

## **Notification: Ecologists continue to attack the vessels – Update**

Further to our previous reports unfortunately we have to inform you that ecological inspection officials' attacks on foreign ships calling at the Ukrainian ports have been recently getting even worse: for the last week we encountered two more attempts of ecological inspectors to get on board a ship and take samples of segregated ballast. In one of the said cases the Master agreed to allow the inspectors to take the ballast water samples which eventually cost the ship USD 18,500.00.

When the inspectors are not allowed to get to the ballast tanks they resort to wily tactics which have already become standard for such cases: they write a letter to the Harbor Master informing him about "unsatisfactory results of the analyses of the samples of port water area near the ship in question". Despite apparent absurdity of such letters it has already happened so that on their basis the Harbour Master ordered detention of the vessel in the port. As a result, the ship is shifted to another pier which may cost the Owners/Charterers a nice little sum of USD 10,000 - 20,000.00 depending on time and days of the week. At that, a stevedoring company tries to make the owners pay for "idle occupation of berth" (usually this fine is over USD 1000 for 1 hour).

In this regard we have to repeat once again our strong recommendation to the Owners: please do follow one simple rule: never allow the ecological inspectors to come to the segregated ballast tanks, never let them take segregated ballast samples and never provide them with any ship's documentation on segregated ballast operations.

If you are under pressure from the local "ecologist" please urgently call for a P&I Correspondent. Taking into consideration all the complications and more than strange attitude of some Harbour Masters, an involvement of a lawyer may usually be necessary to successfully resolve the situation.

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