High aluminium and silicon disputed by supplier

A Lintec client vessel bunkered in the Gulf of Mexico, and took 200MT of IFO-180 from a global bunker-oil supplier. A sample of this fuel was taken using a continuous drip sampler and couriered to Lintec's UK laboratory for analysis.

Analysis was conducted on the same day that the sample arrived at the laboratory, and indicated a combined aluminium and silicon content of 199 (mg/kg) against a maximum specification of 80 (mg/kg).

Advice was given that the delivered fuel was off-specification and should not be used.

Any use could result in damage to the fuel pumps, injectors and the cylinder liners.
Overnight the result was confirmed twice by re-analysing.
The client placed the bunker suppliers on notice.

The bunker supplier disputed the off-specification results and produced certificates of analysis as follows:

Sample Location	Aluminium Content (mg/kg)	Silicon content (mg/kg)	Aluminium + Silicon (mg/kg)
Supplier's sample	4	5	9
Barge sample	8	11	19
Shore tank sample	3	4	7

Arrangements were made to draw a further sample from the vessel's bunker tank to confirm the results obtained from the submitted sample. The vessel was trading in the Caribbean and the owner and supplier agreed to have the sample independently analysed. However the owner accepted Lintec's recommendation that the sample drawn from the vessel's tanks be sub-divided, with one part being sent to Lintec for additional analysis to verify the results obtained by the independent laboratory.

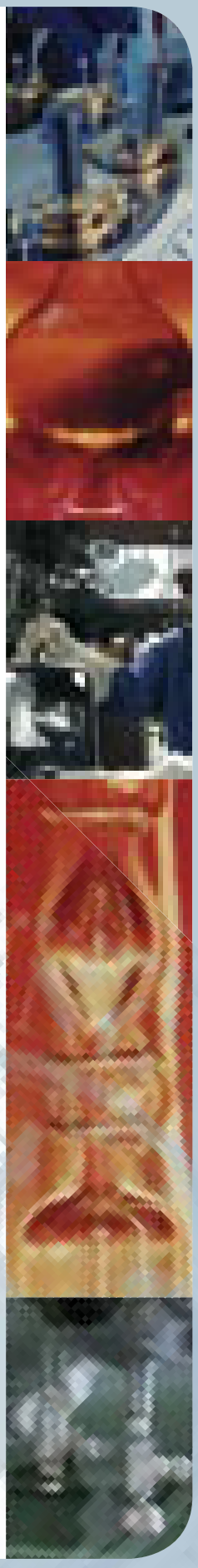
The independent laboratory tested 48 (mg/kg) and Lintec obtained a result of 109 (mg/kg) from the same sample analysed in their U.K. laboratory. As the product had been in the vessel's tanks for some time, a lower result for aluminium and silicon was expected. Both these results cast doubt on the validity of the supplier's analysis.

Lintec had total confidence in the quality of their analysis, and recommended to the ship owner that the fuel was still off-specification and likely to cause engine damage.

The supplier maintained that the results of the analysis conducted by the independent laboratory showed the sample to be on specification.

It was agreed with the supplier that the fuel would be de-bunkered at the next port and re-supplied with new product. During the de-bunkering a continuous drip sample would taken at the barge manifold. That sample would be sent for independent analysis and, if the product was found to be on-specification, the cost of the de-bunkering would be for the account of the owner. Lintec arranged for a surveyor to attend to represent the interests of the owner during the de-bunkering.

The independent analysis of the de-bunkered fuel confirmed a combined aluminium and silicon result of 119 (mg/kg).
The client was fully compensated by the bunker supplier who maintained that the on specification fuel in the storage tank had been contaminated by product in the line at the storage terminal.



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