

LP BULLETIN

Friday 31 October 2008

Bulletin 607 - 10/08 - Customs Fines - Dakar, Senegal

Customs authorities in Dakar appear to be focusing on ship compliance with the Customs Code; paying particular attention to ship's declarations of stores, paints, bunkers, and lube oil.

The Association last reported to Members on Customs fines in Dakar through Loss Prevention Bulletin 497 in 2006. The Club's local correspondent advises that the Customs authorities remain strict in their requirement for vessels to comply with the Customs Code and are imposing large fines on vessels where a discrepancy is found between ship declarations and actual quantities found on board.

The following examples are recent incidents reported by the Club's correspondent:

Example 1 - fine: €25,916.33

The fine was imposed on the vessel because of a difference noted between the quantity of lube oil declared by the master to Customs, and the detailed list per grade later requested from the chief engineer.

Example 2 – fine: €152,449.02

The fine was imposed on the vessel after Customs personnel visited the engine room and ship's stores to make a complete inventory of all items. Small differences were noted so the boarding officer accused the master of fraud. The value of the fine imposed represents the combined value of the difference of each gas oil, lube oil and paint, multiplied by four (as allowed by the Customs code).

Example 3 – fine: €22,867.35

Normal port arrival formalities require the master to provide various documents to Customs and Port Authority departments i.e. health, immigration, harbour master, etc. The master accidentally submitted to Customs some documents that were intended for another administration.

The Customs authority noted that the list of paint was not included in the documents they received and notified the master the infringement to the Customs code, despite the fact that the master provided them with a copy later. According to the authority, all documents must be presented at the first request and the fine was subsequently imposed.

Advice to Masters

- Request in advance of arrival, from the ship's agent, written confirmation of the latest requirements.
- Prepare the Dakar Customs declaration in good time, when entering the Senegalese territorial waters, as per customs regulations.
- The master should personally receive the Customs officer on board, in company with the vessel's agent. The agent must control the set of documents prepared by the master before being presented to the Customs officer.

- Ensure all consumables, including food, paint, engine room consumables, spare parts in boxes, medicines/drugs, stationery, crew personal effects, etc. have been accurately described and declared.
- Do not lower the gangway until everything is in order and the vessel is ready to receive the Authorities on board. Fulfil the formalities one administration at a time. The following order is recommended: Health; Immigration; Customs; and Harbour Masters agent.

Source of information: TCI Africa Dakar
Tel: +221 33 849 1399
Email: tciafrdk@orange.sn with copy to mail@eltvedtosullivan.com