



South African Maritime Safety Authority

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Marine Notice No. 17 of 2019

Fishing in South African ports requires permits.

TO ALL MASTERS, OWNERS, OPERATORS, SEAFARERS AND SHIPS AGENTS.

Summary

This notice advises the shipping industry on the requirements for fishing off the side in South African ports

Fishing off the side of a vessel while anchored in port may be a common and relaxing recreational activity for seafarers. However, many national waters require fishing permits in order to fish and have restrictions on the number and types of catches. Vessel may also be required to disclose all fresh fish on board and their origins.

Local authorities in South Africa have been cracking down on illegal fishing in a bid to protect the country's marine resources. The Department of Environment, Forestry and Fisheries (DEFF) has also appointed inspectors to attend to vessels to check for undeclared fish and fresh fish products onboard. A recent incident in Durban, South Africa, saw three seafarers narrowly escape arrest and prosecution under the South African Marine Living Resources Act No.18 of 1988. This particular incident was resolved with a plea deal of R 15,000 (approximately USD 1,000) and the vessel was able to depart Durban the same night. If prosecuted in South Africa, each seafarer can be fined up to R 2,000,000 (approximately USD 135,000) or have to serve up to five years in prison. Below is a summary of the fishing regulations applicable to South African waters:

- √ Vessels must declare any fresh fish products on board as well as where they come from,
- √ Permits are required to fish in South African waters,
- √ Failure to adhere to the regulations will result in a R 2,000,000 fine or five years in prison.

This notice advises masters, agents and seafarers to comply with any fishing regulations in any port or country, as any breach may result in vessels being detained or delayed, crew fined or prosecuted. The practice of unlicensed leisure fishing is becoming a concern for authorities around the world. Ship's crew are therefore recommended not to engage in fishing activities unless proper permits have been obtained.

Additional cautionary note:

Due to effluents or wastewater from factories, human settlements and businesses, the water and fish in the harbours might be contaminated and be harmful to human health

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