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October 16, 2000

**ELEVATOR SAFETY PROGRAM CODE INTERPRETATION**  
OR-2000-003

Subject: Pit Refuge Area  
Rule No: ASME A17.1b 1998, Rule 300.8a  
ASME Interp: 93-10  
Effective: October 16, 2000  
Question: Are traveling cables allowed to encroach into the pit refuge area?

*Inquiry: 93-10*

*Subject: Rules 107.1 and 300.8a*

*Bottom Car Clearance*

*Edition: A17.1-1990 including A17.1a-1991 and A17.1b-1992*

*Question:*

*Rules 107.1 and 300.8a require a refuge space with an area 24 in. by 48 in. with a height of 24 in., or 18 in. by 36 in. with a height of 42 in. Do these Rules permit an encroachment such as steel supports, the ends of beams or hydraulic elevator piping in the specified refuge area as stated in Inquiry 77-39?*

*If the answer is yes, would the clearance height (24 in. or 42 in.) be measured from the top of the pit floor or the encroaching member?*

*Answer:*

*The intent of the requirement is that there is no encroachment on the floor area of refuge space. However, in situations where it is necessary for the pipe or beam to encroach on this area the volume must be measured from the top of this pipe or beam.*

*A17 Committee Approval: September 22, 1993*

The code intends that an area of refuge, approximately 16-ft<sup>3</sup>, is provided below the car (two configurations are given). ASME's response stipulates "no encroachment" is allowed in this space by pit equipment and would seem to imply any equipment attached to the car (e.g. traveling cables). Pit layout must be carefully planned to allow for proper refuge. Some variation on the dimensions noted in the rule may be allowable based on site-specific conditions. Allowance of such variations will be solely under the site inspector's discretion.

*James R. Runyan*

James R. Runyan  
Chief Elevator Inspector