



NEWS

Panama Canal Tanker Inspection Programme

Panama Canal Advisory No. A-09-2004 contains information about the inspection of tankers transiting the canal as part of the canal's Transit Vessel Inspection Programme. These inspections, which are conducted by industrial hygienists and marine chemists, target cargo and emission control systems, fire fighting and detection systems and other systems considered necessary for a safe transit. It would appear that any tanker may be selected for inspection although factors such as the type of cargo carried, age of the tanker, whether it is double or single hulled and performance during previous transits may result in the vessel being selected for inspection.

The inspections are usually scheduled to take place between 0600 and 2000 and are programmed to avoid disrupting the vessels transit schedule. However, if a vessel has a history of deficiencies it may be taken out of the transit schedule until it has successfully passed the inspection.

The cost of the initial inspection is free but if deficiencies are found then charges will be levied based on the chemist, pilot and launch services. Furthermore we have been informed by De Castro & Robles, our Panamanian correspondents, that if deficiencies are found that the vessel may be deemed to be in breach of Article 49 of chapter X of the Panama Canal Authority Regulations and may be liable to a fine. These fines range from US\$100 to US\$1,000,000 depending on the seriousness of the breach.

For further advice Members are advised to contact either the managers or De Casto & Robles.

Yours faithfully
Assurance Foreningen Ltd

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