

VISAKHAPATNAM PORT AUTHORITY  
TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT

To  
All Port Users

NO.ITRA/SHP/AMN/SOPA  
DT. 11-05-2026

CIRCULAR NO 1937

Sub: Adoption of Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) for Import, Handling and Direct Delivery of Ammonium Nitrate at Visakhapatnam Port Authority – Reg.

Ref:- This office Circular NO.1925 dated 28-04-2026

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In continuation to this office circular under reference cited, all Port Users, Importers, Vessel Agents, Stevedores and other stakeholders are hereby informed that, in order to ensure strict compliance with the provisions of the Ammonium Nitrate Rules, 2012, Environment (Protection) Act, 1986 MSIHC Rules, 1989, Dock Workers (Safety, Health & Welfare) Regulations and other applicable statutory regulations governing handling of hazardous cargo, Visakhapatnam Port Authority has decided to adopt the Standard Operating Procedure prescribed by Paradip Port Authority for handling of Ammonium Nitrate.

Accordingly, the Standard Operating Procedure (SOP) followed at Paradip Port Authority is hereby made applicable mutatis mutandis for all operations relating to import, handling and delivery of Ammonium Nitrate at Visakhapatnam Port Authority. **A copy of the said SOP is enclosed herewith as Annexure-I** for strict compliance by all concerned.

The Importer and Vessel Agent shall be jointly and severally responsible for ensuring full compliance with the SOP, statutory provisions and safety requirements and shall indemnify Visakhapatnam Port Authority against any loss, damage, accident, environmental impact or third-party liability arising out of such operations. All stakeholders shall strictly adhere to the provisions of the Ammonium Nitrate Rules, 2012, Environment (Protection) Act, 1986, MSIHC Rules, 1989, Dock Workers (Safety, Health & Welfare) Regulations and any directions issued by competent authorities or tribunals from time to time.

Any deviation from the provisions of the enclosed SOP or this Trade Circular shall be viewed seriously and shall result in immediate suspension of operations, apart from initiation of penal action including cancellation of permissions and blacklisting of the concerned parties. No operation involving Ammonium Nitrate shall be permitted unless a written undertaking/affidavit is submitted by the Importer and Vessel Agent confirming full compliance with all applicable rules, regulations and the enclosed SOP.

This Circular shall come into force with immediate effect and shall be strictly complied with by all concerned.

Encl:

Annexure-I: SOP for handling of Ammonium Nitrate

  
TRAFFIC MANAGER etc

Copy to: The Secretary, MoPSW for information.

Copy to: Chairman, APPCB for information.

Copy to: Member Secretary, APPCB for information

Copy to: The District Collector, Visakhapatnam City, for information.

Copy to: The Commissioner of Police, Visakhapatnam City, for information.

Copy to: JCEE, APPCB, ZO, Visakhapatnam for information.

Copy to:- The Asstt. Director (Safety), Inspectorate Dock Safety, Ex.

DLB Building, 5<sup>th</sup> floor, Port Area, Visakhapatnam.

Copy to:- PS to Chairperson for kind information of Chairperson

Copy to:- PS to Dy. Chairperson for kind information of Dy. Chairperson

Copy to:- All Department Heads

Copy to:- Safety Officer/VPA for information and necessary action.

**VISAKHAPATNAM PORT AUTHORITY**  
**TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT**

**ANNEXURE-1**

**Standard Operating Procedure(SOP) for handling of Ammonium Nitrate at Visakhapatnam Port Authority (as per provision under Ammonium Nitrate Rules, 2012**

1. Scope:-

Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways vide Gazette Notification No. 1677 dated 17.07.2013 has notified Visakhapatnam Port for import of Ammonium Nitrate in India by sea under Rule 6(4)(c) of the Ammonium Nitrate Rules, 2012.

Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board (APPCB) vide Letter No. 724-APPCB-HO-ECS-TF-VSP-2023 dated 23-04-2026 permitted resumption of import and handling of Ammonium Nitrate (AN) at Visakhapatnam Port for a limited period of six (6) months or until the prevailing Middle East crisis is resolved, whichever is earlier.

