



Australian Government

Australian Maritime Safety Authority

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Proper stowage of cargo containers marine notice 2018/3

This notice aims to remind vessel owners, operators and masters of the need to stow and secure cargo containers in accordance with approved arrangements.

Background

All cargo, whether carried on or under deck, should be stowed and secured in accordance with the vessel's Cargo Securing Manual as approved under Regulation 5.6 of Chapter VI of the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) Convention. This includes the manner in which cargo is secured and the weight distribution of cargo within the stow.

In Australia, Chapter VI of the SOLAS Convention is given effect through *Marine Order 42 (Carriage, stowage and securing of cargoes and containers) 2016*.

AMSA is aware of incidents in recent years in which the stowage of cargoes did not comply with the approved arrangements, in that:

- loaded containers were carried in slots only intended for empty units;
- the weight of some loaded containers exceeded the maximum weight for containers permitted to be stowed in that slot; and
- Fixed and portable securing equipment were not maintained appropriately

Such practices may compromise the effectiveness of cargo stowage and securing arrangements and increase the risk of cargo being lost overboard while at sea. The likelihood of this is increased by weather conditions and navigational practices. The impact of such events on safety and the environment is often significant.

Expectations

Australia expects cargo to be carried in full compliance with the vessel's Cargo Securing Manual and in accordance with the requirements of the SOLAS Convention.

Masters and owners should be aware that additional focus will be directed towards stowage and securing arrangements during forthcoming port State control (PSC) inspections in Australia.

If, during a PSC inspection, evidence is found that;

- the weight distribution and stack weights are not in compliance with the approved cargo stowage arrangements; or
- the securing arrangements are not in accordance with the approved Cargo Securing Manual; or
- the Cargo Securing Manual does not adequately cover the cargo being carried;

AMSA will take the necessary steps to bring the ship into compliance.

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