

## **"SARNIA NEWS" CIRCULAR**

(Ref: 288/16/BM)

TO ALL SHIPOWNER CLIENTS TRADING TO YEMEN

12th January, 2016

**Re: IMPORTANT NOTICE - YEMEN – Current Situation**

Irrespective of your P&I Club / Insurer, please find attached information received from British Marine, which is highly relevant for all ship owners', providing an overview of the current situation at Yemeni ports. Particular emphasis is placed on inflated claims of all types and the slow and difficult process of placing guarantees which can result in vessels being delayed for weeks, if not months.

**It is Sarnia's recommendation that, if possible, trading to Yemen is completely avoided and please ensure this important information is distributed to the relevant personnel, as well as being sent to the Master(s)/Chief Officers(s) of your vessel(s).**

With kind regards,

The Loss Prevention Team

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British Marine News

Advice and Information

## Yemen: Current Situation

08 Jan 2016



British Marine has been observing the ever changing situation in the Yemen in view of the political unrest. We understand that at this moment a humanitarian cease-fire is supposed to be in place, but attacks have not stopped. Port approaches are heavily controlled and containers can no longer be discharged at Hodeidah after air strikes on the crane gantries. We understand container operators are being pushed towards Aden, although the UN continues in their efforts to ensure that foodstuff and similar relief supplies are given permission. The infrastructure and local government of Hodeidah have been affected, and although basic systems are still functioning, the problems of dealing with claims, particularly with regards to the provision of guarantees for ships arrested remains difficult and slow. With regards to the port of Aden which had been effectively closed for some months last year, there appears to be a slow return to commercial shipping, but the absence of normal basic infrastructure is likely to continue for some time. We anticipate any claims arising at these ports to be more difficult than usual for some time to come.

We have noticed an ongoing problem with inflated claims brought by cargo interests in the Yemen, with difficulty in negotiating the provision of security. In some instances the wording put forward has been tantamount to a promise to pay, with the alternative being the provision of a bank guarantee with the inevitable risk of this being drawn down upon straight away. In most instances, the only solution is to

negotiate a settlement on best possible terms, bearing in mind in our experience the local courts, if operating, are likely to be slow and favour local receivers. As a consequence there is a risk that vessels could be delayed for weeks if not months.

In recent months we have experienced an increase in allegations of port damage which have been heavily exaggerated. Trying to source local surveyors with the necessary expertise to perform services such as a dive survey in an attempt to fully investigate the matter has proved challenging, as it is not easy to appoint divers from outside the area in view of the volatile situation in the Yemen. This inevitably leads to delay in the vessel sailing while a solution is reached locally.

Having generally observed an increase in inflated claims in recent months in the Yemen, we would urge our assureds to exercise the utmost caution when deciding whether to trade there in view of the risks involved and the ever changing situation. If problems do arise, we have to stress that the usual levels of assistance provided by our local correspondents may not be available.

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[Website Circular - Yemen.pdf](#)

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