



Maritime & Coastguard Agency

Councillor M Hackett
Nuclear Free Local Authorities Secretariat
c/o Nuclear Policy Unit
City Policy Team
Level 5
Town Hall Extension
Manchester
M60 2LA

Environmental Policy
Bay 2/08
Spring Place
105 Commercial Road
Southampton
SO15 1EG

Tel: +44 (0)23 8329 100
Fax: +44 (0)23 80329 204
E-mail: david.macrae@mcga.gov.uk

Your ref:
Our ref:

13 June 2014

Dear Councillor Hackett

Atlantic Cartier Fire Incident – Hamburg May 2013.

I refer to your letter of 15 May in which you raise a number of concerns regarding the fire on the Atlantic Cartier in Hamburg on the 1 May 2013. It has been forwarded to me at the Maritime and Coastguard Agency to consider your concerns and review the interim accident investigation work carried out by the German Federal Bureau of Maritime Casualty Investigation and the Swedish Accident Investigation Authority. I would caution that we can only respond in general terms in relation to the accident as we do not have access to specific, detailed cargo information or a full break-down of the positions of the cargoes when the vessel arrived in Hamburg. In this regard we look forward to the publication of the final accident investigation report by the German and Swedish investigators.

With regard to the general regime that applies to vessels such as the Atlantic Cartier, the ships are required to comply fully with international standards laid down by the United Nations International Maritime Organization – the key Conventions being the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, and its Protocol of 1988 (SOLAS) which deals with vessel construction and operation, and the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships 1973 as modified by the 1978 and 1997 protocols (MARPOL) which addresses environmental issues associated with shipping. These form the core of the requirements for internationally trading ships. Vessels are subject to regular inspection and if found to be dangerously non-compliant would be prevented from sailing.

The carriage of dangerous goods, including products such as Uranium Hexafluoride is regulated under the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code. The IMDG Code sets out detailed requirements applicable to each individual substance, material or article with regards to the packaging requirements, special considerations when being carried, the stowage position when being shipped and segregation requirements in relation to other products listed in the IMDG Code. The Code also provides details



HM Coastguard



on the actions to be taken in the event a fire or pollution incident. The Code is reviewed every two years at the International Maritime Organisation with input from Member States. This is to ensure it is kept up to date to take into account technological advancements, changes to chemical classifications; related consignment provisions and also taking into account incidents that may require additional safety, stowage and segregation requirements or increased carriage requirements. If as a result of the investigation into the fire on the Atlantic Cartier amendments are required then the UK Government will work with Germany and Sweden to ensure the Code is amended accordingly.

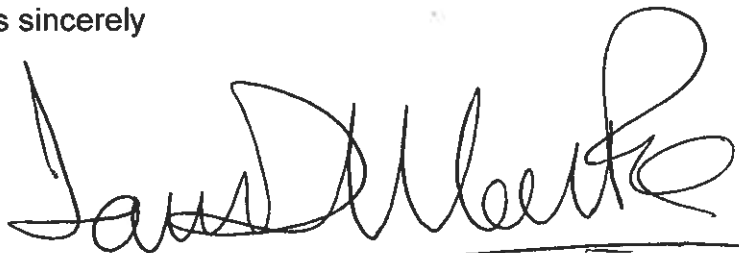
All ships carrying dangerous goods, including the Atlantic Cartier and other vessels engaged in the carriage of 'Class 7' (Radioactive Material), are required to undergo regular surveys to ensure that the vessel is fit for purpose and the correct equipment is fitted and maintained to ensure the risk of a fire or pollution incident is kept to a minimum. It is our understanding that the Atlantic Cartier was fully compliant in this respect and had a valid Document of Compliance for the Carriage of Dangerous Goods.

Substances classified as Class 7, Explosives and Flammable Liquids are required to be separated from one another as a minimum; and in many cases the segregation requirements will be stricter with a greater distance between containers when considering individual products. In addition packages containing Class 7 products have to comply fully with International Atomic Energy Agency Regulations for the safe transport of Radioactive Materials. Under these regulations, the packages have to undergo impact and fire tests before they can be used for transport.

With respect to your concern about the notification of movements of such vessels, you may be aware that all vessels entering European Waters carrying dangerous goods are required to inform the Country that they are calling at that they are carrying dangerous goods. This is required by law under European Directive 2002/59/EC on Vessel Traffic Monitoring and Information Systems.. In addition to this, vessels carrying Class 7 Radioactive Materials are required to inform the relevant regulatory authority in the United Kingdom of the radioactive materials being shipped and details of the packaging so that an approval can be granted for the vessel to call at a UK port.

I hope the above information provides you some comfort that the movement of Class 7 products is subject to stringent regulation and monitoring regardless of the vessel type, and should you have any further questions then please contact the undersigned.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Iain D MacRae', written over a horizontal line.

Iain D MacRae
Marine Surveyor
Environment Policy Branch