

UNISERVICE / TÜRKIYE

VISWA LAB. FUEL ANALYSIS

BÜLTEN #21

WATCH OUT - ROTTERDAM PORT

Problems ahead on Low Sulfur Fuel Directive

Authorities in Netherlands have taken 88 distillate fuel samples from ships in Rotterdam port, in order to check on the conformance to European Commission directive reducing sulfur content of Marine Diesel Oil and Marine Gas Oil. Out of these 88, in 8 cases samples have been handed over to the Department of Justice. The directive on low sulfur MDO and MGO was issued in 1999. This sets a sulfur limit of 0.2% of both grades of fuels. No one apparently, took this directive seriously till the Dutch authorities commenced enforcement activities. Bunker suppliers are vexed and they are telling shipowners to make their voice heard by European Union through organizations like BIMCO and INTERTANKO. They feel these specifications have been drawn by "armchair experts" without adequate discussion with the interested parties in the shipping community. The Netherlands Department of Environment takes the stand that they are simply complying with a directive that is in line with law. Currently confusion reigns supreme.

If you have ships going to Rotterdam, you may want to obtain more information from your Agent. You may also want to keep a tank or two tanks empty to load adequate quantities of MDO/MGO containing sulfur less than 0.2%. This may be a prudent thing to do till the shipping industry succeeds in negotiating concessions with the European Union. Obviously, this has to be done on an emergency basis since other European countries may start similar enforcement activities.

Best regards,

Dr. Vis

Viswa Lab Corporation