

UK P&I CLUB



LP Bulletin

Friday 17th May 2013

Bulletin 888 - 05/13 - Argentine Customs Practices - Argentina

Following a recent case where a provisional fine of over 400,000 USD was imposed, the Club would like to remind members about the need to comply with local Customs regulations in Argentina.

This bulletin is a refresher of previous Bulletins (178, 358 and 784) and has been highlighted by our Local Correspondents in Argentina.

Attention should be paid to local Customs regulations when completing the “store list” at the time of clearing the vessel, and it is important to include bunkers, lubricants, paints, chemicals, spare ropes and the vessel’s grabs (if any) in addition to routine items.

The mis-declaration or non-declaration, especially of bunkers, lubricants and other elements such as spare parts which cannot be seized directly, can cause complicated issues as Customs offices in certain ports (most recently at the port of San Nicolas) require a cash guarantee for the market value of those elements/products where the products themselves cannot be seized due to volume or quantity.

The placement of a cash guarantee itself constitutes a problem particularly when considering large amounts. It should be borne in mind that the US dollars received will be converted into local currency (Argentine Peso) and deposited into a Customs Current Account where the money will remain without accruing interest.

Assuming that any defence placed on Owners behalf is successful, interest will run from the time a sentence is passed until the money is returned.

It is probable that any money recovered will only be returned in local currency and additional complications will arise when seeking authorisation to convert this back into US Dollars.

Further complications may occur if the funds are to be remitted abroad due to complex exchange control regulations.

In view of the above it is very important for Owners to properly instruct their Masters about the need to carefully declare everything on board in the “store list” on arrival and also ensure that the quantities are not duplicated in any way (i.e. in a general list and in an inventory) otherwise this will give scope to Customs to allege infringements.

Source of Information:

UK P&I Local Correspondent (Argentina)
Pandi Liquidadores S.R.L.
pandi@pandi.com.ar