

October 13, 2009

**OP'S ADVISORY TO SHIPPING No. A-20-2009**

**TO : All Steamship Agents, Owners, and Operators**

**SUBJECT: Mandatory use of the EDCS-BAPLIE method for Cargo Declaration**

The Maritime Regulations for the Operation of the Panama Canal require that vessels arriving at Canal waters declare all cargo carried on board at least 96 hours prior to their arrival. The exceptions to these updates permitting less than 96 hours notification prior to arrival or when requested by ACP officials are as follows:

- a. Vessels not intending to transit are only required to submit the dangerous cargo information through the EDCS cargo declaration module.
- b. Yachts and small craft (vessels under 125 feet in length) are only required to submit the "Small Craft Due" module upon arrival at Panama Canal waters.
- c. Military vessels, floating dry docks, and dredges are exempt from the cargo declaration requirements; however, they must declare any container carried on deck.

The cargo information may be submitted through the Electronic Data Collection System (EDCS), by way of the EDCS-WEB, the EDCS-CIG or the EDCS-BAPLIE (by WEB upload or by CIG). To use the EDCS-BAPLIE method, customers and/or shipping agents are required to initiate the accreditation and validation process with the ACP by forwarding requests to [EDCS-CIG@pancanal.com](mailto:EDCS-CIG@pancanal.com). For more information regarding this method, please refer to Advisory to Shipping No. A-25-2008, and the BAPLIE Technical Requirements is available at <http://www.pancanal.com/eng/maritime/edcs/index.html>.

The timely submission of cargo information for vessels intending to transit is essential for security assessment, on-deck cargo assessment, and cargo statistics. The Panama Canal Authority has been experiencing some difficulties due to incorrect or incomplete cargo information, mainly from vessels carrying containerized cargo.

Therefore, effective November 15, 2009, all **FULL CONTAINER VESSELS** must declare their cargo using only the **EDCS-BAPLIE** method. Failure to submit accurate and timely information may result in transit delays as well as additional charges and possible fines.

**ORIGINAL SIGNED**

Manuel E. Benitez  
Executive Vice President of Operations