2. Standard Operating Procedure:-

1. Ammonium Nitrate shall be allowed to be imported only in bagged form or in containers stuffed with bags. Stuffing of bags is allowed in containers at hook point.
2. The importer shall submit an undertaking that, the imported Ammonium Nitrate is of Fertilizer grade only, and has been duly notified to the APPCB, Visakhapatnam. They shall submit Analysis Report of Ammonium Nitrate wherein it is clearly marked as Fertilizer grade.
3. The Importer shall maintain records of Ammonium Nitrate received and dispatched to each Importer to ensure accountability, identification and traceability and file returns.
4. An undertaking shall be submitted by the cargo owners that the said cargo is well within the stipulated conditions and standards as per Environment Protection Act, 1986. All relevant provisions of "Manufacture, Storage and Import of Hazardous Chemical (MSIHC) Rules, 1989 framed under "Environment (Protection) Act, 1986" would strictly be followed.
5. Each bag of Ammonium Nitrate must have the following information in conspicuous and indelible characters, by means of stamping or painting:-
  - a. The word "**Ammonium Nitrate**"
  - b. Purity in percentage
  - c. The name, address and license no. of manufacturer and converter or importer.
  - d. Identification no. of the package or bar coding.
  - e. The net weight of Ammonium Nitrate.
  - f. The gross weight of the package.
  - g. Date of bagging & batch number.
  - h. Name, address, license no. And unique identification number of stevedoring agent (if any).
6. The bags shall be serially numbered by means of stencilling, bar coding by RFID tags or any other means by the manufacturer or importer prior to landing / immediately after landing prior to delivery.
7. The imported Ammonium Nitrate shall be immediately removed from the Port to the Importer's warehouse. The dispatch of bags will be allowed only after observing all formalities as per para (v) above.

8. The cargo so loaded onto the trucks/dumpers will be taken direct delivery from the hook point and removed from the Port premises immediately after landing.
9. The route map from the hook point to the final destination shall have to be provided by the CHA prior to berthing of vessel. Only after submission of the route map, discharge shall be allowed to be commenced.
10. No transit storage of cargo inside the Port Prohibited area/Custom bonded area will be allowed. Stuffing of bags is allowed in containers at hook point only. Stuffing/ De-stuffing of cargo inside the Port Prohibited area/Custom bonded area will not be allowed.
11. A confirmation on receipt of cargo shall be obtained from the Receiver / Importer by the CHA, after the cargo / containers reach the destination. The same shall be submitted to Traffic Manager. Failing of submission of this confirmation shall lead to cancellation of berthing of further vessels in respect the default Importers and the CHAs also shall not be allowed to handle further vessels at Port.
12. Importer shall take a valid Insurance Policy under PLI Act, 1991 and copy of the same shall be submitted to Traffic Manager before berthing of the vessel.
13. The Stevedore shall ensure that all places/areas on the shore and warehouses proposed for handling of the said cargo are thoroughly cleaned and dried prior to receipt and handling of the cargo, since the material has the property of releasing oxygen when involved in fire and its mixtures with combustible materials are readily ignitable.
14. The Stevedore shall ensure that the wharf is thoroughly cleaned immediately after completion of discharge operations and that no cargo residue, spillages, packing materials, or any other material whatsoever is left on the wharf. The entire area shall be restored to a clean and safe condition to the satisfaction of the Port Authority, failing which necessary action shall be initiated at the risk and cost of the Stevedore.
15. The Stevedore shall ensure that the speed of all vehicles operating within the berth area does not exceed 20 kmph under any circumstances. Drivers shall be strictly instructed not to apply sudden brakes or indulge in rash driving during cargo handling operations. The Stevedore shall further ensure that all vehicles, loaders, cranes, and other cargo handling equipment deployed for the operation are maintained in sound and leak-proof condition, and that no leakage of mineral oils, fuel, grease, or any inflammable substance occurs during the course of operations. Any violation or negligence in this regard shall be viewed seriously and the Stevedore shall be held responsible for the consequences arising therefrom.
16. The Stevedore shall ensure that a minimum area of 30 meters around the operational zone on the berth is properly cordoned off and secured during cargo handling operations. Adequate barricading, warning signs, and safety measures shall be provided, and no unauthorized person shall be permitted to enter the restricted area under any circumstances. The Stevedore shall be solely responsible for maintaining strict access control and safety within the cordoned area throughout the operation.
17. The Stevedore/Agent shall submit requisition for deployment of standby fire watch arrangements from the time the vessel is berthed till completion of operations and unberthing of the vessel, along with the relevant Agent Deposit Account Number. All charges towards fire watch deployment shall be borne by the concerned Stevedore/Agent.

