Color Coding on ships

Picking up the thread from the CARTOON at http://marine.ppeg.co.in/color-coding

Let me start off with memories of my junior Engineer days on an old ship. As usual I started off with Pipe Line Tracing. Often I would start off systematically from the Sea Suction filter and follow it meticulously ..only to find it entering the LO Pump. And then I would realise that I have to start all over again.

Sure this may be very irrelevant nowadays, since most of the Engine Rooms are well maintained and follow certain standards.

One among the standards followed is COLOUR CODING OF PIPELINES. Along with it comes the colour coding of certain machineries and pumps. This makes it convenient to an engineer to quickly indentify that a particular pipe/ machinery belongs to a particular system.

Below is reproduced some of the most popular colour codes used traditionally on board ships.

- Lubricating Oil
- Fuel Oil
- Diesel Oil
- Steam
- Compressed Air
- Sea Water
- Fresh Water
- Fire Main line

Lub Oil pipelines, will be painted YELLOW or will have BANDS of yellow painted at regular intervals.

Similarly, SEA WATER pipelines would be DARK GREEN.

The principle is often extended to the Pumps. Example – A Main engine LO Pump and MOTOR would be painted YELLOW.

Colour coding is often extended to

FIRE PUMPS -- Signal RED
Main Engine COOL FW Pumps

Steam Lines are Colored SILVER over the LAGGINGS. Other devices colored with SILVER -- The BOILER and other HOT surfaces like MAIN ENGINE and AUXILLARY ENGINE EXHAUST LINES AND MANIFOLD
HOT WELL TANK
STEAM HEATERS and FILTERS
ALSO HOT OIL LINES OVER THE LAGGINGS
EXHAUST GAS OUTLETS on the FUNNEL
This type of **SILVER PAINT** is often called **HIGH TEMPERATURE** Paint and the product name usually contains the word **THERM**. This Paint is Often MISUSED by the CHIEF OFFICER to paint the GANGWAY to make it SHINING and Pretty. Though the effect cannot be debated and Gangway does look Good it should be borne in mind that this paint is EXPENSIVE.

However International Pipe Color coding standards (including Industry) seem to differ from the traditional colors seen on board SHIPS. There is still a bit of confusion prevailing in the industry regarding the **STANDARDS** to be followed by virtue of directives from IMO, CLASS etc.

*(Professional who have access to the latest information and Marine Rules are requested to throw light on the subject and also about the non adherence to International Color Coding on board SHIPS).*

Similarly **TAGS** on various valves indicate the purpose of the valves and the function thereby reducing chances of mistakes and incidents on board ships.

*Many of the shipboard inspectors are very particular about the colour coding and identification of Valves, AIR VENTS and Sounding PIPES.*

**Shipboard Engineers** should meticulously get familiarised with the color coding IN USE in THAT PARTICULAR ship and **REFRAIN** from changing the colour ALWAYS REMEMBERING that the COLOR of the PAINT is not purely for AESTHETIC and FEEL GOOD PURPOSE.

Similarly many **Parts of the SHIP** like FLOOR PLATES, ACOMMODATION ALLEYWAYS, MAIN DECK and SHIP SIDES usually **Follow the COMPANY'S Color coding systems** which may be available in the OPERATIONS MANUAL.

**It would suffice to understand that one DOES NOT HAVE A MANDATE to CHANGE Colors of pipelines, Parts, Machineries etc according to HIS/HER LIKES and DISLIKES.**