



steamship association of louisiana

(Formerly known as the New Orleans Steamship Association)

316 BOARD OF TRADE PLACE, NEW ORLEANS, LOUISIANA 70130
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Minutes from NAMO WPM Conference Call 4-13-06

In attendance: Helen Brohl (USGLSA); Rob Herb (MEDELRIV); Sean Duffy (SALA); Jeanne Cardona (ASBA); George Duffy (NSA Agencies); Niels Aalund (WGMA); Kevin King (PMSA); and Kathy Long (PSMA); Cathy Saucedo (CBP); Ann Rothrock (CBP); Roger West (USDA); Bruce Leutdke (USDA); Candace Funk (USDA); Mike Simon (USDA).

Sean Duffy, WPM Chair for NAMO, opened the discussion by asking for clarification from USDA and CBP on five items requiring further discussion based on their answers provided to the questions issued on April 3, 2006.

1. There is a contradictory situation between regulation on landing dunnage under ISPM 15 saying if properly marked, can go right to dock. Old regs say USDA must be contacted before discharging. Rob Herb and George Duffy clarified the previous procedures of contacting USDA before offloading. This "in between time" before the July 5th implementation date for dunnage begs the question on whether they should contact USDA now even if the dunnage is marked. The USDA and CBP representatives indicated that this was a policy under discussion but until it is cleared up, unmarked dunnage should be handled under the old rule and marked dunnage under the new rule.

2. If dunnage comes off the ship and gets mixed up with other dunnage, how will CBP determine origin of the dunnage on the dock, especially if not stamped? Couldn't it get mixed up with domestic dunnage and be ordered re-exported in error? Cathy Saucedo indicated that, while they respect any concerns for certain scenarios, they are not in the position to pre-determine the response for all incidents. She believes the best way to treat this is to allow the inspectors the enforcement discretion to make determination as to whether or not dunnage is foreign or not if not marked. To extent that emergency action notices are issued, and there are circumstances that make one believe it was issued in error, then CBP would have to intervene and set some kind of a rule to get Q &A to clarify how to treat dunnage.

3. Marks which have been smeared have been seen. Reg. calls for the mark to be legible. Is this another discretionary issue for the inspector? Cathy Saucedo responded that they discussed this amongst the government agencies and decided to apply the same logic as to cut dunnage where the mark is missing. For the CBP Officer to make an assessment if they believe the smeared mark is from the same stamped compliant lot as the unsmeared marks in the same shipment. CBP will advise field officers to use enforced discretion and to make an allowance for some smeared marks to be ISPM 15 compliant..

4. There are still concerns about sending U.S. WPM overseas. For example, there are no responses from Kuwait. No contacts there and there seems to be changes in what's required. USDA responded that changes in a mark must be within guidelines by ISPM 15. The mark must reflect that the WPM was treated accordingly. Many countries have contacted USDA to request an exemption to the rule for dunnage coming into the U.S. CBP and USDA are not going to issue any exemptions from ISPM 15. Countries that don't have proper processing facilities to supply stamped WPM, can get the wood from a third source. They are still attempting to clear up the lack of response from some countries, and will look to monitor changes within the ISPM 15 mark/stamp.

5. NAMO went on to explain the documented cases of mold related to heat treatment of wood packing material. Mike Simon stated that mold is not a quarantine issue for them. Been in a lot of containers that have been fumigated. Function of wood being wet and festering for a month and it's ripe. Some smells have gotten workers dizzy before. Our concern is that the problem had not materialized until we started receiving vessels with heat treated wood. We are trying to determine if these new mold cases are just totally related to wood being so dry that it absorbs moisture from environment. Very rarely see it otherwise. Seems to be traced back to heat treated wood. Philadelphia stevedores would not discharge because of high level of mold. George Duffy stated that they have put some dehumidifiers on vessels and greatly reduced the amount of mold. Still some but no where near what experienced 30 days ago but it does add an additional cost and confirms heat treatment process is cause.

USDA wondered if it is a product of poorly treated wood since they have not seen mold on US WPM. Sean has since forwarded the statement of the P & I Club and Brian Bond's study on the mold issue and USDA said they would look into it. Sean is also privately pursuing some more definitive information on mold from other sources and will advise NAMO of any developments.

Additional Questions or Points:

Kevin from PMSA reported on a situation in Seattle where ship brought in yachts on cradles but where the metal cradle meets the boat, wood shims have been used. The wood used is untreated. What should they do? Sean recommended having them use bits of smaller gauge wood which fall outside the regulation.

There being no further discussion, the meeting was adjourned at 4:50 p.m. EST.