

The purpose of the TP&I News is to provide the latest news for the shipowners, charterers, as well as any other maritime interests around the globe. Each issue of TP&I News will include a focused review section of several articles on a topic of current interest.<sup>1</sup>

## 1. Douala Port Information

### 1.1. Security Issue

Previously pirate attacks in the Gulf of Guinea always occurred on the high sea beyond Cameroon territorial waters. However, since March 2019, two cases of piracy (involving three vessels) conducted by Nigerian gangs have been recorded at Douala anchorage (pilot station) and several crewmembers have been abducted.

Due to this alarming situation the Cameroonian authorities have been under pressure to increase security patrols in this area.

In the light of these attacks and in order to avoid the administrative delays required to complete an application for government armed guards on board, the Cameroon Government has exceptionally ordered the presence of three armed guards on board each vessel at Douala anchorage. Currently, armed guards are automatically supplied on board for the vessel's security at the anchorage on a free of charge basis.

### 1.2. Douala Port Traffic Control

The risk of pirate attack also remains in the Voluntary Reporting Area (VRA) off Nigeria where the Marine Domain Security alongside is generally satisfactory. Police attend each vessel and private unarmed guards can also be supplied by agents if approved by the Port Authorities.

Of course, even with Police rounds and security guards, it is not always possible to avoid minor cases of robbery and / or the presence of stowaways on board.

### 1.3. Douala Port Infrastructures and Activity

Unfortunately grounding in the Douala approach



channel is a recurrent issue with several cases recorded each year. Re-floating operations can, on occasions, be long and costly. However, this does not usually have any major consequences for the ship's hull as the river / seabed is sandy and muddy.

Indeed, Douala port is not properly / regularly dredged. The official river draft is therefore not accurate enough to assist ship movements.

Berths are often congested, forcing vessels to stay at the anchorage for long periods (5 to 10 days).

Even the port warehouses are sometimes congested. When this occurs, cargo is delivered under ship's tackle. This causes delays in operations and slow discharge rates as trucks tasked with collecting discharged cargo are caught in heavy traffic, first on the quay and then in town.

A berthed vessel may be shifted back to anchorage by the Harbour Master in an attempt to contain the congestion in port.

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## 1.4. Disputes With Authorities

Most of the disputes encountered with the authorities (Customs, PSC, MARPOL) relate to a lack of original paper documents on board (e.g., last port's clearance, H&M insurance certificate or P&I certificate of entry).

The Authorities do not accept electronic documents, but only paper originals signed and stamped in the classic manner, or true copies signed by the issuer.

## 1.5. Cargo Issues

Local stevedores do not always carry out their work very professionally when discharging cargoes such as cement, rice, sugar, salt, fertilizer, wheat, ext. Also, local receivers and even their cargo underwriters usually claim by using extrapolated figures while cargo operations are far from being completed. As a result, alleged shortages and damages may be very high or overstated giving rise to large claims being directed unfairly against the ships' interests.

## 1.6. Stowaways

The vessel's crew must, as far as possible, involve itself in monitoring access on board as well as arranging searches as much as possible, in particular one to two hours before the vessel's departure.

The landing at Douala of foreign stowaways embarked at previous ports is possible in order to repatriate them to their countries of origin after the required formalities have been completed. But this can be possible when the concerned vessel has carried out/or is scheduled to call at Douala port for commercial operations. The costs vary on a case-by-case basis.

## 1.7. Ebola Update

Cameroon is currently Ebola virus free.

As a result of the 2014-16 outbreaks in Guinea, Liberia and Sierra Leone, Cameroon Health Authorities

introduced a 21-day period of quarantine at anchorage for ships coming from Ebola affected countries.

In principle, the quarantine runs from the date the ship departed from an Ebola-affected country. However, due to the congestion of berths, at the end of the quarantine period, the vessel may be forced to wait more days at the anchorage before berthing.

Launches are arranged by ship agents to allow Health Authorities to attend the vessel. The costs for hiring launches and sundries are charged to the vessel.

## 1.8. COVID 19

On vessels arrival at Douala port, all crew members are subjected to COVID 19 rapid test. If the results of the rapid test are positive, the crew is taken to a specialized hospital for a PCR test confirmation, while the vessel is immediately fumigated and disinfected. In case the PCR test is also positive, the crewmember is quarantined to undergo a treatment until complete recovery before any contact with healthy people.

The quarantine can take place in a specialized public hospital, private institution or in a hotel where strict health security is prescribed. An appointed medical staff can therefore be hired for express services. The costs are based on the quality of the request.

To prevent the spread of disease, best practices should be followed:

- Preventive hygiene measures should be applied regularly,
- Hand washing,
- Limit physical interaction between the crew and shore-based laborers.

**We would like to thank to our correspondent, Joel Ndong TCI Cameroun, Douala for providing us this information.**

## 2. Indonesia: Ban of Exporting Coal

Indonesia has issued Circular on 31 Dec 2021 placing with immediate effect an export ban of coal. The Circular halts all export of coal from all over Indonesia during the month of January 2022.

The reason for the export ban is to secure domestic coal supply to the National State Electric Power Company (PLN). The PLN will otherwise have to shut down some of their power plants and they will not let this continue in order to avoid an economic impact.

All stakeholders had meeting with the Ministry of Mineral and Coal already on 5th January 2022 after studying and reviewing the supply of coal to PLN.

After the meeting on 5 January

- The Ministry of Energy and Mineral stated that there are 25 mining companies in East Kalimantan province or 122 companies all over Indonesia that were allowed to export the coal because they had fulfilled their Domestic Market Obligation (DMO).
- The DMO is an obligation that enforces all the mining companies to supply 25% of their total production to the national electricity company Perusahaan Listrik Negara (PLN).



This will affect all ships currently in Indonesia to load coal. The Shippers likely will issue a Force Majeure for this situation. If the contract includes a “Princes and Rulers” clause, it may also take effect here. We strongly encourage Members to either seek legal advice or discuss with P&I Club of what appropriate steps might be right for you and we will closely monitor any developments.

**We would like to thank to our Correspondent SPICA SERVICES (S) PTE LTD for providing us this information.**



## 3. Albania

### 3.1. Durres port

There are no specific concerns that may affect P&I cover when calling Albanian ports.

### 3.2. Other: sludge + bilge

It is obligatory to discharge sludge + bilge for all vessels. The communication date 18 Dec. 2014 issued by Harbour Master Office is ordering that all sludge and bilge should be discharged before vessel leaves the port. Please note they are ordering that vessel will not be allowed to sail if sludge and bilges are not discharged.

**We would like to thank to our correspondent Ilir Misa, Samer-Misa, for providing us this information.**



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