

NEWS

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Liberian Maritime Co. Indicted for Covering Up Oil Pollution

**Crew of M/V Myron N Allegedly Dumped Oily Waste Overboard,
Obstructed Coast Guard Inspection**

(More)

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NEWARK – A Liberian-incorporated shipping company and two of its ship engineers were indicted today in connection with an alleged attempt by crew members of the *M/V Myron N* to cover up the illegal dumping of oily waste in international waters, Acting U.S. Attorney Ralph J. Marra, Jr., announced.

The Indictment charges Dalnave Navigation Inc., a Liberian company with offices in Athens, Greece, which operated the *M/V Myron N*, an ocean-going bulk carrier vessel registered in Cyprus. Also indicted were Panagiotis Stamatakis, 61, of Piraeus, Greece, the chief engineer of *M/V Myron N*, and Dimitrios Papadakis, 51, of Heraklion, Greece, the second engineer of the ship.

The eight-count Indictment alleges that crew members of the *M/V Myron N*, at the direction of Stamatakis and Papadakis, dumped oil-contaminated waste directly overboard into the sea between March 2004 and September 2008. The dumping of oily waste violated the MARPOL Protocol, an international treaty regulating the handling and disposal of oil waste at sea.

“Our New Jersey ports are among the busiest in the nation, and international shipping companies must understand that we and the Department of Justice mean business when it comes to enforcing maritime law protecting our oceans from polluters,” said Marra.

Marra noted that this is the latest of several such prosecutions by the District of New Jersey in recent years in which international shipping companies have been fined millions of dollars and had ship captains and engineers fined and/or imprisoned for exactly the same conduct.

The Indictment alleges that Stamatakis and Papadakis attempted to prevent the U.S. Coast Guard from learning of the illegal discharges during an inspection of the ship in Port Newark on Sept. 8, 2008. According to the Indictment, the chief engineer and second engineer failed to record the discharges in the ship’s Oil Record Book. According to the Indictment, they presented the false Oil Record Book to the Coast Guard during the Coast Guard’s inspection. Ocean-going vessels like the *M/V Myron N* are required by international and U.S. law to maintain an accurate Oil Record Book that records any transfer or disposal of oily waste.

The Indictment further alleges that Papadakis made several false statements to Coast Guard inspectors and encouraged other crew members to lie to the Coast Guard as well.

The company and the individual defendants are each charged with conspiracy to defraud the United States, to violate the Act to Prevent Pollution from Ships (APPS) and to obstruct justice. Each defendant is also charged with violating the APPS, obstruction and with making false statements.

If convicted, the company faces a statutory maximum fine of \$500,000 on each count or, alternatively, twice the amount of any gain to the company that inured as a result of the criminal conduct. The individuals each face a maximum statutory penalty of six years in prison.

Marra credited Special Agents of the Coast Guard Investigative Service, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge Jon C. Finnegan; Special Agents of the Environmental Protection Agency Criminal Investigations Division, under the direction of Special Agent in Charge William V. Lometti; and Marine Inspectors and Investigators from Coast Guard Sector New York, under the direction of Captain Richard R. O'Brien, Jr., with the investigation. The Coast Guard's inspection was guided by the Coast Guard Inspections Office of the Prevention Division and the Legal Office of the U.S. First Coast Guard District.

The government is represented by Assistant U.S. Attorney Kathleen P. O'Leary of the Criminal Division in Newark, and Special Assistant U.S. Attorney Christopher P. Mooradian from the Legal Office of the U.S. First Coast Guard District, and Gary N. Donner, Trial Attorney with the Department of Justice Environmental Crimes Section.

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Defense Counsel:

for Dalnave Navigation Inc.: Michael G. Chalos, Esq., Port Washington, N.Y.

for Stamatakis: Carl Woodward, Esq., Roseland, N.J.

for Papadakis: James Plaisted Esq., Roseland, N.J.