

# MSC Guidelines for Review of Technical spaces behind linings

**Plan Review Guidance #: SOLAS-30**

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**Effective Date**

11/15/02

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**Regulations**

- SOLAS 2001 Cite: II-2/9.2.2.3.2.2
  - SOLAS 1974 Cite: II-2/26.2
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**Contact Information**

If you have any questions or comments concerning this document, please contact the Marine Safety Center by e-mail or phone. Please refer to the Plan Review Guidance #: SOLAS-30.

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**Regulation Text**

"..Smaller, enclosed rooms within a space that have less than 30% communicating openings to that space are considered separate spaces. The fire integrity of the boundary bulkheads and decks of such smaller rooms shall be prescribed in tables 9.1 and 9.2.."

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**Guidance**

Access panels/doors should only provide access to the equipment being maintained and should have restricted accessibility through the use of door locks. With the panel/door open, any reachable horizontal surface (such as the deck) that could be used for storage should be blocked with a permanent barrier. Otherwise, the area should be protected with sprinklers and detectors. Doors extending the full height of the lining should not be used. Instead, panels that require mechanical disassembly should be used. In general, if the opening is such that a person can walk into the area behind the lining, this area should be treated as a separate space.

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**Background**

On most passenger ships, uncategorized and somewhat concealed spaces are created between bulkheads and associated bulkhead linings. Generally, access to these areas is necessary for maintenance and operation of valves, distribution boxes, etc. While this arrangement is acceptable, concerns arise when the area behind the lining is large enough to permit storage. Sometimes, it is not simply the size of the area but the size of the opening providing access that is of concern.

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