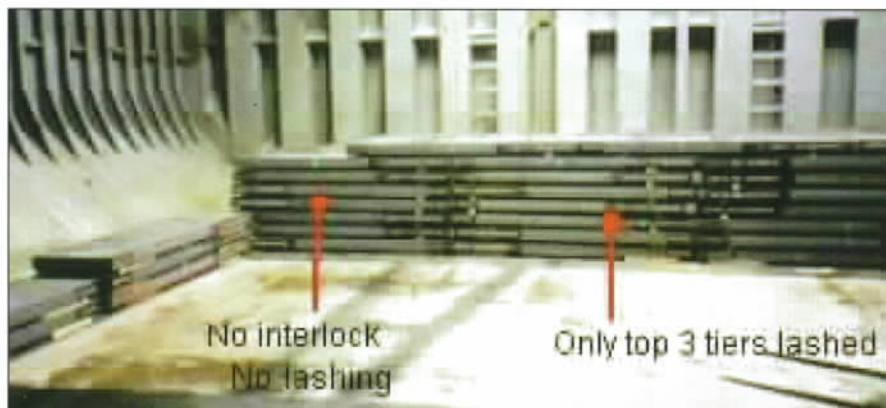




California Block Stow warnings ignored



DESPITE warnings to the contrary (see *StopLoss 17, March 2000*), reports suggest that charterers are still trying to persuade masters of bulk carriers loading large steel slabs in China that the California Block Stowage (CBS) configuration is safe.

CBS was first used to speed up loading and discharge on vessels with box-shaped holds, and indeed is still used extensively on such ships. But the question of whether it can be safely used in self-trimming bulk carriers has yet to be resolved.

One of the central elements of a basic CBS operation is the lashing together of the top three tiers of steel slabs (see *illustration*). This has created a particular

problem in China, where it is reported that many of the ports do not have the banding machines that are used to secure steel cargoes or, if they do, those responsible are not willing to use it with slab cargo.

There is great potential for the slabs to shift when CBS is used, and the Club urges its members to heed the potential dangers which exist when this type of stow is proposed.

CBS involves the loading of large steel slabs one on top of the other, with each slab separated by pieces of dunnage. The slabs are stacked in vertical tiers, with no interlock between adjacent stacks. Care must also be taken to ensure that acceptable deck loading parameters are not exceeded

In this issue...

- Malta monitors standards
- Responding to onboard injury
- Alcohol and Libya don't mix

Members are advised that, prior to loading, if they are in any doubt, there are some sources of useful information on CBS, including the website of surveyors Andrew Moore & Associates, which members can access on www.commercepark.co.uk/andrew-moore, and from which the photograph on this page is reproduced, with kind permission.

Aqaba pollution move

THE Aqaba courts have ruled that liability for marine pollution falls under environmental law 12/1995. Among other things, this provides for heavy fines or imprisonment of masters of polluting vessels, and empowers the Aqaba courts to effect clean-up at owner's expense, plus administration charges. Masters should be advised accordingly.

(Jordan Pandi Consultants Corp)

Quick thinking saves lives

PERSONAL injury claims can be both tragic and costly. Good quality management, the highest standards of onboard practice, and continuing investment in training, can minimise the likelihood of accidents occurring.

The London Club, of course, expects those standards from its members.

There are also occasions when, an accident having occurred, quick thinking and a display of initiative from an owner, or a master or crew member, may save a life that might otherwise have been lost. A recent injury case in which the

Club was involved serves to illustrate the point.

The crew member on a vessel entered with the Club was struck on the head while swinging out the starboard lifeboat during a drill while the vessel was sailing in ballast from Italy to Ukraine. The nearest port at the time was Pylos, in Greece, some sixty miles away.

The master reported the accident without delay to the Greek Ministry of Mercantile Marine. He also notified the Greek National Centre of Immediate Assistance.

With the full co-operation of the vessel's shore-based management company, which readily provided all necessary assistance, the vessel diverted to Pylos, where the crew member was disembarked and taken to

hospital. Although the crew member was later reported to be in good condition, a director of the management company ordered that he be taken to a private doctor, who decided that his life was in danger and emergency surgery was needed to remove a blood clot from the patient's brain.

The crew member was rushed to hospital where, after a five-hour operation, his life was saved. It was a happy conclusion to what could have been a tragic accident. It also provides a timely reminder that a responsible owner or manager, using its initiative in tandem with its P&I club, can save not only money but lives.

There can be few better examples of effective loss prevention.

Stormy weather

OVER the years, heavy weather has been a major source of damage to shipping, as this picture from the Club's files illustrates.

