



TECHNICAL CIRCULAR No. 371 of 06th October 2016

To:	All Surveyors/Auditors
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Ultrasonic Antifouling	
Reference:	AFC

Ultrasonic Antifouling

Ultrasonic technology is well accepted as part of modern class certification and ship management, with applications from non-destructive testing to thickness gauging to fire extinguisher inspections.

After many years of experience with ultrasonic inspection methods, some companies also developed an interest in the use of high frequency sound for purposes of antifouling – traditionally a problem addressed with biocidal coatings, or through mechanical or chemical cleaning.

Ultrasonic antifouling (UTAF) systems prevent barnacles and other marine life from growing on submerged surfaces by removing biofilm and killing larvae, algae and unicellular organisms, with no chemical residues. Ultrasonic antifouling has been employed in shore side applications for years, from preventing clogging in pipelines and industrial coolers to keeping down lime scale buildup in process piping. In marine use, a permanently installed ultrasonic device can greatly reduce the growth of fouling.

The system is most commonly used to prevent the fouling of boxcoolers, sea chests and sea filters – systems that are especially vulnerable to the growth of biofilms and marine organisms – but it can be used on the entirety of a vessel's hull.

When UTAF is used in hull or sea chest applications, soft antifouling coatings are no longer required in the installation area, allowing the ship manager to substitute a hard wearing, long lasting paint. Unlike cathodic systems, UTAF requires no exchange of spares, and it can be installed without dry-docking.

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REFERENCES:

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