

LP BULLETIN

Thursday 15 November 2007

Bulletin 553 - 11/07 - Restrictions on crew changes - USA

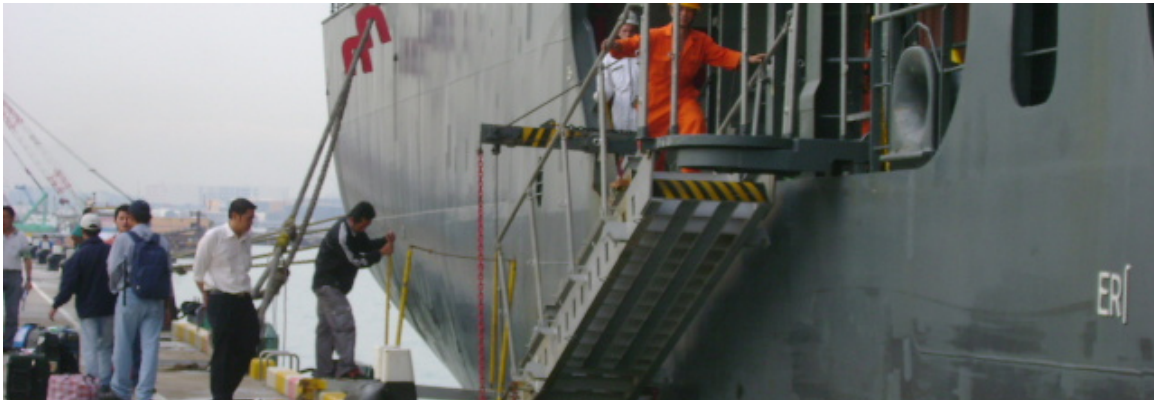
The Customs and Border Protection (CBP) are taking an interest in respect of those involved in crew changes who do not join their ship immediately on entering the USA, or who are not repatriated immediately on signing off.

It has long been expected by the CBP that departing crew will leave the USA on the next available flight but Members should understand that the CBP's current directive is that off-signing crew must depart the country the same day they are signed off the ship. This directive applies unless there are unusual circumstances which warrant leniency in this requirement.

Crew that do not depart/arrive the same day they leave/join the ship will subject owners/crew managers with a fine of US\$3,300 per crewmember.

In the interest of safety and crew welfare, some operators are understood to have a policy of giving officers a night's rest in a hotel after flying before joining their ships. Such policies and actions will now result in fines being imposed. In cases where the arrival date of a ship is not certain, Members will find this regulation particularly unfair as it is normal practice to get crew to their joining ports in good time in order not to miss the ship.

Members should not expect the authorities to be lenient on this matter as it has been noticed that the number of fines issued nationwide by the CBP has increased. It has also been noticed that the CBP are now issuing fines for infractions which would have previously warranted no more than a warning.



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