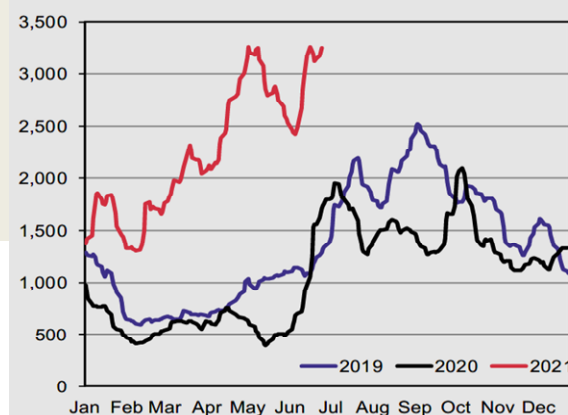




# THE GENSTEAM CURRENTS

## COMPANY NEWSLETTER – PUBLISHED QUARTERLY

### Baltic Exchange Dry Index



**CAPTION:** The Baltic Dry Bulk Index shows a dramatic increase in 2021 (red), compared to the two previous years.

## *Ships Keep on Comin’!*

JUNE 2021

The last 18 months have been unusual by many metrics. Not least of which, are the surprising increase in ship volumes we have seen compared to this time last year. While the container sector has struggled to recover from back-logs brought on by the pandemic, the dry/liquid/break bulk sectors have seen significant growth as confidence builds that the pandemic is nearing an end.


Many companies cut inventory and stockpiles during last year’s lockdowns, not knowing when production could or would, return to ‘normal.’ Now that things are looking better, the surge is on, and we have certainly noticed.

### ***G Captain Reports:***

“Rising demand for everything from soybeans to steel has sent the cost of hauling dry goods soaring more than 50% this year. Manufacturing, which first picked up in China, is now accelerating elsewhere, and countries are stepping up commodity purchases to rebuild stockpiles after running them down during lockdowns that slowed port operations and hit economic activity globally.

Analysts say the rally isn’t over, with rates to carry unpacked commodities like grains, iron ore and coal — known as dry bulk — expected to remain high this year and possibly into 2022. That’s a stark turnaround for a market that slid to a four-year low less than 12 months ago, and comes amid a tight supply of vessels. It’s also happening as the uneven recovery scrambles movements of ship containers, which carry everything from furniture to packed commodities like coffee and white sugar.”

We are certainly capitalizing on this increased demand, and all indications are that 2021 will be a good year for us. While the absence of the cruise industry appears to be an inevitable reality once again for 2021, we are certainly making up for it in other sectors of the market.

We’d like to thank everyone for their continued hard work in servicing this notable increase in vessels. Your efforts are appreciated! 



**CAPTION:** Crew of the GS Forward, were all vaccinated some 3NM offshore Nome, Alaska, thanks to the efforts of our colleagues at Alaska Maritime.

## *Sound Your Horns! A Call to Action*

JUNE 2021

At 12:00 pm local time on 25 June, ships the world over blasted their horns to send a message to local governments.

That Message?

The urgent need to vaccinate seafarers.

Dubbed the “Sound Your Horns Campaign,” The International Chamber of Shipping called on ships to sound their horns when in port at 12 noon local time on the 25<sup>th</sup> June, as long as it was safe to do so, to draw attention to the plight of seafarers, and ensure that they are prioritized for the vaccine.


While the United States has led the way in seafarer access to vaccines, many countries around the world are continuing to refuse shore leave or onboard vaccine programs, or simply do not have enough supply of vaccines to provide to crewmembers arriving on foreign vessels.

Weeks before the campaign took place, General Steamship and Alaska Maritime were already well underway in coordinating seafarer vaccination efforts. Our offices not only met with state and local officials to advise them on the need for vaccines in the often overlooked maritime industry, but also laid the logistical groundwork for, and oversaw the implementation of, several on-board and off-site vaccination programs in key ports across the country.

We are happy to announce that COVID vaccines are now available to seafarers calling on most ports within the United States. These programs are available to all vessels and agents, not just on our own ships, and are actively getting vaccines into the arms of our hardworking colleagues at sea.

Since the pandemic began, seafarers have been at increased risk of exposure due to their continual contact with people and places all over the world. Often spending weeks at a time at sea between port calls, adequate medical attention in the event of severe infection was often, and continues to be, an impossibility. While the entire world came to an effective halt in 2020, shipping never stopped, and neither did our seafarers. They are now asking us to return the favor by aiding them in getting adequate access to vaccines, and we have answered the call.

We would like to thank all of our staff, local vendors, port authorities, and government officials who have gone above and beyond to get these programs up and running. Truly rewarding work! Fantastic job to all involved. The outpouring of appreciation and support from ship owners, managers, operators, and the crew themselves, has been tremendous.

