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Bulletin 1090 - 04/16 - Garbage Disposal - Argentina

In recent months we have seen an increase in the activity of the Argentinean Authorities regarding the disposal of garbage on board vessels, which has triggered a number of queries from our Members.

In this respect we would like to draw attention to the following points which have to be taken into consideration.

SENASA (National Health Authority)

As a matter of principle, in Argentina, it is not mandatory for foreign vessels to discharge the garbage on board when calling at ports. Nevertheless, according to Resolution 714/2010 for the "National Plan for garbage", enacted by SENASA, the latter has the right to inspect the vessels and to decide, at its own discretion, whether the garbage on board should be discharged or not. If they consider that it should be discharged, their order to do so is mandatory and has to be complied with accordingly.

In general terms, the criteria of SENASA seems to be to require disposal of the garbage when its volume reaches about 2-3CBM. However, this cannot be taken as a rule, as it would depend very much on the criteria of the attending officer which, on the other hand, would appear not to take into account the vessel's arrangements for storage of garbage or its capacity.

Coastguard

The Argentinean Coastguard – Prefectura Naval Argentina (PNA) – is the authority to enforce the MARPOL Convention. Until recently, we did not hear about cases in which the PNA requested the vessels to discharge and dispose their garbage. However, we have seen in the last months some cases in which they observed the presence of excessive garbage on board during their PSC, as a consequence of which they ordered the discharge and disposal of the garbage. Their criteria, apparently matched that of SENASA's (i.e. 2-3 CBM).

Port Authority in the province of Buenos Aires

The Sub-Secretary of Port Activities of the Province of Buenos Aires enacted in 2015 their Resolution 648, which affects the ports located in the above mentioned Province only, such as San Nicolas, Campana, Zarate, Ensenada and La Plata among others.

The Resolution is intended to make it mandatory for all the vessels calling at the Province to discharge and dispose of the garbage (unless they proceed from another public port of Buenos Aires). This is part of their plan for "Tracing Management of Garbage coming from Vessels"

In addition, within this plan, the Sub-Secretary reached an agreement with the National Technological University (UTN for its initials in Spanish) for the development of technology to trace and manage the garbage. As a consequence, the UTN intended to charge US\$ 5,445 to every ship calling and discharging cargo in the port of Buenos Aires (and US\$ 1,452 if no discharge is performed).

It should be mentioned that these measures pursued by the Sub-Secretary and UTN have not been applied yet, as they were objected by the local chambers.

Finally, it should be pointed out that the costs for discharging and disposing of the garbage are as follows: minimum charge of US\$ 3,000 for up to 3CBM of garbage, and US\$ 1,000 for every extra CBM.

In conclusion, shipowners calling at ports in Argentina should be ready to discharge the ship's garbage upon request from SENASA (health authority) or PNA (Coastguards).

We shall continue monitoring the matter and advise if further information is available.

Source of Information

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