What happened?

During an inspection of vessel accommodation by shore management, it was observed that a plastic cover was obstructing a smoke detector.

During construction work in the area, the cover had been used to prevent activation of the detector, but was not removed when the work was finished.

IOGP Life Saving Rules:



Bypassing safety controls



What were the causes?

- Lack of risk perception – smoke detectors are designed to warn individuals that something is on fire. A plastic cover will prevent it from working.
- Stop Work Policy was not applied – crew must have seen it but did nothing about it! No-one challenged this unsafe practice.
- Inspections were not conducted – this illustrates the importance of periodic inspection of fire protection systems to ensure that they are maintained in serviceable condition.

What actions were taken?

- Our member arranged a “Time Out for Safety” with all vessels’ crew to emphasise the hazards associated with blocking and covering of smoke detectors.
- Further fire inspection was conducted on-board the vessel to check the condition of the other smoke detectors.

Member may wish to refer to:

- Be alarmed by all alarms – USCG safety alert regarding the possible consequences of failing to take proper actions when faced with alarm signals from equipment.

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