



## **Bulletin 21 - 10/97 - Bagged Vietnamese Rice - Discharge in West Africa/Jordan**

We are being made aware of a significant number of problems involving cargoes of Vietnamese bagged rice in ports in West Africa and Jordan at the moment. We understand cargoes are being discharged with serious wet, mould and caking damage. Rice from other countries such as Thailand does not appear to have been seriously affected, even in cases of mixed shipments, where both Vietnamese and Thai rice have been transported on the same vessel. The cause of the problem is not yet fully understood, but it is probable that it is a combination of things probably exacerbated by cargoes coming out of Vietnam with a higher than normal moisture content. We understand that drying facilities in Vietnam are scarce with only one shipper "American Rice" having access to proper equipment. (We have not heard of claims emanating from this shipper).

We believe most of the rice cargoes are being bought by Cargill and shipped by a German company "Allied" (Entered with the Newcastle Club). We further understand most of the cargoes are insured on the French and Belgium cargo markets.

The rice is of poor quality but cheap, it would appear this is not taken into consideration when vessels arrive in West Africa. Here large demands for security are received and in Abidjan, now, in many cases where Vietnamese rice is involved shippers are wary of accepting club letters and will only accept bank guarantees.

John Kirman of Jarrett Kirman and Willems (London) is acting as the agronomist on some of the cases. Capt Richard Skene of Spica Services Ho Chi Minh City (club correspondent), Mr M Heer of TCI Dakar (club correspondent) and Captain Roger Maddison of Sheringham P&I Services Abidjan (club correspondent) are also fully aware of the problem.

Owners intending to load cargoes out of Vietnam should contact our correspondent in Ho Chi Minh City to learn of latest developments. Owners without mechanical ventilation should also think seriously about accepting such cargoes especially if adequate dunnaging and suitable stowage is not possible to obtain/achieve.

Source of Information     Jeremy Barrett, Susanne Hall, Lance Hebert, Anne Marie Castle.