Additional information of crew vaccine programs can be found on our website: <https://www.gensteam.com/gensteam-covid-19.html> 





IN THIS ISSUE

UPCOMING  
CHANGES TO VAP

SAFETY SEGMENT:  
ANCHOR  
BOARDINGS

ITIC CLAIMS  
REVIEW SUMMER  
2021

Safety Segment: Anchor Boardings  
(Repeat from Volume 01)

*Note: Going forward, we will be repeating safety segments from previous volumes of this publication as refreshers for new and experienced staff alike.*

This issue’s safety piece focuses on agents boarding vessels while at anchorage. Launch to ship transfers and vice versa, are one of the most dangerous parts of an agent’s job and there are many preventative measures that can be taken to ensure a safe and successful boarding.

1. Do you have your PPE?

PPE is required for all boardings, including those at anchor, and should include:

- a. High visibility vest
- b. Company approved life vest
- c. Safety gloves
- d. Hard Hat
- e. Safety Boots
- f. Safety Glasses
- g. Backpack/boarding bag for documents / paperwork.
- h. TWIC Card / Photo I.D.

If you do not have your required PPE, do not continue with the boarding.

2. Plan your boarding.

Taking a few moments to plan out your boarding can make all the difference.

- a. Identify potential hazards – weather / sea conditions, encumbrances – number of parcels to carry etc.
- b. Assess the level of risk – do the current conditions warrant boarding? If you are not satisfied with your boarding plan, do not proceed.
- c. Proceed – once you are satisfied that the boarding can be safely conducted, proceed.

3. The Launch Boat

- a. Crewing

Our company policy requires that all launch boats have a minimum two-person crew - one captain and one deckhand to assist passengers.

A second pair of eyes is critically important to responding quickly and effectively in an emergency.

Many accidents occur when passengers fall overboard and the sole captain, being tied up with operating the vessel, does not notice and cannot respond quickly. If the launch boat does not have a two- person crew, decline the boarding and hire an alternate provider.

- b. Familiarize yourself with the boat. Take a look around the boat and familiarize yourself with the location of life vests, life rings, first aid kits, fire extinguishers etc. If you are unsure about the location of any safety equipment, ask the vessel crew. Always follow the instructions of the crew in any emergency.

4. Prepare for Boarding

As the launch boat approaches the gangway/accommodation ladder, agents should be weary of the following:

- a. Is the gangway safely deployed? Full gangway deployed to waterline with safety net is always the preferred method of boarding. Vessel should be instructed to prepare same well in advance of your arrival. Jacobs/Pilot ladder should not be used for anchor boardings whenever possible. Make sure that vessel crew are monitoring the boarding process before stepping onto the gangway.

- b. Bottom platform  
The bottom step of the gangway should be perpendicular to the waterline as not to slip. If the bottom platform is at an awkward angle, crew should be summoned to adjust the platform before stepping on board. Giving the platform a firm stomp before stepping on board is also advised to ensure everything is safely secured. If you are not comfortable stepping onto the bottom platform, stepping over it directly onto the first step of the gangway is perfectly acceptable.

- a. Packages  
Agent should always step onto a gangway with two-free hands. Any parcels to bring on board should fit in your backpack/boarding bag. Any remaining parcels should be left on the launch boat for vessel crew to hoist onto deck.


5. Check for Swells

Before you step off the launch be sure to check the sea conditions around you one

last time for large swells or passing ship traffic can cause wakes that makes boarding especially perilous. Do not attempt to board the ship during dangerous conditions. Unsafe river/sea conditions are the underlying cause of most accidents during launch to ship transfers. If the boarding is beyond your capabilities or what you are comfortable with, do not attempt. Boardings can always be rescheduled.

6. Welcome Aboard

Always keep three points of contact on the gangway while ascending and descending. Go slow and at a pace that is comfortable for you. *Pro tip: watch out for the gangway cables! They are greasy and will stain your clothes.* Once at the top of the gangway, always check in with vessel crew and sign into the visitor log. This is important to account for all people in the event of an on-board emergency. Always be polite and respectful while on board and follow all instructions of the crew. Remember, you are their guest and are flying the company flag while on their vessel!

We appreciate all offices taking the time to go over proper anchor boarding procedures with your staff. We all need refreshers from time to time, even the most experienced among us. Complacency leads to accidents and safety is not optional! 



CAPTION: Vessel’s gangway deployed for anchor boarding.



## Upcoming Changes to VAP – Quotes / Training


### QUOTES TOOL

With the help of our I.T. department, we have developed a new tool in VAP that allows users to generate responses to PDA inquiries in a matter of seconds.


Dubbed the “Quotes” tool, our new system integrates port information from the Gensteam Operations Desk, with new formulaic tables stored in VAP – to produce a highly accurate auto generated PDA, with all relevant port information, bundled into one package. The final product can be redistributed back to the customer directly from VAP, thus no jumping back and forth from outlook required.

Several offices are already up and running using the new system, and for those who are not, we will be coming to you soon to get you started.

Centralizing our inquiry responses into one system enables very important data gathering capabilities, which can then be used for marketing and other purposes later on. Which customers are looking at what cargoes? Where? Which cargoes are on the rise/fall? Where should we focus our marketing efforts etc.? Our current system of every office having their own way of answering inquiries via email, with no centralized location, does currently not allow for this capability.

