

GENERAL OVERVIEW AND SERVICES



National Cargo Bureau (NCB) was incorporated as a non-profit organization, with a mission of “Safety of Life and Cargo at Sea”, in May of 1952 and began its actual operation on November 19 of the same year. The Bureau was formed from the inspection divisions of the Board of Underwriters of New York and the Board of Marine Underwriters of San Francisco and now operates on a nationwide basis.

NCB was launched in 1952 after a series of maritime disasters demonstrated a need for uniform standards and regulations. Those disasters included the capsizing of grain ships due to shifting of cargoes, shipboard fires relating to wet cotton or metal turnings, and an ammonium nitrate ship explosion at Texas City, Texas in 1947.

Since inception, NCB’s role has grown in many areas. The U.S. Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) contains a number of references to NCB in Titles 7, 19, and 46 as well as in the Hazmat Regulations under Title 49. By assignment and under the authority of the United States Coast Guard, the certificates issued by National Cargo Bureau, Inc. may be accepted as prima facie evidence of compliance with the provisions of the Dangerous Cargo Act, bulk solid cargo transport regulations and the rules and regulations for Bulk Grain Cargo.

Although NCB is cited in the U.S. Code of Federal Regulations, and certificates are accepted as evidence of compliance, NCB is not an enforcement agency. NCB surveys are performed at the request of industry. If deficiencies are noted during inspections, NCB works with the client to address them. NCB considers all surveys to be confidential and does not share information unless directed to do so by the party requesting the survey.

NCB presently has 18 offices located nationwide, providing coverage for all major U.S. ports. These operations may be supplemented globally by trusted network partners vetted and approved by NCB.

Marine surveyors employed by NCB include licensed ex-mariners with broad experience in all manner of cargo and vessel surveys. Staff experience and expertise is enhanced and maintained by a robust internal training regimen. NCB’s corporate management team has amassed over 200 years combined seafaring, marine survey, loss prevention and training experience with broad expertise in bulk, breakbulk, project and containerized cargo handling and transport, hazardous material regulatory requirements, cargo theft prevention and other related disciplines.

NCB conducts inspections and surveys that are incidental to the loading or discharging of ships as well as those considered integral to marine loss prevention and issues the appropriate certificates and/or survey reports.

NCB attends the International Maritime Organization’s (IMO) Sub-Committee on Carriage of Cargoes and Containers (CCC –formerly DSC) committee in London each year to provide technical support for the U.S. delegation. NCB also supports the marine insurance market through representation on the American Institute of Marine Underwriters (AIMU) Marine Loss Prevention and Technical Services committees.

NCB regularly conducts Safety Inspections and investigations for several Flag Registries, including Bahamas, Barbados, Antigua & Barbuda, Marshall Islands, Vanuatu and Luxembourg. In the case of investigations on such incidents as grounding, collision, oil spill, accidental death etc., NCB may be the direct liaison between the Flag Registry and the authorities.

In June 2018 NCB acquired Exis Technologies, the leading supplier of IT compliance systems for the management of dangerous goods in sea transport. They have over 35 years’ experience of supporting major shipping lines, ferry operators, ports and terminals, logistics operators, freight forwarders, government, and regulatory organizations worldwide. More recently Exis, now part of the NCB Group, has developed Hazcheck Detect a real time cargo screening application that searches booking and bill of lading information for potential mis and/or undeclared Hazmat / Dangerous Goods.

