

Initial instruction of surveyor – liquid cargo quantity survey

The following guidelines are intended to accompany the initial instruction of a surveyor appointed by Gard to investigate an incident or dispute regarding liquid cargo quantity. The guidelines should be applied as appropriate at ports of loading or discharge. Gauging / measurement that has taken place prior to the surveyor's attendance and that in which he participates should be reviewed / approached in accordance with the guidelines. It is accepted that access / information in respect of shore arrangements may be restricted. Should cooperation from cargo interests not be forthcoming to the extent that the surveyor is unable to conduct a full investigation, he should issue a letter of protest to record such fact.

1. Obtain briefing and gather relevant documents from ship's staff, including: bill of lading / shore figure; relevant letters of protest; VEF calculation; OBQ report; ullage reports; dry tank certificate / ROB report; plan of all cargo / ballast / void compartments and pump / pipeline arrangements; cargo handling / stowage plan; statement of facts.
2. Check calibration certification of ship's measuring equipment which has been / is to be used. Ensure the availability of clean sample bottles / sampling equipment in order to confirm product density.
3. Record list, trim and any movement of the vessel during gauging. Record any cargo characteristics that might affect accurate gauging, i.e. particularly light / volatile, or heavy / viscous product.
4. Check the vessel's other cargo tanks, ballast tanks and void spaces. Confirm that ship's lines are correctly set and that unused valves are tight or sealed.
5. Gauge and measure the temperature of product in ship's tanks in order to confirm the volume of cargo on board. The inspector acting on behalf of cargo interests and ship's staff should be invited to participate / witness.
6. Draw samples jointly with other interested parties and confirm product density. One set of sealed samples should be retained on board, one set to be retained by the surveyor.
7. Request calibration certification of flow meters or other measuring equipment which has been / is to be used. Ascertain the condition of the shore line(s) before and after loading or discharge and the method used to clear lines if they are left empty. Establish whether shore lines are dedicated and / or that unused valves are confirmed to be tight and sealed.
8. Verify the accuracy of shore tank gauge readings. Ascertain whether shore tanks were active or static during loading / discharge and whether tank roofs are fixed or floating.
9. Gather any further relevant background information.
10. Draft report should be forwarded for pre-approval prior to issuance of final report.