The tool has been made as efficient and user friendly as possible, and it is no exaggeration that inquiries can be answered in less than 60 seconds once you are used to it. We hope the system proves useful to all of the offices and look forward to working with you to get this fine tuned to your liking. 

### VAP TRAINING

Detailed VAP Training will be conducted very soon with our Stockton office view several new hires. These meetings will be recorded this time to redistribute to all offices. There are many hidden capabilities of VAP that we wish to highlight with all staff so that they are getting the most out of the product. More to come. 

## Welcome Aboard! Personnel News

JUNE 2021

### New Staff:

We have had some recent personnel changes that we are happy to report.

James Mejino joined our Stockton, CA office in June as a vessel manager, and Luis Viteri has returned to our Los Angeles office.

We would like to congratulate Albert Cue for being promoted to Asst. Ops Manager in the Houston office! Way to go.

### Anniversaries:


Bryan Smith is celebrating 15 years with General Steamship this month. Rebecca Peralez and Jorge Viteri both hit 10 years with the company this month. Congrats to you all on reaching these milestones!

Tyler Anderson and Jen Phillips left the company this quarter to pursue other opportunities. 

## ITIC.com Case Studies – Ship Agency Claims Review

### WRONG HOLDS


A ship agent issued bills of lading in respect of a cargo of different types of coal being transported to Canada. Due to human error, they confused the holds and indicated on the bills of lading that Coal Type A cargo was in holds 1, 3 and 5 and Coal Type B cargo was in holds 2 and 4. However, it was actually the other way around.

The cargoes were discharged to the wrong facilities. The receivers brought a claim against the owner which was passed to the agent. ITIC arranged for lawyers to represent the agent. They argued that there was a discharge plan on the vessel (which was correct) and had the vessel been discharged in accordance with the discharge plan this claim would not have happened. In addition, the receivers had a surveyor in attendance and his reports referred to the correct configuration of the cargo. The bills of lading were however clearly wrong and the agent ultimately contributed US\$185,000 which was 45% of the claimed amount. 

### GAS FREE OR NOT GAS FREE

A North American ship agent was nominated for the call of a ship scheduled to load at a terminal on the east coast of USA. After the ship agent notified the terminal of the ship’s pending arrival, the terminal foreman advised the agent that the ship had to be “gas free” prior to loading.


This information was passed to the master of the ship. The master replied that his tanks were inerted to less than 2%. The ship agent did not pass this information on to the terminal. The ship received loading instructions and proceeded to clean tanks while en route to the terminal.

Just prior to arrival, the terminal sent a message again to the agent to the effect that the tanks would need to be gas free prior to loading. The ship agent passed this information to the master who said that he would require 24 hours to make the ship gas free. This procedure was followed but the shipowner found subsequently that the terminal would have considered the ship ready to load in either a gas free state or an inerted state. A demurrage claim of US\$67,375 was incurred and this was claimed from the agent. There were arguments on behalf of the agent as to why the charterers and the owners had not taken more care to ensure that the ship complied with the terminal’s requirements, but the agent had to accept responsibility for an element of the demurrage claim. 

### MISREAD TARIFF

A port agent was asked by the owners of a ship to provide a quote for the costs of discharging a shipment of project cargo. The agent reviewed the port authority’s official tariffs, and advised

the owners that the stevedoring costs would be US\$28.90 per metric tonne of cargo. The cargo weighed 296 metric tonnes, so the owners calculated the stevedoring costs at approximately US\$8,500 and quoted that in turn to the charterers of the ship. The voyage was fixed on that basis. The cargo was discharged and the stevedores invoiced the agent US\$130,000 - costs which were passed to the owners who questioned them. The agent then realized that the US\$28.90 rate that they had quoted to the owners was the rate per cubic meter, not per metric tonne. The case was reported to ITIC who verified, via local correspondents, that the agent had simply misread the port tariff document. The agent approached the stevedores who were willing to offer a discount on the costs, and ultimately the agent settled the claim for US\$75,000, which was covered by ITIC.

Claims commonly arise from misread tariffs. In another recent case, ship agents in Australia quoted the incorrect port charges for a local port to their customer. Their customer then fixed on that basis and suffered a loss of AU\$86,000. The claim against the agent was reimbursed by ITIC. 



*Photos of the Week From Across the Company!*

RECENT SUBMISSIONS



**CAPTION:** The Blue Baie (Toko), arrives to Lynnterm, Vancouver B.C. Photo provided by Steve Pomeroy.



**Caption:** Russ Lyzell attended the USCG Benjamin Bottoms in Coos Bay, Oregon.



**CAPTION:** Crew aboard the MV Atlantic Brave get their COVID vaccinations in New Orleans, LA. Photo provided by Chris Kerwin.

**[END]**

Thanks for reading Issue 04 of the Gensteam Currents!  
Check back in Quarter 03 2021, for Issue 05.

Any questions/comments about this publication can be directed to:  
[media@gensteam.com](mailto:media@gensteam.com)



**Caption:** Empire Shipping's office in Vancouver BC, circa 1930. Photo submitted by Bruce Rothdram.