

## High viscosity fuel disputed by supplier

A Lintec client vessel bunkered 150MT of IFO-180 fuel in Southern Europe. The supplier was a global oil major. A sample of this fuel was taken using a continuous drip sampler, and couriered to Lintec's UK laboratory for analysis.

Analysis was conducted the same day as the sample was received at the laboratory. The result for Viscosity @ 50oC was found to be 290 cSt. As the maximum limit for this grade of fuel is 180 cSt, Lintec contacted the client to advise this, and were informed by the client that the vessel was unable to burn fuel with a viscosity as high as 290 cSt. The client advised Lintec that the vessel was able to segregate the fuel for an indefinite period. The client then put the supplier on notice.

After three weeks the supplier advised that their sample had been tested with a result of 180 cSt at 50oC, and therefore the fuel was "on specification".

Lintec requested the client find out details of the sample tested by the supplier's laboratory. This investigation confirmed that the sample tested was not taken by continuous drip sampler at the time of bunkering, but was a sample taken by the supplier - and was of indeterminate origin. It also came to light that the sample had been tested without any representative of the client being present.

Lintec forwarded information on seal numbers for the samples taken at the time of bunkering, together with a recommendation that witnessed analysis was to be carried out on the sealed (retained on board) sample.

The client subsequently advised Lintec that the retained on board sample had been handed to the supplier who was to carry out their own tests. The client was advised that this sample was their property, and needed to be retrieved from the supplier so that an independent, witnessed analysis could be carried out in a third party laboratory, with all representatives present. The importance of the seal being intact for this sample was stressed to the client.

The sample was safely received from the supplier and the analysis conducted by an independent laboratory, witnessed by all parties. The viscosity result found to be 295 CST. The supplier then accepted that the fuel failed to meet the specification, and recommended to the client that the fuel could be blended to meet the specification. Lintec advised the client against this option, and recommended the best course of action would be to de-bunker the off specification fuel and re-bunker with good fuel.

The supplier accepted this option but, on going on board the vessel, their representative attempted to seal the tanks in question. Lintec advised the client that this was bad practice as the supplier had accepted that the fuel was off specification.

The supplier then arranged to de-bunker the fuel and re-bunker with good fuel which was found to be on specification, and suitable for the vessel to burn.

