



LP Bulletin

Friday 27 March 2009

Bulletin 630 - 3/09 - Carriage of Logs - Fatality - Worldwide

Following on from bulletins 74 (12/98) and 346 (02/04) the Association has been notified of a fatality onboard a vessel carrying logs in Africa.

The vessel in question loaded a partial cargo of logs in Gabon and sailed towards Congo where she was to load the remainder of her cargo. Upon arrival at the Congolese port the vessel opened her hatches and two stevedores entered the hold to prepare for loading, after several minutes it was noted that they were missing, a search was conducted and the men were found to be unconscious in the hold. Following an initial unsuccessful rescue attempt, the Bosun and two crew members entered the hold in breathing apparatus to retrieve the stevedores, they were found to be dead.

The initial suspicions were that the men had died from inhalation of the chemicals used to fumigate the hold in Gabon, consultants were dispatched to investigate the situation. Upon atmospheric testing of the holds and an investigation it was revealed that the men had actually died from asphyxiation due to an



oxygen depleted atmosphere within the hold. The three main factors involved were the mould on the logs, the humidity in the hold and the lack of ventilation throughout the voyage. It should be noted that it is normal not to ventilate the holds in this kind of situation and that all involved were used to carrying log cargoes.

Members should be aware of the dangers associated with the carriage of this kind of cargo and ensure that the holds are opened for as long as possible before commencing cargo operations and the cargo should be ventilated during the voyage. These measures are especially important in humid climates where the exposure to risk will be greatly increased.

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