

# **MEMBER ALERT**



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## **STOWAWAYS: SOUTH AFRICA**

Your Managers have received information to the effect that the number of persons trying to stowaway on board ships in Durban and Cape Town is increasing. Shipowners are recommended to implement appropriate preventative measures.

It is the obligation of the crew, in South Africa, to check the identity of all people coming on board ship. If unauthorized persons are allowed aboard the shipowner is liable for the consequences, including repatriation costs where relevant.

It is recommended that:

1. The crew should post and man a security desk to the bottom of the ship's gangway.
2. No person without a Transnet National Ports Authority (TNPA) permit should be allowed aboard. If an individual without a special permit arrives as part of a stevedore team, the stevedore foreman should explain why that person does not have a permit and the crew should then take a picture of the stevedore, together with the stevedore foreman, as evidence.
3. The security desk should collect the TNPA permits from stevedores and the permit should be returned to them when they disembark. Should a stevedore not collect the permit he can be assumed still to be on board. This is the best means of evidence that demonstrates the individual(s) boarded the vessel.
4. The crew must keep a 24 hour watch on all mooring lines – a widely reported means for stowaways to gain access.
5. If the crew find anyone trying to gain unlawful access to the vessel, that person should be taken to the bottom of the gangway and port security called in order for action to be taken against the individual as a trespasser on port property. The crew must confirm that they apprehended the person trying to gain unlawful access to the vessel. It is important to note that taking such persons up to, or putting them in, the ship's office does not help and gives them time to concoct a story about why he or she was on board.
6. If possible, private security should be employed on the quayside. This is better than asking them to patrol the ship, an assignment which they might not accomplish to proper effect.
7. It should also be noted that the reopening of dry docks also creates a elevated risk of potential stowaway access to ships in Durban and Cape Town.

Your Managers thank P&I Associates (Pty) Ltd. in Durban, South Africa for this update.