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## Customs fines in Togo



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**The Club has recently experienced several fines in Togo arising from the crew bartering minor items with local fishermen. These have most commonly been at sea where vessels may be undertaking ship-to-ship transfer operations. Correspondents, Budd Group, have reported on this more fully in a recent bulletin.**

Members should be aware of the potential magnitude of these fines and that they can be difficult, lengthy, and expensive to negotiate. In addition, since they are deemed by the local authorities to be fines for smuggling, there is no cover as of right under the Club's rules and reimbursement of any fines paid can consequently only be made where the Club has exercised discretion in the Member's favour. Each case will be viewed on its own facts.

Members are therefore strongly advised to ensure that their crews exercise extreme caution if approached while in Togo to barter or purchase any items, even at anchorage, as the consequences may be unforeseen and disproportionate.