



Ship Type: All Trade Area: China

Bulletin 504 - 01/07 - Asbestos contaminated hot rolled steel coils - China

The Club issued a loss prevention bulletin on the subject matter in November 2006. It is understood that the practice of using asbestos during the production process of hot rolled steel coils has been discontinued, however considerable costs have been incurred by owners and charterers of ships affected.

The only cargo affected is hot rolled steel coils from a specific production mill at the port of Bayuquan, China. Ship's loading hot rolled steel coils from this port should appoint surveyors and health & safety experts before loading to confirm that asbestos contamination does not exist.

Old production is still being shipped and, although we understand that asbestos matting is no longer used, steel coils in storage awaiting loading on to ships may be contaminated and cause further incidents.

Ships with these hot rolled steel coils contaminated with asbestos on board have experienced lengthy delays in discharge at European ports. Personnel from specialist cleaning firms, wearing protective clothing, have to be employed to scrape clean the affected coils before discharge. All other cargo in the hold also has to be wiped clean before discharge. Upon completion of the discharge it is necessary for the hold to be cleaned and certified asbestos free. Air monitoring takes place during the whole operation to detect asbestos dust.

In these recent incidents, contamination was noticed visually. The images below illustrate how the coils appear with asbestos matting adhering.



Source of information: Tony Kennedy
Claims Specialist, UK P&I Club
Tel: +44 20 7204 2208
Email: tony.kennedy@thomasmiller.com