

Customer Information – Defective Reefers

Dear customers

As has been reported in the press, fatal reefer container accidents/explosions have recently been recorded with apparent background in faulty cooling/gas systems.

Due to this fact we would like to share the following information received by our P&I club, Messrs. UK P&I Club. In the meantime we will need to reserve the right to reject bookings if there appears to be any potential risk to our crews and vessels.

We also kindly ask our clients to keep us informed of matters related to these incidents.

Bulletin 792 - 10/11 - Defective reefers - Worldwide

The Club has received reports that reefer containers that have been recently repaired and/or maintained in Vietnam have suffered catastrophic failure. Three incidents so far have resulted in fatalities.

Recently there have been numerous incidents of reefer containers exploding. Fortunately these explosions have all occurred on the quayside and not onboard. It has been speculated that the refrigerant gas supplied to these reefers was off spec. However this claim is unsubstantiated at this time. It is likely however that poor maintenance to these units is the root cause. The only connection these containers have in common is that they were all repaired or maintained in Vietnam in the last eight months.

It is apparent that these reefer containers were supplied to their respective lines by three different vendors meaning the fault lies not with one specific vendor in Vietnam.

The Club has been advised that numerous container lines are taking action to deal with the threat that these containers pose. Empty containers are not an issue as they are not active however all 'live' containers could pose a possible safety threat.

The Club urges any members who have had reefer containers repaired or maintained in Vietnam since February 2011 to exercise caution when handling these units and to have these units checked at the earliest opportunity. Additionally it may be prudent to contact the manufacturer of the unit for instruction and guidance.

Source of Information:

Loss Prevention
UK P&I Club
www.lossprevention.ukclub@thomasmiller.com

In case of further questions please do not hesitate to contact your local Team Lines Office.

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