

June 25, 2003

FLEET / SAFETY LETTER 03062.GEN

RE: VANUATU'S INTERNATIONAL SHIPPING HIGH SAFETY STANDARD AGAIN RECOGNIZED.

The U.S. Coast Guard has recently released its annual 2002 statistics on inspections/detentions of vessels entering U.S. ports.

Vanuatu flagged vessels experienced 65 random inspections in 2002 resulting in **ZERO** detentions. Over the last three years, the Vanuatu detention rate in the U. S. averaged less than 1% (0.76%). In comparison, the all-country average was 2.5% for 2002, and 2.4% for the last three years.

With these statistics in mind, we are pleased to note that two Vanuatu flagged self-unloading bulk carriers, the *M/V NELVANA* and the *M/V THORNHILL*, recently qualified for the U. S. Coast Guard's *Quality Shipping for the 21st Century (QUALSHIP 21)* program, which recognizes quality ships. One of the requirements for a ship's entrance into the program is that it is registered in a country whose U.S. port state control detention rate is less than 1% for the previous three years.

A second requirement for entrance into the program is that the country has completed the IMO flag state self-assessment and has submitted a copy to the U. S. Coast Guard. Vanuatu has completed two self- assessments. There are just 12 countries in the world whose ships can qualify for the prestigious *QUALSHIP 21* enrollment.

Similar positive port state statistics for Vanuatu international ships can be found elsewhere:

- In the Asia-Pacific area: Vanuatu flagged vessels experienced 85 inspections in 2002 with only 1 detention (1.18%). For the years 2000 - 2002, the Vanuatu detention rate was 2.16%. In comparison, the all-country average was 6.67% for 2002, and 7.09% for the period 2000 - 2003.
- In the Paris MOU area: Vanuatu flagged vessels experienced 36 inspections in 2002 with only 1 detention for a detention rate of 2.78% compared with the all-country detention rate of 7.98% for the same period. The Vanuatu detention rate was 4.27% for the years 2000 - 2002. (Note: complete statistics for the period have not yet been released.)
- Worldwide: Vanuatu's 2002 detentions totaled 3, including the 2 above. This was a 50% decrease from 2001, and a 67 % decrease from 2000.

These positive statistics do not “just happen”-- they are the result of a number of things including Vanuatu's high standards; continuous enforcement of convention requirements by recognized organizations and safety inspectors; frequent communications with ship owners and operators; and owners' and operators' positive and pro-active stance vis a vis safety and environmental protection.

With statistics like those above, Vanuatu ship owners can be proud to fly the Vanuatu flag! With statistics like those above, we anticipate that many more Vanuatu vessels will apply for, and be accepted into, the U.S. Coast Guard's *QUALSHIP 21* program. We would be pleased to hear from you in that regard.

Log on the U. S. Coast Guard's website: <http://www.uscg.mil/hq/gm/pscweb/qualship.htm> for more details on the *QUALSHIP 21* program.

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