



PRESS RELEASE

FINAL

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

IUMI calls for further industry cooperation to tackle containership fires

Two recent onboard containership fires have fueled concerns from IUMI (International Union of Marine Insurance) over the challenges involved with managing these incidents at sea.

Uwe-Peter Schieder, Vice Chairman of IUMI's Loss Prevention Committee explains:

"At sea, below-deck fires cannot be fought with water and so CO₂ is used instead to displace the oxygen and extinguish the fire. However, if the fire is burning within a container, the box will protect it from the CO₂ and so this method of fire-fighting is rarely successful. Currently there are no other methods of fighting a containership fire below deck. Even on deck, the crew only have access to hoses and nozzles. They do not have sufficient monitors or foam and so cannot cool the vessel's structure".

IUMI is concerned that seafarers are being asked to tackle onboard fires with inadequate equipment. The Association highlights the unfortunate incident concerning MSC Flaminia where, sadly, three seafarers lost their lives. The vessel burned for almost six weeks, 70% of the cargo was destroyed and the ship was declared a Constructive Total Loss (CTL).

IUMI is well aware of the SOLAS regulations but is calling for further dialogue involving IMO, class, shipbuilders and shipping companies to further improve firefighting capabilities onboard containerships. All stakeholders should work together to identify sustainable solutions to protect lives and property at sea.

The two recent containership fires referenced by IUMI are:

NNCI Arauco - 1 September 2016: A fire broke out whilst alongside in Hamburg during welding operations and 300 firefighters were deployed. The hold was sealed and flooded with CO₂, this was unsuccessful. Water was then used for flooding the hatch and stopped before stability problems occur. Finally, foam was used to bring the fire under control.

Maersk Karachi – 13 May 2016: A fire caused by welding operations needed more than 100 firefighters to control the blaze. Water monitors were needed to flood the hold to extinguish the fire.



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International Union of
Marine Insurance

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Notes to editors:

The International Union of Marine Insurance (IUMI) is a professional body which is run by and for its members. IUMI represents national and international marine insurers and considers issues of interest to the worldwide marine insurance industry. IUMI currently has 46 national associations as members, protecting and advancing their interests. IUMI's roots date back to 1874.

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