



Ship Type: Bulk Carrier

Trade Area: Iraq

## **Bulletin 134 - 03/00 - Grain Discharge Problems - Umm Qasr - Iraq**

Members should be aware that there is a strong risk of spurious cargo claims being made on grain cargoes in Iraq. During the discharge of an Argentinian wheat cargo at Umm Qasr, the Iraqi receivers claimed that cargo in one hold was contaminated with e-coli bacteria. The cargo was analysed three times by a local health authority laboratory and on each occasion the tests were positive. The Member had a cargo sample analysed by Soloman and Seaber in the UK and the result was negative.

It is very rare for grain cargoes to contain e-coli bacteria. Almost the only source could be excrement - perhaps bird droppings.

The ship eventually sailed from Iraq with the cargo in that hold still on board. It was subsequently discharged at Dubai without any further problems. We understand that the ship ahead of our Member's at Umm Qasr also experienced the same problem - as did a following vessel. We understand that several other ships bound for Iraq with similar cargoes are refusing to proceed and that charterers are being asked for alternative voyage instructions.

It is suggested that this is an attempt by Iraqi receivers to obtain part of their cargo at a discounted price, by alleging it is contaminated when they are aware it is sound.

These grain cargoes are part of the oil for food barter scheme being run under the supervision of the UN. The receivers only pay for the amount they accept on discharge so there is no loss to them should cargo remain on board.

We strongly recommend that Members consider this trade carefully before fixing.

Source of Information : Charles Elmer (L1)