



3rd August, 2017

MV *Rena* banned from Australian ports

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority has banned the Bahamas flagged bulk carrier MV *Rena* from Australian ports for six months after the ship repeatedly failed to pay outstanding wages and maintain a safe workplace for its crew.

On 30 June AMSA received a complaint from the International Transport Workers Federation alleging the crew had not been paid their total wages for several months.

AMSA conducted a Port State Control inspection when the ship arrived at Hay Point in Queensland on 6 July. Upon completion of the inspection AMSA issued the ship with a number of serious deficiencies including;

- Failure of the emergency generator to start;
- Failure of the life boat starting arrangements;
- Short comings in the safety management system (ISM); and
- Failure to pay crew the cash component of their wages which totalled about \$53,000 US.

The emergency generator, lifeboat and safety management system deficiencies presented a clear risk to the health and safety of the crew, the ship and Australia's marine environment. Failure to pay crew their total wages is a clear and unacceptable breach of the Maritime Labour Convention 2006.

AMSA takes a strict approach to Port State Control in Australia, and these deficiencies were serious enough to warrant immediate detention of the ship at Hay Point.

The ship had also been detained by AMSA earlier this year in February at Port Adelaide for a number of serious deficiencies, including crew working excess hours.

The MV *Rena* remained detained at Hay Point for 29 days until AMSA and the vessel's flag state (Bahamas) received evidence that the crew had been paid their outstanding wages on 3 August.

AMSA's General Manager of Operations, Allan Schwartz, said the behaviour of the ship's owners gave AMSA considerable cause for concern but expressed appreciation to the Bahamas Maritime Authority for taking an active role in resolving the issues.

"The failure of the ship operator to ensure that the ship is effectively managed along with the repeated failures of the ISM Code and Maritime Labour Convention, is a clear indication the ship is not being operated to meet applicable minimum standards," Mr Schwartz said.

"The length of time taken to rectify the outstanding issues, particularly in relation to crew welfare, is completely unacceptable."

All vessels operating in Australian waters must comply with the relevant international standards which are given effect under Australian law.

Ship owners must ensure that their vessels are operated and maintained to meet or exceed mechanical and safety standards and that their crews are treated in line with their obligations under the Maritime Labour Convention.

Substandard ships are not welcome in Australian waters, and as such AMSA has banned the MV *Rena* from Australian ports for a period of six months. The ban will expire on 3 February 2018. If the ship returns to Australia after the ban expires and is detained again by AMSA for serious deficiencies, it may be subject to a further ban of 12 months.