



Friday 7th September 2012

Bulletin 843 - 09/12 - Attempted Drug Smuggling - Peru

The Club has received a summary of the problems facing Members who operate out of Peru concerning the practices of drug smugglers.

Quote

From our experience, the problems with illegal shipments of drug in Peru were always related to illegal use of containers by illegal shippers (which, mixes sound goods with illegal drugs) or by the stevedores before the shipment on board the vessel.

However, last July 2012, a vessel was moored alongside the port of Callao, where a crewmember found several bags near the crane of the vessel. Local authorities were called on board and seized 63 kilograms of cocaine.

The vessel was detained in port during the subsequent investigation before being released some fifteen days later. The Master, First Officer and one crewman were taken into custody pending criminal investigations. Also, personnel of the port terminal and port agents were detained for questioning pending criminal investigations.

It is understood that the suspect were removed from the original hiding position and hidden elsewhere on the vessel prior to the police arriving at the scene. The Police having carried out a search of the vessel recovered the drugs. It is thought that the Master failure to secure these packages at the place where they were found until the arrival of the authorities that has resulted in his arrest

Unquote

The view of the Club's correspondent is that Members vessels should exercise extreme caution in Peruvian ports against people attempting to gain access to the ship. Full and proper ISPS procedures should be followed.

Additionally and as a result of this case if any suspicious packages are found at any time then the vessel should immediately inform the authorities via radio, keeping a record of the conversation, they should also lodge a formal letter of protest addressed to the Port Authority. As evidence, pictures should be taken of the packages in the place where they are found and the packages left in situ, under custody until the authorities arrive.

Source of Information:

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