

June 24, 2002

MR'S ADVISORY TO SHIPPING No. A-18-2002

TO : All Steamship Agents, Owners, and Operators

SUBJECT: Review of Maximum Above Deck Container Carrying Capacity

Effective 1 October 2002, the Panama Canal Authority will begin reviewing the maximum above deck container carrying capacity (MDCC) for all vessels transiting the Panama Canal.

In compliance with the 1994 Amendments to Chapters VI/5.6, VII/6.6 of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974 (SOLAS), and the Code of Safe Practice for Cargo Stowage and Securing (CSS Code), cargo units, including containers, shall be stowed and secured throughout the voyage in accordance with the vessel's Cargo Securing Manual (CSM), approved by the Flag Administration of the vessel. These amendments enter into force 1 July 2002.

The Cargo Securing Manual (CSM) shall be prepared in accordance with the "Guidelines for the Preparation of the Cargo Securing Manual" as established in IMO's Maritime Safety Committee Circular 745 (MSC/Circ.745), and shall be maintained on board and available as part of the routine inspection by Panama Canal Authority Boarding Officers. Upon arrival to the Panama Canal, Masters should be prepared to present Boarding Officers with a complete set of drawings and a complete copy of the Cargo Securing Manual, specifically the container stowage section.

These documents will be taken ashore by Panama Canal Authority Boarding Officers to review the maximum above deck container carrying capacity. A receipt will be issued for these documents and they will be returned to the vessel through its local agent as soon as the review is completed.

The MDCC form will be prepared by the Admeasurement Office of the Panama Canal Authority and taken to the vessel for the Master's signature on the vessel's next arrival at the Panama Canal. A new PC/UMS Tonnage certificate will be issued when deemed necessary.

ORIGINAL SIGNED

Jorge L. Quijano
Maritime Operations Director