

## **Best Practice: Limiting Unauthorized Ship Access @ Anchorage**



<b>Category:</b>	Training & Procedures
<b>Location:</b>	Port of Arsew/Bethioua, Algeria
<b>Date Observed:</b>	December 2004
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**Description:** Algerian officials have recognized that stowaways have been boarding vessels at anchorage under the cover of darkness and bad weather. The port of Arsew/Bethioua now requests that U.S. bound vessels not go to anchorage but either slow up their arrival if berths are occupied, or will fast track them after cargo operations, to reduce opportunities for potential stowaways to board the vessels

**Discussion:** Timing ship arrivals and departures and minimizing time at anchorage is an effective means for lessening the opportunity for stowaways, smugglers, or pirates to access ships at anchor. Other approaches include requiring ships to lower or hire a picket boat to provide a mobile security perimeter around the vessel while at anchor, or placing a floating security boom around the perimeter of the vessel while at anchor. Ships can also ensure their jacob's ladder is not lowered at anchor, point powerful lights around the ship towards the water, and can rig fire hoses to help repel potential boarders.

**Potential Down-side:** While Algeria's policy improves the security of vessels headed directly from Algeria to the United States, it does not improve the security of vessels headed to other countries. Restricting ships from arriving at anchorage prior to berthing may at times require ships to remain out at sea during storms, complicate the ability to make engine repairs or take on supplies while at anchor, and/or to meet with Customs or Immigration officials. Ships forced to "speed up" to approach or depart a berthing during a specific time window will consume more fuel, adding to operating costs.

**Conclusion:** While this practice provides some targeted short term benefit, the use of a broader, synchronized Advance Notice of Arrival system, will permit a port to better manage berthing arrival times and cargo operations, and lessen the time ships spend at anchor. Nations should continue to consider various policies that will lessen the need for vessels to remain unprotected at anchor, reducing the opportunities for stowaways or other opportunists to access the vessel.

**Cost:** Investment of time for planning and communicating new procedure to all stakeholders.