



More than 50 blocks of frozen fish, averaging 40 pounds each were weighed. In hold number one there were very few blocks and so could be counted individually. In hold number four, seen here looking through one of the hatches the hold party had to estimate the number of blocks in the hold by counting the number of blocks they could reach, measuring the volume occupied by these blocks, and calculating the number of blocks per cubic meter. The hold party then used ship's plans confirmed by actual measurement to determine the full volume of the hold. Using the value for the blocks per cubic meter, and the volume of the hold, the number of blocks present was calculated. The total number of blocks aboard was estimated to be 3,065.

Using the average weight per block obtained, and the total number of blocks estimated to be aboard, the boarding party calculated that the SHOSHIN MARU NO. 21 had to have caught 79 metric tons (2200 lbs/ton) of fish to have the amount of frozen product that was aboard. The conversion of frozen fish product aboard back to round weight is done with a series of formulas and conversion factors, taking the frozen fish product, adding weight to compensate for the fact that all fish aboard had been headed and gutted prior to freezing, and deducting the weight of water used to freeze the fish together into blocks.

The master of the SHOSHIN MARU NO.21 had logged that he had caught only 57.1 metric tons of fish. This 23% discrepancy was too large to accept, so the hold party, working in the holds until 0200, with the help of the Japanese crew, moved the entire contents of hold number four to hold No. one. Individually, the blocks were counted as they passed by the members of the boarding party on a conveyor belt, and several hundred were weighed. The result was the same. The SHOSHIN MARU NO. 21 was suspected of being in violation of the FCMA for underlogging.

This type of violation stems from the fact that the foreign fishing boats can catch far more fish than their quota allows. Some vessels, therefore, gambling that the Coast Guard will not board them, will catch as many fish as they can but log only the quantity of fish to make them arrive at their quota, on paper at the end of the year.

