



Ship Type: Dry Cargo Trade Area: Nigeria

Bulletin 200 - 07/01 - Mandatory Container Inspection and Congestion - Nigeria

There is presently significant congestion in the ports of Lagos (Apapa and Tin Can Island). Although this is primarily due to the Port Authority's lack of logistical and organizational structure, the problem has recently been exacerbated by the introduction of a mandatory inspection of all incoming containerised cargo. Despite an existing regulation stipulating that all imports must be subject to a pre-shipment inspection, almost all goods entering Nigeria are under-declared. For bulk cargoes, there have been instances of under-declarations in the region of 12,000 m/t.

In addition to this, there are three newly constructed facilities in the port of Apapa which have considerably contributed to the volume of lorry traffic and there has also been a recent general increase in the number of vessels calling at Apapa. Much of the discharged cargo is now brought to open areas off the berths, which are not meant for stacking or storage, thereby causing blockages to all vehicular traffic. The container terminal at Apapa is almost full of containers awaiting clearance, and there is only just enough space to allow container handling equipment to manoeuvre safely between the ship's side and the adjacent stacking area. The situation at Tin Can Ro-Ro port is equally bad. More used vehicles are being imported from Europe and the severe lack of storage space and painfully slow process of clearing the vehicles have made the problem even worse. In February this year the Port Authority arranged for 24 hour port operations to go ahead, but at the same time banned the overnight parking of trucks idling within the port premises. The congestion problem has therefore extended outside of the port area resulting in huge traffic jams. The correspondent's two mile drive to the office now takes in excess of 45 minutes.

Nobody has yet succeeded in considering what needs to be done to resolve the situation which may thus be considered as a long term problem.

Source: Pandiship Limited (Club Correspondent)