



LP Bulletin

Wednesday 2nd September 2015

Bulletin 1057 - 09/15 - Tianjin, China Explosions and Precautions for Possible Contamination - USA

The United States Coast Guard issued a Marine Safety Information Bulletin 07-15 last week regarding potential contamination risks from the Tianjin Port explosions. The bulletin requires all vessels bound for US ports to immediately report any potentially hazardous conditions, illnesses or unknown substances or residues to the US Coast Guard.

The "impacted vessels" (any vessel that was in the Tianjin port complex, or that has loaded cargo or containers that were in the Tianjin port complex, at the time of the first explosion on August 12th through August 15th) should be able to demonstrate to the cognizant USCG Captain of the Port (COTP) and to Customs and Border Protection (CBP) authorities the actions they have taken to ensure that no hazardous conditions exist on board their vessels or with their cargo as a result of the explosions in Tianjin.

We suggest that all such actions should be recorded in the deck logbook, and presented to the USCG Captain or COTP upon request. If vessels, which were in Tianjin at the time of the explosion, fail to demonstrate the actions that they have taken, it is likely that their entry into US ports could be delayed.

COTPs will evaluate each vessel individually for risk factors when determining appropriate courses of action. Vessel owners and operators of impacted vessels bound for U.S. ports should assess the following criteria for their vessel or cargo and determine if COTP notification is warranted. COTPs will consider the following factors when determining whether the vessel or cargo may constitute a risk to the port. These factors will include, but are not limited to:

- The location of the vessel or cargo within the port of Tianjin during the time window of concern;
- The operations that were ongoing, such as loading or discharging of cargo;
- Whether or not any cargo bays, holds, or external doors were open;
- The status of the cargo or containers held within cargo bays or holds within the time window of concern;
- Whether the vessel received any visible ash, debris or residue on deck, within ventilation, in between containers, or on any other part of the ship following the explosions;
- Whether any persons on board have been experiencing any ill health effects subsequent to the explosions for unknown reasons, or due to exposure to substances from the explosions;
- Whether an impacted vessel has undertaken measures to test for potentially hazardous substances including any sampling taken; and
- Weather conditions experienced in-route.

Some key points to remember regarding this incident:

- Although there is much reporting in the media as to the situation in Tianjin, China, there is not yet clarity of the full extent or nature of any possible chemical contamination that may be aboard

impacted vessels. Vessel owners and operators should be aware of the potential for hazardous ash, debris or residues on board impacted vessels or containers, particularly in cargo bays and interior spaces not regularly exposed to the elements.

- Based on the currently available information regarding the incident and its aftermath, the Coast Guard is concerned that impacted vessels and cargo may have an increased risk of exposure to potentially hazardous chemicals. There is not yet available a comprehensive list of chemicals that were involved in the Tianjin incident; however, several hazardous chemicals are reported to have been in the main warehouse, including sodium cyanide (UN1689) and calcium carbide (UN1402).
- Given the substantial size of the explosions and the suspected hazardous chemicals that were involved, ships and cargo in port at or near the times of the explosions may have been exposed to potentially hazardous dust, ash, or debris. There have been no reports of vessels with confirmed hazardous ash, debris or residues on board.

The Department of Homeland Security is monitoring all U.S. bound cargo and vessel traffic that were in the port of Tianjin on or after August 12th.

Source of Information

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