The increasing size of modern container ships also means that exposure on individual risks can be greatly increased.



Malta issues new register guidelines

THE Malta Maritime Authority has issued new guidelines to ascertain the seaworthiness of vessels registered in Malta.

Under the new guidelines, vessels of 25 years and over will not as a rule qualify for entry into the Malta register. Applications for registration of ships of less than 25 years will be considered subject to:

- the vessel being in class or in the process of being classed with a recognised class society
- the receipt of up-to-date class survey status reports, or information about the validity of current statutory certificates and pending recommendations, related to both class and statutory surveys

Tripoli's tough line

THE authorities in Libya are continuing to take a tough line with regard to possession of undeclared alcohol on board vessels in the port of Tripoli.

Members are reminded that it is prohibited to bring or to keep on board vessels



Registration of vessels is dependent on satisfactory inspection reports

- receipt of affirmation by class that the vessel is in a position to be issued with all appropriate statutory certificates without recommendations.

Registration of vessels which are between 20 and 25 years of age is also subject to prior inspection by an authorised flag state inspector, while vessels in the 15-to-20-year

bracket must be presented for inspection within a month of registration. One-off inspection charges, where applicable, have to be paid before the inspection can be authorised.

Unsatisfactory inspections of registered vessels may lead to the immediate suspension of registration.

(O F Gollcher, Valletta)

- except in the bonded store
- any kind of alcohol or any other similar substance, including cans of beer. Cigarettes should be treated similarly.

Other products which are prohibited by the Tripoli port authorities include any kind of pornography, and

any commodity of Israeli origin. Any breach of these and other regulations could result in heavy fines and possible delays to vessel departures and, in the case of drugs or alcohol, to imprisonment of vessel personnel.

(Germa, Tripoli)

Alaska brings in new pollution Act

THE state of Alaska has passed legislation requiring non-tank self-propelled vessels operating in Alaskan waters and exceeding 400 gross tons to demonstrate proof of financial responsibility for oil spills occurring in Alaskan waters.

The effective date of the Financial Responsibility Act is September 1, 2000. Proof of responsibility must be established in the following amounts:

- For vessels using predominately persistent product, \$300 per incident for each barrel of oil storage capacity, or \$5m, whichever is greater.
- For vessels using predominately non-persistent product, \$100 per incident

Fishing alert

A NUMBER of casualties involving collisions with fishing vessels have been brought to the Club's attention in recent months, particularly in Far

for each barrel of oil storage capacity, or \$1m, whichever is greater.

Vessels covered by the Act include commercial fishing vessels, passengerships and cargo vessels. Barges are excluded, as are all public vessels other than those "engaged in commerce".

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) has proposed draft regulations to implement the financial responsibility requirements. ADEC predicts that its regulations will not become final until either September or early October this year, but the effective date for the new law remains September 1, 2000.

London Club members have already been circulated with this information, and will be kept updated in the lead-up to final enactment of the ADEC regulations.

East waters. Watchkeepers should be reminded to be particularly vigilant and bear in mind the fact that fishing vessels can be difficult to see. They are often poorly lit and ill-equipped with sound signalling devices.



New piracy video

As part of its ongoing commitment to training and loss prevention, the Club has co-sponsored a video entitled *Piracy and Armed Robbery*, in association with Videotel Marine International. The video is designed mainly to help instruct officers and crew on ways in which they and their vessels can be prepared to minimise the dangers of piracy, particularly in known high-risk areas.

Although the London Club has only been faced with one recent claim for piracy, it recognises the potential threat which it poses to its members.

The video is available from Videotel on +44 (0)20 7299 1800. London Club members qualify for a twenty per cent discount on either the purchase or rental price.

PUBLISHED

on behalf of The London Steam-Ship Owners' Mutual Insurance Association by A. Bilbrough & Co. Ltd., 50 Leman Street, London. E1 8HQ, UK. Tel: +44 (0) 20 7772 8000 Fax: +44 (0) 20 7772 8200 E-mail: comms@a-bilbrough.co.uk www.lsoo.com

EDITED BY

Chris Hewer, Merlin Corporate Communications, 11 Kingsland Court, Three Bridges Road, Crawley, RH10 1HL, UK. Tel: +44 (0) 1293 55 00 44 Fax: +44 (0) 1293 55 04 04 E-mail: wizard@merlinco.com

PRINTED BY

Stuart Vaux Associates, Chiltern Lodge, 38 Clifton Road, Amersham, Buckinghamshire, HP6 5PP, UK. Tel: +44 (0) 1494 726593 Fax: +44 (0) 1494 727380 E-mail: sales@stuartvaux.demon.co.uk