



Oil Companies International Marine Forum

Cargo Inspectors – Safe Working Practices

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The OCIMF mission is to be the foremost authority on the safe and environmentally responsible operation of oil tankers and terminals, promoting continuous improvement in standards of design and operation

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1 Background

The OCIMF Ports and Terminal Committee (PTC) has received reports about poor compliance with basic safety procedures and/or an apparent lack of basic tanker safety knowledge by Cargo Inspectors whilst engaged in their professional duties on board tankers. The particular concerns reported to PTC relate to Cargo Inspectors being able to safely discharge their professional duties so as not to compromise the safety of the tanker whilst engaged in its vessel operations. PTC has further concerns that if this situation is not addressed the issue will deteriorate further with decreasing levels of marine, and in particular tanker, experience among those becoming Cargo Inspectors.

The Asia Pacific Terminal Forum (APTF) of the PTC formed a Working Group to review the current safety training and practices of the cargo inspection industry.

2 Work Group Activity

The Working Group noted with concern that there were currently no international standards or regulations for certification, training or competency requirements for Cargo Inspector. The Working Group carried out a review of competency and safety standards for Cargo Inspectors against the following criteria:

- Company HSE policy and commitment
- inspectors qualification for initial employment
- induction familiarisation and safety training
- competency development and training programme
- job risk assessment on terminal and tankers
- competency evaluation
- compliance with national and local port authority regulations, and terminal requirements
- certification standards
- specific requirements for measurement/sampling/testing (on site)
- incident reporting.

The Work Group reviewed a number of cargo inspection companies against the above criteria. A number of inspection companies were also visited.

3 Findings

- Management commitment and ownership of HSE matters within the individual inspection companies was limited
- many inspection companies held classroom induction training for new inspectors but placed a high reliance on peer group assessment
- where structured induction training schemes were provided these provide only limited instruction on safety awareness and ship/shore interface
- most inspection companies supplement formal safety awareness and ship/shore interface training with "on the job" training using an experienced Cargo Inspector to oversee the trainee Cargo Inspector until the trainee is considered proficient to undertake work without supervision.

There was a heavy reliance on the knowledge of experienced cargo inspectors to provide knowledge of HSE requirements to junior inspectors.

4 OCIMF Discussions with the International Federation of Inspection Agency (IFIA)

OCIMF has raised its concerns with IFIA (the cargo inspection companies trade association) over the level of safety awareness and ship/shore interface demonstrated by some cargo inspectors.

IFIA advises that safety is extremely important to its members. IFIA currently attempts to address OCIMF's concerns in its existing literature which refers to the need for Cargo Inspectors to be conversant with the recommendations of publications, including *International Safety Guide for Oil Tankers and Terminals 5th Edition (ISGOTT)* and *Marine Terminal Baseline Criteria and Assessment Questionnaire*. IFIA advises that it has also developed an Inspection Certification Programme which is being rolled out internationally to its members.

IFIA advises that ultimate responsibility for all aspects of safety rests wholly with its individual member inspection companies. IFIA further advises that OCIMF members and/or marine terminals specific concerns regarding safety issues should be directed to the relevant cargo inspection company.

5 Recommendations

Prior to the engagement of an inspection company it is recommended that Members/marine terminals should ensure that the cargo inspectors provided by those companies have:

- Undertaken formal safety training which includes tanker and terminal safety and an awareness of the ship/shore interface
- been assessed as competent following that training
- a knowledge of safe working practices in ISGOTT (5th Edition) in particular Sections 3.3, 4.2, 4.3, 4.8, 13.3.2, 13.4, 15.1, 15.2, 15.4, 15.5.4, 26.2.1, 26.2.2, 26.2.3, 26.2.4
- a knowledge of safe working practices in OCIMF Marine Terminal Baseline Criteria and Assessment Questionnaire (1st Edition), in particular 1.4, 1.5, 1.7, 6.1, 6.6, 6.7 as applicable to their job function
- an awareness of national, port authority, refinery and marine terminal requirements that apply to them whilst carrying out their professional duties
- job risk assessment be submitted by the inspection companies before they are granted permission to perform their job at any terminal.