

## Lancelot crew allowed ashore

Posted on 30th Jul 2015 09:43 | By Andrew Campbell [andrew@thesun.co.nz](mailto:andrew@thesun.co.nz)

**The crew on board arrested bulk carrier Lancelot V in the Port of Tauranga have finally been paid and are allowed ashore after nearly two months confined to the ship.**

**Despite their new-found freedom, however, union officials have admitted they don't have anywhere to go.**



*The arrested ship Lancelot V in the Port of Tauranga. Photo: Andrew Campbell.*

With 18 crew members left on board, the union is now appealing for people from Ukrainian and Filipino communities in the Bay of Plenty to contact the ship and give them a run ashore.

“I'm sure the crew would appreciate being able to interact with a wider group, other than just each other,” says Maritime Union of New Zealand representative Selwyn Russell.

“They are being looked after by the High Court in terms of food and so on, so their needs now are on the social front. They have been cooped up in there for such a long time.”

The mainly Ukrainian and Filipino crew have been stuck on the vessel since it was arrested in Auckland in May following a dispute between the charterer and the owners of the Greek-owned, Panama registered ship.

The ship came to Tauranga in June to complete its discharge and was re-arrested.

While food supplies dwindled, action by the International Transport Workers Federation and the Maritime Union of New Zealand succeeded in getting the men fed and paid on ITF rates, which equate to more than they were being paid by the owners.

It is also hoped a court hearing next week will address the crew's back pay.

Acting Manager United Seafarers' Mission at Port of Tauranga, Jeff Law, says the men have been allowed off the ship for around two weeks now.

“Previously, the crew were virtually imprisoned on board because not only were the ship's owners' not paying wages, they were also not paying for visas,” says Jeff.

While they were unable to disembark the vessel, the mission's chaplains were able to visit the men on board and provide them with sim cards and phone top-ups.

“They have been living a relatively normal seafarer's life for the last two weeks,” says Jeff.

“Quite a lot have been visiting the mission or using our wifi, as well as going to Bayfair and spending a bit of money.

“Mission chaplains have had plenty of contact with the ship - particularly when the guys were unable to get off.”

“Normally, visiting seafarers can come into the mission, use the free wifi and spend hours on *Skype*.

“So they have actually been getting a lot of support from us.”

The United Seafarers' Mission is a charity that survives on donations.

The ship can be contacted by email via: [Lancelotv@skyfile.com](mailto:Lancelotv@skyfile.com) or, alternatively, master captain Stannislav Titomer can be contacted on: 00 870 773 168650.