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Issue related to Voyage Data Recorder (VDR)

Master and operators should be aware of the requirements for annual testing of VDR equipment prescribed under SOLAS Chapter 5 Regulation 18. This could avoid the problem of certain required sensors not feeding data to the VDR unit at the material time.

SOLAS Chapter 5 Regulation 18:

“The voyage data recorder (VDR) system, including all sensors, shall be subjected to an annual performance test. The test shall be conducted by an approved testing or servicing facility to verify the accuracy, duration and recoverability of the recorded data. In addition, tests and inspections shall be conducted to determine the serviceability of all protective enclosures and devices fitted to aid location. A copy of the certificate of compliance issued by the testing facility, stating the date of compliance and the applicable performance standards, shall be retained on board the ship.”

Recommendation:

1. Ship officers who are responsible for VDR equipment to make sure they are fully familiar with the error codes/ indication prescribed in the appropriate VDR operator’s manual
2. Routine assessment of the indicators and/ or test sequence

Source of Information: Andrew Liu & Co., Ltd www.andrewliu.com.hk
London P&I Club