



Friday 13th April 2012

Bulletin 819 - 04/12 - Import containers with radiation exposure - USA

The Club has become aware that several containers imported to the United States have been placed on hold at their discharge ports due to unacceptable levels of radiation. The radiation is caused by scrap metal containing Cobalt-60 which could have inadvertently been incorporated into the product during manufacturing. The containers placed on hold were booked as bath products and originated in China and India.

US Customs & Border Protection has processes in place to detect and prevent these products from entering the United States. If CBP orders the container to be returned to origin, the Club offers the below advice to lines:

1. Container must be isolated until it is placed on the ship
2. Labelled "Marked" with the United Nations (UN) transportation index required by marking the container with Yellow Radiation Level III signs on all sides
3. The manifest should list the cargo as IMDG / IMO radioactive materials section 7
4. Do not open signs should be placed on the container doors along with the radioactive signs
5. Transport Radiation Level shall not exceed two (2) milliSieverts (2 mSv = 2 mRems) at any point of the external surface.
6. The container should be placed within the ship so as to minimize opportunities for ships' crew exposures
7. The ship should be limited to no more than 100 radioactive containers
8. Upon receipt, the consignment shall be placed in a secure location and the appropriate authority shall be informed as soon as possible and a request made for further action

Shipping lines containers become caught in the crossfire and it could be several months before the containers are back in circulation. Costs for storage at the port and return ocean freight must be borne by the shipper. We recommend that after the containers are returned empty, that the containers are checked for radiation exposure by qualified personnel prior to being placed back into service.

Source of Information:

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