

NORTH P&I CLUB LENDS SUPPORT TO THE INTERNATIONAL CAMPAIGN TO CUT LIQUEFACTION COSTS

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The 'A' rated, 170 million GT North of England P&I Club is playing a major role in continuing international efforts to prevent further loss of life caused by nickel ore cargoes that liquefy at sea. The latest developments in the campaign are reported in the Club's loss-prevention newsletter *Signals*.

Most recently, North's loss-prevention manager Andrew Glen attended the editorial and technical group of the International Maritime Organization's subcommittee on dangerous goods, solid cargoes and containers (IMO DSC) meeting on 19-23 March as a representative of the International Group of P&I Clubs. A number of proposals to improve the safe transport of solid bulk cargoes were discussed which will lead to amendments to the International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes (IMSBC) Code.

French representatives submitted a proposed new code schedule for nickel ore based on research in the French territory of New Caledonia in the Pacific, which has a quarter of the world's nickel ore deposits. According to Glen, 'The schedule references a new test developed by the French government to assess the suitability of New Caledonia nickel ore for carriage by sea. It is a revised version of the penetration table test described in the International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes (IMSBC) Code.' If adopted at the IMO DSC meeting in September 2012, the new schedule will be mandatory from 1 January 2015.

Glen was also recently part of a delegation to Indonesia from the International Group of P&I Clubs and Intercargo to discuss the shipping industry's concerns. Five ships carrying Indonesian nickel ore have been lost in the past 18 months along with the lives of 66 seafarers.

'The purpose of the visit was to establish a dialogue with local authorities which in turn will lead to a range of measures to address recent casualties and reduce the likelihood of further accidents associated with nickel ore liquefaction in this region,' says Glen.

North is also working with the International Group of P&I Clubs, Intercargo, the International Chamber of Shipping and the International Union of Marine Insurance to introduce additional safety measures designed to reduce the likelihood of further casualties in nickel ore trade. 'This includes engaging with administrations to identify aspects of compliance that could be improved and locating suitable resources to enhance oversight by the competent authority and adoption of IMSBC Code requirements,' says Glen.

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