



Emergency Fire Pump

One of the key points during Port State control or Flag State inspections is checking the technical condition of critical equipment on board of vessel.

Quite often inspectors comment on the condition of the emergency fire pump. According to them, the pump runs and runs, but does not create pressure for a long time.

The reason for this situation is the airing of the suction line of the emergency fire pump. Despite the fact that many emergency fire pumps are equipped with attachments for air removal; the pump is unable to create fluid pressure in the system for a long time.

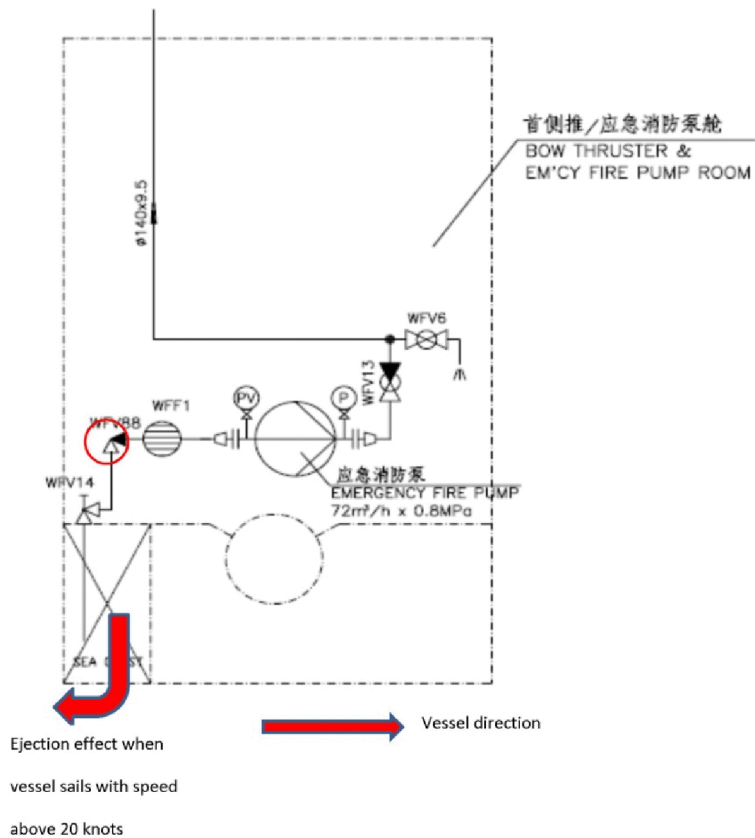
Detailed investigation of this problem on one of the container ships revealed that the non-return flap on the suction side did not close properly due to seat surface damages. This led to the fact that while the vessel was moving at speeds of over 20 knots, it created an effect of water ejection from the suction pipe.

Moreover, when unloading has been finished at the port, the ship had a large trim by the stern. Thus the centrifugal pump could not create pressure in the fire system.

After replacing the defective non-return flap, the system's condition has been restored.

Moreover, the following reasons for dry running could be considered too:

- Worn parts of emergency fire pump (impeller, wearing rings, etc.)
- Defective vacuum unit
- Wrong installation of fire pump



Summary:

To avoid operational problems the following actions must be undertaken:

- Regular inspection and testing of the emergency fire pump (weekly);
- Check strainer on the suction line (if applicable);
- Depending on the type of air ejector, check unit for any worn parts in due time
- Check and overhaul overboard armature during planned dry-docking

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