

Reefer vessels – caring for cargo: Skuld update



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Van Ameyde Marine and Skuld Hamburg technical manager and senior claims executive Anatolii Bilyk have issued an update on the caring for cargo in reefer vessels.

Skuld noted that most specialized reefer vessels were fitted with a vertical airflow system whereby the refrigerated air from the cooling batteries was introduced into the compartment under the floor gratings and vertically forced through the cargo via the holed gratings or spaced floor boards. The air flowed back along the ceiling towards the return air openings of the cooler rooms and to the suction side of the reefer fans. Depending on the cargo, the cargo compartments were ventilated with fresh outside air in order to remove respiration gases like CO₂ and ethylene produced by the cargo. Skuld said that it should be considered that foodstuffs were being carried and that these vessels were an important part in the transport chain from producers to consumers. meaning that good hygiene was of paramount importance.



Based on its longstanding experience with cargo claims on reefer vessels, Skuld said that it went without saying that the reefer installation must be properly maintained. This also applied for the auxiliary engines and the generators so that at all times the capacity was sufficient to cope with the electric power demands of the reefer installation.

Reefer circulation fans, evaporators, fresh air fans and all other equipment had to be kept in a good working order. Regular testing and calibrating of the equipment was essential, with a comprehensive record being kept.

The insulation itself and the panelling that covered the insulation should be kept in a good condition and any damage had to be repaired immediately, with sufficient spare parts available on board. The maker's requirements for the quantity of the spare parts was to be considered as only the minimum. Sufficient refrigerant to compensate for possible leakage of the system should be on board as well.

After discharge of the previous cargo, cleaning of the cargo compartments depended on the cargo which was carried. If it concerned dry cargo, broom sweeping might be sufficient. All floor gratings had to be lifted and the debris and cargo remains removed. If it concerned a wet/dirty

cargo, the cargo compartments would have to be washed with a high pressure cleaner, with an appropriate fat/odour removing detergent being applied.

Washing of the cargo compartments, even when only dry cargoes are carried, was required periodically, especially when cargoes of cars/trucks are carried in the cargo compartments on return voyages.

Full safety requirements and precautions are available at:
<https://www.skuld.com/topics/cargo/reefer/reefer-vessels—caring-for-cargo/>

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