

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
MILITARY SEA TRANSPORTATION SERVICE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20390

COMSTS 4750.1B
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5 Mar 1965

COMSTS INSTRUCTION 4750.1B

From: Commander, Military Sea Transportation Service
To: Distribution List

Subj: Painting instructions for MSTs controlled civil-service-manned (USNS) and commissioned (USS) ships

Ref: (a) Bureau of Ships Technical Manual (NAVSHIPS 250-000)
Chapter 9190

Encl: (1) Interior Painting Instructions, MSTs Civil-Service-Manned Ships (USNS)
(2) Exterior Painting Instructions, MSTs Civil-Service-Manned Ships (USNS)
(3) Bottom Painting Instructions for MSTs Civil-Service-Manned Ships (USNS) and MSTs Commissioned Ships (USS)
(4) Distinctive Markings Applicable to MSTs Civil-Serviced-Manned Ships (USNS) and MSTs Commissioned Ships (USS)
(5) Plan showing type of markings for MSTs Civil-Service-Manned Ships (USNS)
(6) Instructions for Lifeboat Painting
(7) MSTs Paint Color Code

1. Purpose. This Instruction provides paint schedules and establishes criteria for painting civil-service-manned (USNS) and commissioned (USS) ships assigned to COMSTS.

2. Cancellation. This Instruction cancels COMSTS Instruction 4750.1A * and COMSTS letters serials 1382M4R1 of 28 November 1962, 892M4R1 of 16 July 1963, 76M35 of 7 December 1964, and 1515M4R1 of 8 January 1965.

3. Explanation. The paint schedules (except for ships' bottoms) covered by the enclosures generally follow the latest Navy practice of providing an adequate range of colors to increase habitability through painting for pleasing interior effects. For instance, subparagraph 1.a. and Appendix A of enclosure (1) have been prepared on the basis of the use of standard commercial oil-base or chlorinated alkyd-base paints. For ships complying with the fire zoning and other fire prevention requirements of the U. S. Coast Guard, their use is acceptable in order to gain a wider range of colors and the more durable qualities of these paints. On ships not certificated by the U. S. Coast Guard, standard Navy fire retardant paints of the same color insofar as possible are required.

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4. Action.

a. Preparation of surfaces for painting, paint mixing and application of paint shall follow procedures as outlined in reference (a).

b. Painting of civil-service-manned ships' surfaces shall be accomplished in accordance with color schemes and special instructions as outlined in enclosures (1) through (7) of this instruction. Painting of commissioned ships' surfaces shall be accomplished in accordance with "General Specifications for Ships of the United States Navy," except underwater body below the waterline shall be painted in accordance with enclosure (3), the **stacks** shall be painted in accordance with enclosure (4), and lifeboats shall be painted in accordance with enclosure (6).

c. Basically, good painting is a matter of adequate surface preparation and proper application of good quality paints, properly and thoroughly mixed. The resultant coating is subjected to two deteriorating effects: (1) underpaint deterioration on the base to which the paint is applied; and (2) deterioration of the coating from external sources. Proper surface preparation largely reduces the possibility of the first effect, and the second effect may be guarded against by recoating the surface before the base coat has lost all its protective and adhesive qualities. Pending recoating the surface, good adhering paint may have its superficial appearance renewed by proper washing. To the extent possible, washing should always be resorted to for cleaning rather than repainting the surface. Care should be taken when washing that the detergent solution used is no stronger than that required to remove the soil. The remaining traces of the detergent should be washed off the cleaned surfaces so that the destructive action of such solutions may be terminated as quickly as possible.

* d. Touch up and repainting of exterior surfaces on ships having inorganic zinc coatings shall be as follows:

(1) Touch up inorganic zinc coating as necessary, using same material as original. Surface preparation shall be by sanding disc or blasting with sand or grit.

(2) Use vinyl alkyd paints with semi-gloss finish for ships overcoated with vinyl paint. Reference (a) lists vinyl alkyd paints available from the Navy Supply System. Vinyl alkyd paints required but not obtainable from the supply system shall be procured locally.

(3) Use Navy Formula 5H for ships overcoated with Formula 5H. Formula 5H paint shall not be overcoated with vinyl alkyd paint as the 5H paint tends to lift when so treated.

(4) Navy Formula 5H may be applied over vinyl paints or epoxy esters if inorganic zinc coatings and primers are undamaged.

5. Limitation.

a. It is not possible to develop a set of rules and regulations or readily useable standards to govern the time for repainting or washing painted surfaces. Professional judgment and experience are the only sound basis for such decisions. In every case, the surfaces to be repainted, washed, or otherwise treated must be inspected by the personnel making such decisions. Subordinate commanders, in authorizing repainting, must consider all pertinent factors and reach a satisfactory compromise between the desire to have "bandbox" ships at all times and the cost of such upkeep, particularly under the aggravating conditions of sea and salt air. Overpainting at high cost with constant build-ups of paint thickness should be avoided. Similarly underpainting with attendant deterioration of ships' structures should not be permitted.

b. As a rough rule of thumb, COMSTS feels that not over 10 per cent of a ship's maintenance and repair budget should be expended for contract painting. This figure does not include cost of paint or labor for ship's force painting. Variations in trade routes influence the amount of work which can be accomplished by ship's force. Thus, the 10 per cent figure is only a general guide mostly applicable to ships in which a fair share of the topside painting is accomplished by ship's force.

c. It is not intended that mass interior or exterior repainting will be undertaken as a result of these instructions, but rather that such repainting will be accomplished only when required as a result of deterioration of the presently applied paint.

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