



Bulletin 6 - 06/97 - Deballasting Problems - Ukraine

Some dubious practices have been brought to our attention in the ports of Odessa, Ilyichevsk and Yuzhny. All ships visiting these ports mainly those loading and with water ballast on board are being inspected on arrival by the SIPBS (State Inspection for Protection of the Black Sea).

These people reportedly inspect the ballast water for such things as oil content, Iron content and suspended substances. The limits we are advised are

Oil Content 0.05mg/litre
Iron (rust) content 0.05mg/litre
Suspended material 1.75 mg/litre

If the samples exceed this, the ship is not allowed to discharge ballast and is expected to proceed out of port to the 12 mile limit to discharge. Costs for this as you can imagine are high both in money terms and in time lost. The alternative we understand which is recommended by the agents is to de ballast and pay a fine???

We are told some 80-85% of ships visiting these ports are found to have contaminated ballast?????. We are not aware of any circumstances where a ship has left the berth for the 12 mile limit. Arrangements are usually made between the SIPBS and the agent over the size of the fine after which the de ballasting then takes place in the port?????. One problem for owners is that, in most cases the agent is working on behalf of the charterer and therefore does not have too much interest in fighting the owners corner. On top of that there is rumour that some agents/individuals are quite close to the SIPBS.

Initial fines are usually in the tens of thousands we have one example of a US\$50000 fine. After negotiation this one in particular was reduced to US\$1500 with we understand US\$3500 passed to an individual (we have no proof of this).

There is presently a lot of corruption in FROSU/Ukraine which is not surprising when you consider a surveyor over there is only earning something like US\$180 a month. Owners should be aware of this.

As we are dealing with a state organisation here it is difficult to give any recommendations. Should you or one of our members become involved in something like this, we would suggest you contact Mr. Igor Cherezov of Dias our correspondent in Odessa who is fully aware of the problem.

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Source of Information - Anonymous (see Karl Lumbers)