



**AUTORIDAD DEL CANAL DE PANAMÁ**  
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENCY FOR OPERATIONS

3654-A (OPXI)  
V. 4-2-2015

**ADVISORY TO SHIPPING No. A-02-2016**

January 18, 2016

**TO** : All Shipping Agents, Owners, and Operators

**SUBJECT:** Deck cooling during transit

Effective immediately, and until further notice, the Panama Canal Authority (ACP) will require transiting crude oil tankers, product carriers, and chemical tankers carrying cargoes with flashpoints of less than 18°C, to cool their main decks with water by means of the on-deck water sprinkler system or any other means available in order to prevent automatic activation of their pressure relief valves during transit.

The cooling of the main deck shall be performed between 1000 and 1600 hours while the vessel is underway at Gatun Lake or Gaillard Cut, or at anchor in Canal waters. However, this procedure should be stopped while the vessel is transiting through the locks or is in the vicinity of the locks, and when Canal deckhands are on board.

If this procedure fails to prevent automatic activation of pressure relief valves, it may be necessary to reduce the pressure by manually opening pressure relief valves. This shall be done only after the Master has ascertained the following:

- The situation has been reported to the ACP's Canal Port Captain on duty through the pilot on board or to the Canal signal stations at Flamenco or Cristobal when there is no pilot on board.
- All necessary actions have been implemented to prevent exposing ACP personnel to vapors.
- Shipboard and nearby ignition sources have been controlled.

Compliance with measures described above will enhance the safety of Canal operations, as well as Canal customers, and reduce or eliminate possible disruptions in transit scheduling.

For further information, please direct your inquiries to [cargoinfo@pancanal.com](mailto:cargoinfo@pancanal.com)

**ORIGINAL SIGNED**

Esteban G. Sáenz  
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