

Loss Prevention Bulletin

Ship Type: Containership

Trade Area: France

Bulletin 136 - 4/00 - Container Pilferage (Pharmaceuticals) - Marseilles - France

We are currently investigating a serious case of pharmaceuticals pilferage in Marseilles which has revealed some disturbing practices. It would appear there is an organised system of delivering empty containers (declared as full) to the port. Once in the port, allegedly with the help of port employees and forklifts, these containers are filled with goods pilfered from other containers. The containers are then shipped to their point of destination where the pilfered goods are collected by the parties involved (in this case West Africa). Similarly the pilfered containers are shipped to their destination with the subsequent claim for loss on the carrier.

Under French Law it is not possible for cargo interests to proceed directly against the stevedores when a contractual (b/l) situation exists. The carriers only possibility to avoid a claim in this type of case is to present a recourse action against the stevedores. This is hampered by a further problem in Marseilles which is that surveillance video tapes, of the areas concerned, are not being kept long enough by the port before being erased.

We would strongly recommend members request secure stowage for their containers in Marseilles prior to/ after discharge, and ensure their staff are fully aware of this current problem.

Further information can be obtained from the Club's correspondent in Marseilles .

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