

Surveyor's Notebook

GENERAL ADVICE FOR 'OVERSIZE' OR 'OUT OF GAUGE' CARGO

The acceleration that acts on a ship in a seaway and on items of cargo stowed on board, caused by the wind and wave conditions being experienced, will be mostly a combination of longitudinal, vertical and transverse motion, with rolling of the ship being the predominant cause. In order that a piece of cargo does not move in stowage, those longitudinal, vertical and transverse forces must be absorbed by the securing arrangements, which might comprise lashings alone or a combination of lashings and shoring/bracings. Those forces can be minimized by placing the cargo item in an appropriate stowage location, and by loading/ballasting the ship appropriately so that the metacentric height is a reasonable value for the cargo, ship and voyage. Planning the voyage is important to consider, particularly for high-value cargoes, heavy cargoes and/or cargoes that are difficult to secure due to their shape or size. The voyage should be planned so that it does not involve the ship entering areas where adverse weather and sea conditions, beyond what is acceptable, are encountered. A prudent voyage plan with the exercise of good navigation and seamanship should ensure that the motions of the ship do not become excessive and overstrain the cargo and securing arrangements.

The transportation of an item of cargo can be divided into the following activities, each of which must be properly planned and executed.

These include:

A. Loading of the cargo

- obtaining information about the cargo
- planning the suitable and appropriate stowage location for the cargo
- calculating worst-case stability during the lift
- planning the lift of the cargo
- managing the lift (personnel/communications/who is in charge)

B. Securing of the cargo

Ensuring there are:

- adequate lashing points
- appropriate securing arrangements
- necessary lashing materials
- necessary shoring/bracing materials
- measures to check securing/tensioning arrangements

C. The voyage

- voyage planning
- stability check
- cargo inspection routines by competent personnel
- contingency plans for emergency situations

D. Off-loading the cargo

- planning the lift
- calculating worst-case stability during the lift
- managing the lift (personnel/communications/who is in charge)

E. Recording

- properly recording all events for future reference

Guidance should be obtained from the Cargo Securing Manual and from the IMO Code of Safe Practice for Cargo Stowage and Securing. Further information is given in the Nautical Institute's Guide to Lashing and Securing of Deck Cargo.

(Article extracted from The Standard Club's publication – Standard Safety)