



PRE-SHIPMENT STEEL SURVEY

STEEL CARGOES, (rolls, coils, rebars, strip, girders) may result in claims arising from water damage or physical damage. It is important that the cargo condition is recorded before loading on to the vessel, any marks and description of apparent damage being carefully noted. Photographs to supplement the reported condition may be essential and should be taken by the person inspecting the cargo. If rust is found, a check should be made to see if salts are present, especially if a trans-shipment cargo. Damage or rust should be recorded in a clear and accurate manner, using the recommended clauses shown in the table below, supplemented as necessary.

As water ingress is a major cause of cargo damage claims, a check on the watertight integrity of the hatch-covers is also advised.

Difficulties in such a survey being carried out by the ship's staff arise because:

1. The survey should really commence before the ship arrives whilst the cargo is on the quay.
2. The survey requires a constant attendance for observation. The usual manning of a ship would preclude such a person with the necessary diligence and experience being available all the time that the cargo is being worked.
3. The Master is often under pressure to sign only clean, unclauses Bills of Lading. Where the Bills do have to be cloused, the opinion of an independent expert may be invaluable in assisting the Master to protect his owner's/charterers' interests.
4. Where the hatch-covers are examined an unbiased opinion will assist in defending claims.

From the above, the survey has ideally to be carried out by a person who is not a member of the ship's crew but who would necessarily protect the interest of the ship, i.e. an independent surveyor with the necessary experience appointed by the owners or charterers as appropriate.

In appropriate cases, it is permissible for any of the following clauses to be used when describing steel shipments which show signs of rust or a similar condition on shipment:

Partly rust stained	Some rusty ends	Rust with pitting
Rust stained	Rust spotted	Goods in rusty condition
Rust spots apparent	Rust and oil spotted	Edges bent and rusty
Some rust spots apparent	Wet before shipment	Partly rusty

Rust spots apparent on top sheets	Wet steel tubes	When packed sheet iron is shipped the following two clauses may be used:
Top sheets rusty	Wet bars	Covers rusty/wet
Some top sheets rusty	Rust on metal envelopes	Packing rusty/wet
Rusty edges	Covered with snow	
Some rusty edges	Pitted	
Rusty ends	Rusty	
It must be emphasised that the clause which is used must accurately describe the apparent condition of the steel shipment and must also come within the clauses as set out above.		

While every care is taken in the preparation of this page, it is published solely for the purpose of providing information and should not, in any way, be construed as a substitute for legal advice, which should always be sought in respect of any specific legal problems experienced.
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