



Maritime and Coastguard Agency

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## Fishing Vessels: Risk of Fire and Explosion from Gas Welding and Burning

**Notice to all Employers, Owners, Skippers and Crew of Fishing Vessels.**

*This notice should be read in conjunction with MGN 20(M+F) and MSN 1731 (M+F) and supersedes MGN186 (F)*

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### Summary

This Notice:

- provides advice and a reminder on the safe use and handling of gas welding and burning equipment.
- applies both to trained and untrained users.
- may in part be used to meet requirements for information and training as required by articles 8, 9 and 10 of European Council Directive 93/103/EC.

### 1 Introduction

1.1 The risks of fire, explosion and injury generally associated with the use of gas welding or cutting equipment. In order to minimise these risks it is essential to identify and follow correct operating practice and procedures. The attached guidance is to help in identifying the main points of correct practice.

### 2 The Guidance

2.1 The attached Annex should be used as a guide for trained users; and also untrained users and other persons in the vicinity of gas welding or cutting who may be unaware of the dangers from the use, handling and storage of such equipment. Whilst the annex deals primarily with oxygen and acetylene, other gases (such as oxygen/propane) are also used and require similar precautions.

### 3 Training

3.1 It is recommended that operators of gas welding and burning equipment undergo specialist training.

## Further Information

Further information on the contents of this Notice can be obtained from:

Fishing Vessel Safety Branch  
Bay 2/05  
Maritime and Coastguard Agency  
Spring Place  
105 Commercial Road  
Southampton  
SO15 1EG

Tel : +44 (0) 23 8032 9163  
Fax : +44 (0) 23 8032 9447  
e-mail: [robb.bailey@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:robb.bailey@mcga.gov.uk)

General Inquiries: 24 Hour Infoline  
[infoline@mcga.gov.uk](mailto:infoline@mcga.gov.uk)  
0870 600 6505

MCA Website Address: [www.mcga.gov.uk](http://www.mcga.gov.uk)

File Ref: MS 88/1/59

Published: January 2006

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An executive agency of the  
Department for  
**Transport**

## ANNEX

### GUIDANCE FOR HOT WORK AND OXY-ACETYLENE GAS WELDING

#### BEFORE beginning work:

Be careful when transporting acetylene cylinders; whether full or empty, DON'T DROP THEM!

Equip yourself, and any others affected, with appropriate protective gear (Personal Protective Equipment).

Fire prevention; check the area and adjacent compartments and remove any combustible materials, liquids or gases before starting work; ensure suitable extinguishers are to hand.

Other people should be made aware and be prepared to assist.

Remember to check the equipment is in good working order and rigged properly with the correct safety items (with flame arrestors fitted at the supply lines and non-return valves at the torch).

Ensure your working area is well ventilated, especially in a confined space.

#### DURING work

Don't operate the acetylene with pressure over 1 atmosphere gauge (1bar).....

Unlike the oxygen pressure, which should be high enough to prevent acetylene flowing into the oxygen line.

Remove any hot acetylene cylinders to the open deck, jettison them; or keep them cool with water and fully open the stop-valve.

In the event of a "backfire" the valves should be closed; if the acetylene cylinder becomes hot follow the above.

Note the arrangement of the hoses; avoid any kinks and tangles and don't create a tripping hazard.

Guard against fire; ensure that surrounding areas are checked and be aware of those areas you cannot see.

#### AFTER work

Always close cylinder stop-valves and ensure any gases within the hoses have been released.

Fire is still a threat; frequently check for delayed fires up to 2 hours after the work is completed.

**Transportation of cylinders must be done with great care;**

**remember, DON'T DROP THEM!**

Ensure that cylinders are stored securely and correctly.

Remove cylinders from the vessel whenever possible.