

International Chamber of Shipping

38 St Mary Axe London EC3A 8BH

Tel +44 20 7090 1460

Fax +44 20 7090 1484



info@ics-shipping.org www.ics-shipping.org www.shipping-facts.com

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11 January 2012

ICS(12)06

TO: ALL FULL AND ASSOCIATE MEMBERS
Copy: CANALS PANEL
MARINE COMMITTEE
MARITIME LAW COMMITTEE

EGYPTIAN AND SUEZ CANAL REQUIREMENTS REGARDING WEAPONS AND SECURITY TEAMS

Action required: to note the attached circular from the head of the Egyptian Maritime Transport Sector detailing strict requirements with regard to weapons and security teams on board ships transiting the Suez Canal or calling at Egyptian ports.

Members are invited to note the attached circular from the head of the Egyptian Maritime Transport Sector which states that the carriage of weapons / security teams is banned on board commercial vessels transiting the Suez Canal or calling at Egyptian ports. It is stated that ships carrying weapons are required to hand them over to Egyptian port authorities in a locked box on entering the Canal/ an Egyptian port for return on exit.

ICS is contacting the Suez Canal Authority for further clarification; in the meantime, members are requested to report their experience of recent transits to the undersigned at emily.rowley@ics-shipping.org

Emily Rowley
Adviser

Maritime Transport Sector
Marine Permits Department
Date: 09/01/2012

Dear Sirs,

Kindly be Informed that on 28/11/2011, we received correspondence from the General Secretariat of the Ministry of Defense No. 10/3/24/2 C53 dated 21/11/2011, and also correspondence from the Marine Operations Department dated 3/12/2011 regarding the necessity to comply with the following:

1. The Egyptian Government bans the existence of any weapons/security teams on board any commercial vessels as per the laws and regulations with that regard issued by the International Maritime Organization.
2. In case commercial vessels calling the Egyptian ports have weapons onboard: Vessel Master shall keep the weapons under lock and shall issue a certificate to that effect to be submitted to the pilot in the pilotstation. The certificate is to include an undertaking by the Master to hand in the weapons in a locked box to the Port Police immediately upon mooring. The box shall be carefully checked by the Port Police and will be handed back to the Master upon vessel departure.
3. In case of non-compliance, vessel shall not be permitted to enter harbor with weapons onboard.
4. As for vessels transiting the Suez Canal: Civil Police elements (Port Security) shall receive the weapons from vessels to transit the Suez Canal at the entry point and shall transport them by land, and then hand them back to vessel crew at clearance point.
5. In case weapons are deployed onboard a vessel while in the Egyptian territorial waters, while berthed at port, while being at anchorage whether inner or outer roads, or while transiting the Suez Canal, vessel Master and crew shall be held accountable pursuant to the Egyptian Law, including detaining vessel, Master, and persons carrying the weapons without permits who shall be liable under Law No. 394 and its amendments regarding weapon and ammunition possession without permits. They shall be interrogated by the competent prosecution authority after a seizure report is issued.

Kindly comply with the instructions mandated by the Ministry of Defense with due diligence and communicate them to the maritime transport companies you serve as agents, as well as to ship masters of vessels calling the Egyptian ports.

Best regards,
Head of Maritime Transport Sector
Rear Admiral
Al-Sayed Hamid Hidaya