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INTERPRETATION: IIAR SC 2021-2, IIAR 2 Machinery Room Door Louvers

FINALIZED: May 13, 2021

SUBJECT: Machinery Room Door Louvers

BACKGROUND: IIAR 2-2014, Addendum A, Section 6.10.2 and IIAR 9-2020, Section 7.3.9.2 require that machinery room doors shall be tight fitting. IIAR 1-2017 defines tight-fitting door as "a tightly constructed door with seals to minimize gap clearances between the entre door perimeter and its fixed frame that is intended to control the transfer of liquid, moisture, air, and vapor."

QUESTION 1: Are these requirements intended to prohibit the installation of a louver in the door itself? There seems to be no discernable difference between having a louver in door and having a louver in a wall right next to the door.

ANSWER 1: If all the following conditions are met, the installation of makeup air louvers on doors is permitted:

- The doors must open only to the outdoors;
- The ventilation makeup air system does not require dampers;
- The louvers must be permanently installed and must maintain the necessary security to prevent unauthorized persons from entering the machinery room;
- The facility does not practice nor intend to practice operational containment (see IIAR 2-2014, Addendum A, Appendix M);
- The louvers would not interfere with the ability of the door to mitigate a liquid spill;
- Exterior doors shall maintain the fire rating required by the Building Code based on the fire rating required for exterior wall openings;
- All other requirements for inlet air are met;
- Maintenance is performed as necessary to maintain the airflow requirements of the room.

COMMITTEE

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ACTION: Revise IIAR 2 and IIAR 9 to permit the use of louvers in doors that open to the outdoors during their next scheduled revisions to reflect the position of this interpretation.