

UK P&I CLUB



LP Bulletin

Tuesday 17th October 2017

Bulletin 1143 - 10/17 - ALERT – Nickel Ore Liquefaction

Members will be aware of the tragic sinking last week of the M/V Emerald Star in the Philippine Sea, with the loss of 10 crewmembers. The ship is believed to have been carrying a cargo of lateritic nickel ore at the time, although it is too early to say whether the cargo played any role in the ship's sinking.

At the UK Club we are at the same time dealing with two ongoing cases in which cargoes of lateritic nickel ore from Surigao, Philippines have liquefied. In the first case, the crew noticed the ship was developing a list of 2 degrees and took immediate actions to reduce vibration and weather impact by adjusting course and speed. Upon arrival at the discharge port in China, the cargo in 3 out of 5 cargo holds was found to have liquefied - there were tide marks on both sides of the holds, and the master reported that the cargo had been flowing from side to side like wet cement in synchronism with the ship's rolling. Below is a picture taken from inside one of the holds. The other ship reported liquefaction in at least one of the holds part way through the voyage, and has headed for a port of refuge. The shippers in those cases were 'Century Peak Corporation' and 'Platinum Group Metal Corp'.

The Club wishes to remind Members that Group A Cargos of the IMSBC code prove a real and present danger to the stability of the ship if allowed to liquefy as the free surface flow effect will increase the Vertical Centre of Gravity of the ship and can cause the ship to capsize with little or no warning. As such, the Club wishes to remind Members that as per the attached circular they are required to notify the Managers if they intend to load a cargo of lateritic nickel ore as early as possible before loading commences.



Source of Information

Loss Prevention Department