18. The Stevedore/Importer shall mandatorily inform the Port Fire Officer well in advance before berthing of the vessel and commencement of discharge operations of the cargo, and shall strictly comply with all fire safety instructions issued by the Port Fire Wing from time to time.
19. The Stevedore shall extend full cooperation and assistance to the Port Authority in maintaining safety and security within the operational area and shall ensure that no unauthorized personnel are permitted to enter or remain in the working area during cargo handling operations.
20. The Stevedore/Importer shall ensure that the said cargo is strictly segregated and kept completely isolated from all combustible materials, particularly inflammable liquids, organic substances, oils, waxes, reducing agents, acids, alkalis, sulphur, chlorates, chlorites, chlorides, hypo chlorites, chromates, nitrates, permanganates, finely divided or powdered metals, and substances containing metals such as chromium, copper, cobalt, nickel, zinc and their alloys, as well as fibrous materials including cotton, jute, sisal, saw dust, and similar combustible substances.
21. The said cargo shall at all times be handled, transported, and maintained in a manner ensuring complete separation from all other cargoes/goods so as to eliminate any possibility of contamination, chemical reaction, fire hazard, or unsafe condition during the course of operations. Any lapse in maintaining the prescribed segregation and safety requirements shall be viewed seriously and the Stevedore/Importer shall be held solely responsible for all consequences arising therefrom.
22. Declaration by Importer:-

A person holding an Import License granted under these rules shall furnish a declaration to the Licensing Authority (PESO) and the Chief Controller;

  - a. In Form R-3 under Part – 3 Schedule II as soon as ship carrying Ammonium Nitrate sails from the port of loading;
  - b. In Form R-4 under Part-3 of Schedule II as soon as any shipment of Ammonium Nitrate cleared at the port of import.
23. Declaration by Master of Ship or by the Ship's Agent:-
  - a. The master of the vessel carrying Ammonium Nitrate or the Agent for such ship shall give VPA not less than seventy two hours' notice of its intended arrival at the Port;
  - b. The master of the vessel carrying Ammonium Nitrate shall deliver to the pilot before entering VPA, a written declaration in Form C-1, under Part 4 of Schedule II, provided that, if in anticipation of a ship's arrival, the agent for such ship delivers to the PFSO/Deputy Conservator, VPA a written declaration as aforesaid under his signature, no such declaration need to be made by master of the ship;
  - c. Every declaration delivered to a pilot under clause (b) as above shall be made over by master without delay to the VPA and all declarations received by the PPA shall be forwarded by master, with all convenient dispatch to Vizag Customs.

24. Restriction of Transport:-

- a. The Ammonium Nitrate shall not be transported with any other explosives, inflammable substances, oil, gases, carbonaceous matter, etc.
- b. No Ammonium Nitrate shall be transported in any carriage vessel plying for or carrying passengers on hire.

25. Restriction on delivery or dispatch:-

- a. No person shall deliver or dispatch Ammonium Nitrate to anyone other than a person who
  - i. Is the holder of a license to possess the Ammonium Nitrate or the agent of a holder of such a license duly authorized by him in writing on his behalf or
  - ii. Is entitled under these rules to possess the Ammonium Nitrate without a license.
- b. The Ammonium Nitrate so delivered or dispatched shall in no case exceed the quantity at any point of time for which the person is holding a license under these Rules.
- c. No person shall receive Ammonium Nitrate from any person other than the holder of a license under these Rules.

26. Restriction on employment of children, intoxicated persons and certain other persons.

No person shall employ, allow or engage a person.

