

Hanjin boxship arrested off California

World Fuel gets Hanjin Montevideo in its clutches. Judge bats down another effort.

September 2nd, 2016 20:51 GMT by **Eric Martin**

World Fuel Services has secured a court order arresting a Hanjin Shipping-chartered boxship off California.

The US fuel supplier seized the 4,250-teu Hanjin Montevideo (built 2010) in the federal court in Los Angeles, McKasson & Klein lawyer Neil Klein confirms to TradeWinds.

World Fuel filed the lawsuit Wednesday seeking to recover \$489,000 for bunkers that it supplied to the ship while it was at Seattle in July.

Wait and see

Klein said he is now waiting to see how Hanjin responds to the litigation.

The lawsuit came the same day that Hanjin, the South Korean liner operator, filed for court receivership in Seoul. The filing, which was approved by the court a day later, touched off a turmoil worldwide as ports and Hanjin's partners rejected the company's ships and cargoes.

At least four lawsuits have been filed in the US in anticipation of a Chapter 15 bankruptcy filing, which would put a freeze on litigation in this country.

Seizure bid rejected

Also in the federal court in Los Angeles, Magistrate Judge Paul Abrams declined to issue an asset seizure order requested by a shipowning affiliate of Idan Ofer's Eastern Pacific Shipping.

His order comes after Hastay Marine, the registered owner of Eastern Pacific's 3,670-teu Hanjin New Jersey (built 2013), filed a lawsuit Wednesday seeking to seize \$1.38m in unpaid charter hire.

Abrams wrote that there is no evidence that Hanjin assets will disappear from reach if they are not seized before the liner operator receives notice of the lawsuit.

No dissipation

"None of plaintiff's assertions constitutes specific evidence that this particular defendant is likely to hide or dissipate the assets sought to be attached by plaintiff through a writ of attachment before the matter can be heard," the judge wrote.

But Hastay's lawyers at Kaye, Rose & Partners asked the judge to reconsider.

They argued today that the window to seize assets could close soon, when the company files for Chapter 15 creditor protection.

Seizure race?

And they pointed to a lawsuit filed by an affiliate of Eyal Ofer Zodiac Maritime in the same court as “evidencing a predictable race to seize or collect debtor assets following defendant Hanjin’s filing for rehabilitation in Korea”.

A Hanjin representative could not be reached at the company’s regional headquarters in New Jersey.

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