



Ship Type: All Trade Area: Egypt

Bulletin 187 - 05/01 - Alcohol Related Fatalities - Egypt

Recently a Member's vessel left the port of el-Dekheilo, Egypt, bound for Bilbao. Within 24 hours of the ship's departure, a number of Ukrainian crewmembers were taken seriously ill. Owners ordered the ship to divert to the nearest port, which was Tobruk, Libya, to seek urgent medical attention. With the assistance of the Club's correspondents at Tripoli, six crewmembers were landed and hospitalised. Regrettably, four died in hospital and two others were reported to be in a critical condition, but were expected to recover.

Investigations established that while the ship was at el-Dekheilo, four of the crew obtained permission from the chief officer to go to a local village to buy cigarettes and toiletries. One of the crew admitted that, with the intention of obtaining some spirit, they visited a pharmacy and purchased a white liquid stored in a five litre clear plastic container. The liquid was consumed upon return to the ship. The Master confirmed that the crewmembers were aware that company policy did not permit the consumption of alcohol on board. However, the owner's superintendent admitted that it was common practice for crewmembers generally to purchase pure spirit and dilute it with a high proportion of water before drinking it. Signum Services, who investigated the incident on behalf of the owners and the Club, arranged for samples of the liquid to be analysed by a laboratory in the United Kingdom where it was found to be methanol. Owners have circulated the laboratory's report to their crew managers in the hope that it will prevent similar incidents occurring in the future.

Source of information : Samantha Vandome (L5) through Graham Daines (Claims Director)