

JAPAN P&I NEWS

To the Members

Hazards of Carrying Cargoes Classified as Group A under the IMSBC Code

1. Risks Associated with the Carriage of Nickel Ore

We have recently encountered an extremely grave casualty in which a vessel entered with the Association sank after loading nickel ore in the Philippines. It is highly probable that the accident was caused by cargo liquefaction, which tragically resulted in the loss of precious lives of the crew members.

Nickel ore is classified as a Group A cargo under the IMSBC Code, which identifies it as a material that may liquefy if shipped with a moisture content exceeding its Transportable Moisture Limit (TML). Such liquefaction can lead to a significant loss of vessel stability, potentially resulting in the vessel capsizing.

Historically, there has been a series of casualties involving the listing or capsizing of vessels due to the liquefaction of nickel ore loaded in the Philippines and Indonesia. In response, the Association issued circulars [No. 10-026](#) dated 1 February 2011 and [No. 12-005](#) dated 6 June 2012 respectively, to highlight the specific risks and provide guidance on necessary precautions. Furthermore, we have requested Members to provide advance notification to the Association whenever an entered ship is scheduled to load nickel ore at ports in these regions.

Please refer to the aforementioned circulars when instructed to carry nickel ore and kindly provide the Association with the following information:

- Ship name
- Port/anchorage of loading and estimated time of arrival (ETA)
- Date of intended loading
- Charterer/shipper's details
- Agent's details
- Copy of the shipper's cargo declaration and supporting certificates

2. Liquefaction Risks of Other Cargoes

The risk of liquefaction is not limited to nickel ore. Recently, a serious incident involving the liquefaction of coal loaded in Canada was reported. This serves as a critical reminder that the dangers of liquefaction remain a persistent threat that cannot be overlooked across various cargo types.

3. Recommended Actions for Members

If there are any doubts regarding the cargo declarations provided by the shippers or the actual condition of the cargo itself, Members are advised to contact the Association immediately. In such cases, we recommend the prompt appointment of an independent surveyor to conduct professional sampling and analysis.

Yours faithfully,

The Japan Ship Owners' Mutual Protection & Indemnity Association