



Ventilation records – a defence against expensive cargo claims for moisture damage

Over the years, Gard has handled numerous cargo claims where condensation was found to be the contributory cause of cargo damage. When dealing with such claims, the voyage records of the hold ventilations play a central role in mitigating the claim.

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The need for ventilation arises when there is a potential for condensation to form within a cargo hold. This can start to happen when the outside air temperature is lower than the dewpoint of the air inside the cargo hold. This can result in surface condensation. The only way to minimise or prevent moisture condensation inside the cargo hold is through proper ventilation. An aide mémoire which mariners can rely on is 'Hot to cold ventilation bold [or hold], and cold to hot, ventilate not'.

Carrying out ventilation is one thing, maintaining accurate ventilation records is another. Both are equally important. Ventilation helps prevent damage and the records assist in defending a cargo claim. To defend against a claim in the event of moisture damage, the shipowner will have to provide evidence for each hold that proper ventilation was carried out by the crew. Depending on which ventilation rule is followed (dew point rule or 3 degrees rule), crew members should record the following at least once a watch:

- temperature of cargo during loading;
- dew point for outside air, along with dry and wet bulb temperatures;
- dew point for air each cargo hold, along with dry and wet bulb temperatures;
- whether ventilation needed (Y/N);
- seawater temperature;
- time for starting and suspending ventilation in each hold, including reasons for suspension; and
- bilge soundings.

For more information see additional articles below;

- Insight: [Don't work up a sweat](#)
- Loss Prevention circular: [LP Circular 03-13.pdf](#)
- Loss prevention poster [gard poster20 temperaturemonitoring lores-01.pdf](#)