

Bulletin 406 - 03/05 - Stowaway Check Requirements - New Orleans - USA

The USCG Marine Safety Office (MSO) New Orleans have issued a Marine Safety Bulletin advising masters and operators to be alert to stowaways trying to gain access to and hiding in rudder trunks on deep draft vessels. The COTP may require a fax from the master of ships bound for the Port of New Orleans that requires confirmation of the following:

1. A thorough search for stowaways was conducted upon getting underway from a foreign port and whether or not stowaways were found on board;
2. Whether or not the rudder compartment was checked during the search; and
3. Stowaway history for the past 24 months.

The MSO also distributed information on the installation of a grid to make the rudder trunk inaccessible from outside as the consequences of carrying a stowaway into the United States far exceeds the manpower expended in conducting a thorough shipboard search for stowaways when getting underway. Members may remember that in November 2004 the Club issued Loss Prevention News issue 17, which contained information on stowaways seeking access to these areas and the Club's Loss Prevention website also shows a grid system put in place on a Member vessel to prevent stowaways accessing the vessel's rudder housing.

The Club recommends Members follow these guidelines when bound for the Port of New Orleans in order to reduce the likelihood of the vessel encountering delays.

Images: a stowaway sat on the top of the rudder by the rudder stock, a crew member demonstrating how access to the rudder housing can be gained from outside and an example of how a Member ship took action to prevent this by welding steel bars across the access.

Source of information: US Coastguard Marine Safety Office
New Orleans
USA

