

MEMBER ALERT



Shipowners Claims Bureau, Inc., Manager
One Battery Park Plaza 31st Fl., New York, NY 10004 USA
Tel: +1 212 847 4500
Fax: +1 212 847 4599

<https://www.american-club.com>

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BRAZIL: FLOODING AT RIO GRANDE

Flooding in the southern region of Brazil has affected port operations at Rio Grande, resulting in navigational hazards including swift currents of more than five knots. In particular, the flood waters have drained into the Patos Lagoon and ultimately into the bar channel of Rio Grande, a critical passageway for grain, fertilizer, and container terminals. Due to safety concerns, the local maritime authorities, in agreement with local harbor pilots, have decided to restrict all vessel maneuvers to daylight hours only.

Berthing maneuvers for panamax-sized vessels calling at the three operative grain terminals – Teragrassa, Bianchina, and Bunge – will also be evaluated on a case-by-case basis taking into account ships' particulars, currents, wind force, drafts and mooring plans.

For the time being, the Tecon container terminal, Yara fertilizer terminal, Braskem chemical terminal, and the commercial pier will continue to operate normally.

Berthing operations have been temporarily restricted to vessels with a maximum draft of 42 feet (12.8 meters). In relation to this draft restriction, Members are advised to inform vessel Masters that, in consequence of the heavy rains, the dock water density is presently being considered as equivalent to that of fresh water, which is likely to impact the quantity of cargo that a vessel may be able to load.

This draft restriction was agreed with the port authority and the managers of the grain terminals allowing them to keep operating, subject to the weather and current at the channel. This may force vessels to remain idle at the berth after loading completion. However, the intent has been to keep the terminals open albeit with some reduction of cargo throughput.

Members are asked to note the foregoing. If they have any questions, the Managers will be pleased to respond. They also thank the Club's Brazilian correspondent Cranston Marine and P&I Consultants, Ltd. for providing the information upon which this Alert has been based.