



**STANDARD GUIDELINES  
FOR SHIPMENT OF COCOA BEANS  
IN BREAK-BULK**

**APPROVED  
BY THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS**

**October 22, 2015**

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**THE COCOA MERCHANTS' ASSOCIATION OF AMERICA, INC.**

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**PURPOSE AND NEED FOR THE GUIDELINES**

The purpose of these guidelines is to suggest measures and methods to be followed in an attempt to maintain the condition of the cocoa beans during shipment in break-bulk .i.e., pre-slung. However, neither the CMAA nor any member makes any representation that these guidelines is a substitute for and/or the preemption of the authority vested by law in set-forth by the U.S government and all other pertinent Federal, State and Local regulatory agencies.

Cocoa beans characteristically have a propensity to develop condensation and to re-absorb moisture, and to become easily infested while in transit. Experience has shown that the break-bulk method of ocean transport of cocoa beans responds best to this hygroscopic feature of cocoa. Subject to current terms of The International Chamber of Commerce ("INCOTERMS") and the rules and conditions herein unless negated by specific agreement herein.

The problems associated with condensation and infestation can generally be controlled when certain elementary rules are observed. By following the guidelines as set out below, the likelihood of damage in transit is greatly reduced. Nevertheless, it should be noted that extraordinary conditions may still be at play under certain circumstances which may render some of these measures less effective.

**PREPARATION OF BEANS BEFORE THE VESSEL IS LOADED**

Cocoa beans should conform to the exporting country's grading standards and contract specifications and terms. They should be reasonably free of foreign matter and be packed in new jute, sisal, burlap or spun-weave polypropylene bags of a weave tight enough to withstand handling and sampling by trier. The bags should be marked in English with the content ("cocoa beans"), net and gross weight in kilo, and the country of origin, as provided by law, plus the usual commercial markings as to lot number, name of shipper and place of business. All markings should be in compliance with all U.S. government regulations. In addition, random checks of moisture contents of the cocoa should be done prior to loading. Holes in the bags caused by the sampling trier should be repaired to prevent the spillage of beans.

Cocoa must be free of any and all insect and rodent infestation.

**PREPARATION OF VESSEL**

The cargo holds of the vessel must be electrically and/or mechanically ventilated.

It is preferred that the vessel be double-skin with box-type holds for easier stowage at the sides, as well as at the forward, and aft of the holds to lessen the damage to the bags. Cargo must be pre-slung for the off-loading process.

Prior to loading the cargo the holds of the vessel should be inspected by an independent surveyor to determine that the cargo holds are clean, dry and free of odor and to certify that cargo holds are ready to receive the intended cargo.

Furthermore, the functioning of the cargo hold ventilation should be tested and documented. Once the cargo holds are inspected and the ventilation system tests positive, the cargo holds must be fumigated by the Carrier so that the empty holds are free of any infestation.

Prior to loading, all sides of the tanktop should be laid out with dunnage wood and the bottom to be fully covered with kraft paper so the bags are not in direct contact with the steel tanktop.

During loading, the sides of the cargo holds are to be covered with corrugated kraft paper and with plywood or dunnage wood so the bags are not in direct contact with the steel and protected from condensation. Wood packing materials should be consistent with the International Plant Protection Convention standard ISPM #15 and should be labeled with the IPPC logo.

After completion of loading the top layer of the cargo, it should be fully covered with kraft paper to protect against condensation, which could drip down from below of the hatch-covers.

The cargo must be loaded by lot and bill of lading by the Carrier, which is supervised by tallymen engaged by Stevedores and the Carrier. The lots must be delivered alongside the vessel accordingly and not mixed.

#### **DISCHARGE OF BREAK-BULK VESSEL**

An accurate stow plan is critical in discharge to maintain lot integrity, condition of cocoa beans and chain of custody for any certified/program.

#### **SHIP SECURITY**

Security is the responsibility of the Carrier and all applicable ISM (International Safety Management) and ISPS (**International Ship and Port Facility Security**) codes should be followed.