



Ship's Vetting and It's Effect on Safety of Sea Transportation

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Introduction

Vetting is a risk assessment process carried out by charterers and terminal operators in order to avoid making use of deficient ships or barges when goods are being transported by sea or by inland waterways. Vetting” means to make a thorough inspection of...

- In the shipping industry, it is the potential charterer making a thorough inspection of your ship with a view to chartering (hiring) it, based on the results of the inspection;*
- Vetting Inspections reports are now available to Port State Control through the SIRE or CDI databases.*

This voluntary system is in no way intended to replace certification by classification societies, whose responsibility it is to certify that a vessel is seaworthy and complies with maritime safety regulations. Oil companies' vetting departments help them choose a suitable vessel from among the certified vessels exclusively. Vetting enables the charterer to optimize vessel selection by matching available vessels to operational requirements of the voyage and therefore maximizing efficiency. So, in order to carry a cargo, it is now a requirement that the vessel is approved by the company chartering the vessel. Either by physical inspection or by reference to a database inspection report. This paper treats ship owner's duty to supply a seaworthy ship and the owner's strict liability for pollution damage. This strict liability is regulated in international conventions, such as the 1969 Civil Liability Convention. For a long time, vetting has been deemed a completely voluntary process without legal consequences for the neither the charterer nor the cargo owner [1].

History of the vetting

During 1970's and early 80's, major oil companies sold many of their aging vessels, They became more reliant on chartered tonnage to move increasing quantities of oil, chemicals and gas, This exposed them to risks associated with substandard ships and different standards of onboard management. When in the late sixties a large crude oil carrier grounded and spilled its cargo, the oil industry decided to take action to safeguard the quality and safety standards of the ships transporting its cargoes in order to avoid similar accidents. This triggered the creation of ship vetting departments within the oil companies and the development of industry ship inspection