CONTENTS

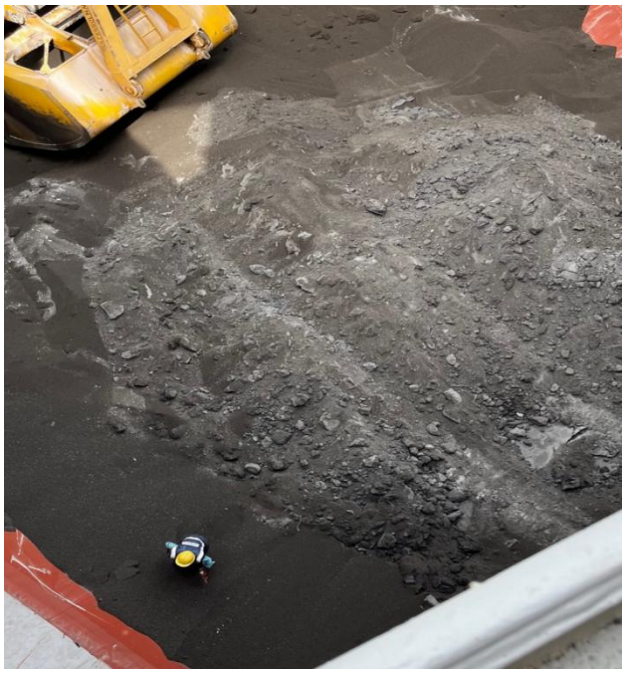
GUIDANCE FOR TESTING BILGE VALVES[1]

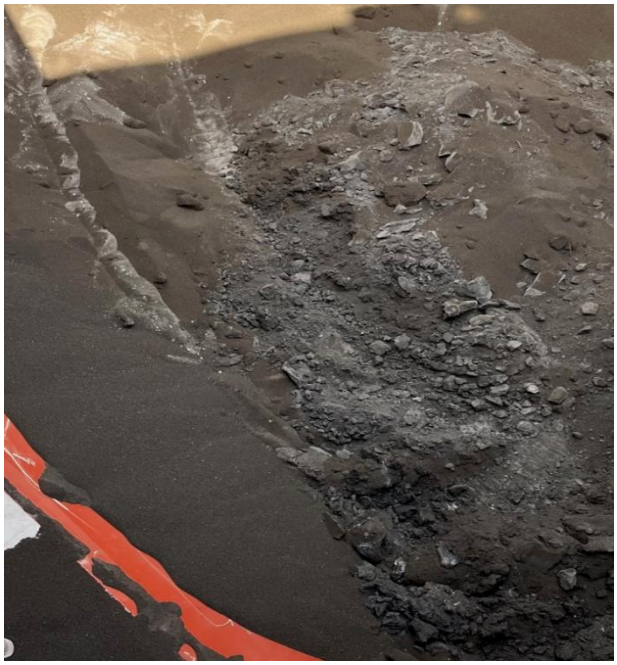
1. GENERAL

Leaking bilge valves from the engine room or from the cargo holds can cause water ingress in the cargo holds which may result in solidification or damage to cargo causing severe cargo claims.

Also, improper management of the Ballast system in the engine room can result in water ingress in the cargo holds.

Cargo solidified due to leaking bilge valves





It will be a very difficult task to break the solidified cargo during discharge operations by the stevedores and the company may have to engage additional manpower which will result in unnecessary delays and commercial losses and large claims against the owners.

Moreover, the solidified cargoes (for example cement clinker) can also cause damage to the shore conveyor system during discharge and the vessel may be held responsible for this damage.

Prior loading, the following shall be complied with.

- The shipboard management team shall hold a meeting regarding the characteristics of the cargo to be loaded. Hold preparation and particular requirements will be discussed and any risks and precautions will be highlighted.
- All bilge valves shall be pressure tested post hold cleaning to identify any leaking valves. Leaking valves shall be immediately repaired.

[1] W 42 / 2022 (New Chapter)

- All bilge lines shall be totally stripped / dried after completion of hold cleaning.
- Sounding pipes will be sounded and the sounding bob is to be observed in the bilge. Sounding cap closing to be checked to be watertight.
- The CNO shall ensure that the bilge wells are totally dry after hold cleaning.
- The wells covers to be covered in burlap if required
- Communication shall be established by deck and engine department regarding the use of spectacle flange.
- Once all testing is complete, the CNO shall seal the closed bilge valves with numbered seals prior loading and entries to be recorded in the deck logbook.
- The opening/ closing of bilge valves shall NOT be delegated to the oilers. Engineers should supervise the opening / closing of any bilge valve.

2. GUIDANCE FOR TESTING BILGE VALVES

- One officer shall be in engine room and one officer inside the cargo hold with handheld radio.
- Use the head of sea water on the overboard to conduct pressure test.
- Test only one hold at a time, for example pressure test the engine room bilge valve and cargo hold bilge valve of NO 1 HOLD (port side).
- Keep the engine room bilge valve closed.
- Line up the system carefully and crack open the sea chest so that water pressurises the engine room bilge valve.
- If water enters the cargo hold it means both the engine room bilge valve and the cargo hold bilge valve are leaking.
- If no water is observed in cargo hold, then crack open the engine room bilge valve.
- If water enters the cargo hold it means the cargo hold bilge valve is leaking.
- Repeat above procedure for each line one at a time.

Ship specific procedures for testing the bilge valve shall be prepared and displayed near the engine room bilge valves.

3. FORMS

The following forms to be completed and filed electronically after each hold cleaning

- Form 2.3.20 – Hold Condition Report
- Form 2.3.21 – Record of Cargo Hold Bilge Valve Inspection and Testing