



STEAMSHIP MUTUAL

Comprehensive Cover. Exceptional Service.



Acindar, Argentina: Strong river currents in Parana River

August 2018

The Owner of an entered vessel recently contacted the Club to ask for information about berthing procedures on the Parana River. The Member's concern stemmed from hearing about a recent serious FFO incident while a vessel (entered with another IG Club) was berthing at a bulk loading terminal in Acindar, Argentina.

After investigating this matter further we were able to establish that the latest incident is one of several that have occurred in recent years – all of which have led to multi-million dollar claims for repairs to berths, mooring dolphins and loading equipment, as well as consequential losses and damage to hull.

Information from investigations into these claims show they share the same root cause: attempting to berth fully loaded Panamax bulk carriers without tug assistance in an area where the river currents may be relatively strong and also unpredictable. The berth is located just downstream of a port bend in the river and the outer starboard bank, i.e., close to the terminal is where the maximum current flow can be expected:



(image courtesy of Google Maps)

A local port agent (<http://www.antareshipping.com/northern-pampa-ports/villa-constitucion/puerto-acevedo-acindar-mineral-wharf/>) reports that tug use at the terminal is not compulsory and therefore experience suggests that the natural inclination of vessel Masters, being mindful of managing voyage costs, will be to not engage them. While this desire is understandable the Club recommends that vessel Masters, in consultation with pilots, should carefully consider the undoubted benefits and assurance that tugs can provide against the relatively modest additional costs of using them.