

# **MEMBER ALERT**



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## **CUSTOMS FINES IN ARGENTINA: DECLARATION OF ONBOARD STORES**

Members' attention is drawn to recent developments in Argentina concerning the application of customs fines to the misdeclaration of shipboard stores. Customs authorities in Argentina are becoming stricter, particularly as to the declaration of lube oils, bunkers, chemicals, spare parts, grabs and other items in lists of stores carried onboard vessels, particularly in ports such as San Nicolas.

Authorities have been reported as requiring ships to declare the lube oil in the sump tank of the main engine, despite previous practice to the contrary. It would appear that a number of ships have recently been boarded by customs agents asserting that the lube oil in the sump tank has not been declared, and deeming such lack of declaration to be a customs infringement.

In such cases, customs have insisted that the lube oil in question be discharged within 48 hours and placed in storage for the account of the vessel. If the lube oil is not discharged, owners may be requested to post a cash guarantee for up to twice its market value. In this connection, customs are reported to use a price from USD 7 to 10 per liter when the real market price is about USD 1.50 to 2 per liter.

Members are therefore urged to declare the quantity of oil in the ship's sump tanks especially when their vessels call at the port of San Nicolas. Moreover, masters are advised to exercise great care when declaring quantities to ensure that no under-declarations are made, or that declarations are not duplicated. There have been instances of customs agents finding discrepancies which, in reality, do not exist but are difficult to disprove after the owner has already been fined in consequence of them.

Your Managers wish to thank Pandi Liquidadores S.R.L. for their assistance in bringing attention to this matter.