



Loss Prevention Bulletin

Ship Type: Bulk Carriers Trade Area: Australia

Bulletin 147 - 07/00 - New Standards of Hold Cleanliness + Receivers and Shippers Checklist - Australia

Due to some recent cases we would like to remind Members of the exacting standards of the Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service (AQIS). Members should remind their crews that "Grain Clean" now takes on a different meaning when trading to Australia.

Should the carriage of fertilizer to Australia be contemplated by Members, then extreme vigilance should be applied, particularly if the nominated vessel has previously carried organic material such as grain.

The prevention of introduction of diseases into Australia is an AQIS primary function. One of its principal worries is Karnal Bunt, which is a fungal disease which spreads by airborne spores. It inhibits the growth and quality of wheat and triticale. It also gives flour a 'fishy taste'. It was first discovered in the city of Karnal, Northern India in 1931 and has since spread to many countries including some Southern States of USA.

The introduction of even one grain of infected wheat or other disease-carrying grain, pulse or seed into fertilizer can deliver the infected material directly to the wheat growing areas of Australia with dramatic ramifications.

The Club is presently involved in a case where just **13 grain seeds** were found in 19,000 mt of fertilizer and can confirm the strong stance being taken by AQIS as it is likely this cargo will be totally rejected.

As a consequence of this the cleaning standards for ships loading Australia-bound fertilizers must now be extreme and meticulous and require the use of mechanical lifts, "cherry pickers" and water blasters. Each frame, beam and stiffener including those at the upper extremities of the holds **MUST** be cleaned at close quarters to ensure that not one grain of organic material remains. Hatch lids, rubbers, hinges and channels must be totally free from any residue including rust and paint scale.

Fertilizer Industry Federation of Australia Inc

An organisation known as the Fertilizer Industry Federation of Australia Inc (FIFA) has been formed by the major fertilizer importers into Australia. Its function is to manage and improve the industry's image and to ensure that the impact of government regulation upon the industry is positive.

The standards of cleaning of ships' holds is reflected in the standard of inspection by FIFA approved load port surveyors. These surveyors are given wide ranging powers to engage any equipment necessary to access all parts of the vessels' holds and surrounding areas. They will only conduct the surveys in daylight hours and must have the full co-operation of the master and his crew throughout the survey. There are cases where surveys have taken up to two weeks when residues of previous cargoes have been found. Surveyors are authorised to stop the loading at any time to inspect areas not previously accessible and can conduct 'walk-over' surveys on completion of loading. The reason for the 'walk-over' survey is to emulate the AQIS inspection at the first port of entry into Australia, where AQIS officers are present when the hatches are opened to inspect the surfaces of the cargo for any material which may have fallen during the vessels' passage.

The practice of cleaning a ship's hold on a ballast passage in preparation for the next cargo is no longer acceptable since the hatches must be fully open and mechanical equipment in place in a stable environment to ensure that the strict requirements are satisfied.

All reasonable endeavours must be made to approach the standard of "zero tolerance" for organic material in fertilizer cargoes, otherwise excessive delays and costs to Members will be inevitable.

For information we attach an example of a charterers/shippers guide and checklist for vessels loading fertilizers and raw materials for Australia.

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