- a. who is below the age of eighteen years; or
  - b. who is in a state of intoxication; or
  - c. Who is mentally or physically challenged, for manufacture, conversation, bagging, storage, sale, loading, unloading or transport of Ammonium Nitrate or to enter any premises permitted under these rules.
27. The Stevedores shall ensure that all workers engaged in handling of this cargo shall wear personal protective equipment.
28. The Stevedores shall obtain all relevant permissions as are required by various statutes in force such as permission of the Chief Controller of Explosives etc. and shall continue to abide by all the regulations in force till the cargo is finally evacuated from the Port area and its estate.
29. A certificate of purity/analysis report issued by the competent authority in the country of manufacture will be produced before such cargo on board a vessel is allowed inside the docks (Copy enclosed).
30. Welding, burning, cutting or other operations involving the use of fire, open flame, spark or Arc producing equipment will not be carried out or used. Special precautions will be taken both on board and on shore to ensure that there is no 'No smoking' or 'Naked lights', particularly in or near the hold.
31. Bunkering or pumping of fuel oil will not be allowed during the unloading operation.
32. Restriction on use:-All operations associated with stevedoring, bagging, handling, transport and use of Ammonium Nitrate in any building or part thereof shall be carried out under the supervision of a person employed by the license holder who is conversant with the process thereof and the hazard connected therewith and the provisions of these Rules.

33. Vessel will ensure that the ship's fire-fighting appliances on board the vessel are kept in readiness at all times to meet any emergency and fire-fighting personnel should be present along with appropriate fire-fighting appliances during the entire period of unloading the said cargo from the vessel.
34. The unloading operation of the said cargo will be carried out under direct supervision of a responsible nominee of the vessel till the completion of such operation. The handling and delivery operations of the said cargo will be carried out under supervision of a responsible nominee of the importer till the completion of such operation.
35. Recovery of spillage during handling:-If any spillage occurs during the process of handling of Ammonium Nitrate at any stage, it should be carefully collected and bagged and accounted for and the spillage, if not contaminated may be transferred expeditiously only to a licensee after proper accounting.

In the event of spillage of this cargo, such spillage should not be rolled over by weight or such any method under any circumstances. Spillage of this cargo, if any, should be immediately swept out separately and cleared away immediately by your responsible competent person in consultation with the vessel agent and stevedore.

Ship's firefighting appliances on board the vessel should be kept in readiness at all times to any emergency. Adequate supplies of water for fighting purposes should be immediately available from the fire hydrant/main whenever this material is on board. In case this cannot be supplied by the ship's pumps it should be augmented to the required quantity by means of portable pumps. Firefighting personal should be present during the entire period of unloading/handling and delivery of the said cargo from the dock area.

The unloading, handling and delivery operation of the said cargo are to be carried out under direct supervision of 'Competent Person' from the Importer as well as the Vessel Agent side as they will be jointly and severally responsible for any lapses or mishaps. Further, the Importer shall submit, shift-wise, the details of the Competent Person and a list of personnel being deployed at Berth before commencement of each shift.
36. The license holder shall submit monthly returns of Ammonium Nitrate manufactures, converted, stevedored, received, sold, transported, used, destroyed or imported or exported to the license issuing Authority, the District Magistrate and Superintendent of Police in the form specified in Para 3 of Schedule II so as to reach the above authority on or before the tenth day of every succeeding month.
37. The license holder shall maintain record and make transaction and file returns by electronic means when directed by the License Issuing Authority or the Central Government.
38. The Vessel Agent will inform the Safety Officer, VPA and PFSO/Deputy Conservator, VPA regarding arrival of the vessel, berthing of the vessel, commencement of discharge of the cargo, completion of discharge of the cargo and sailing of the vessel.
39. Agent of Vessel carrying Ammonium Nitrate for import shall submit necessary information as prescribed in 'Form-A' (enclosed as Annexure-C) at least 3 (three) clear working days, in quadruplicate, prior to the arrival of the vessel to the PFSO/Deputy Conservator, VPA. If found satisfactory, Form-A will be endorsed by the PFSO/Deputy Conservator, VPA. After endorsement, the first copy will be retained by the PFSO/Deputy Conservator, VPA, the Vessel Agent will submit the second copy to Traffic Manager, VPA and the third copy to Stevedore appointed by the Importer and the fourth copy will be retained by the Vessel Agent.

40. The Importer and Vessel Agent should indemnify the VPA for any damage/injury to the Port's properly, personnel etc. or even any liabilities arising out or damage to third party during the time of unloading, handling and delivery of the said cargo at/from the dock area. A liability may arise by or arising due to the entry of vessel into the Port till the vessel completely leaves the Port for beginning of another transaction. The liability in respect of each and every act of the import of Ammonium Nitrate till it is totally free from this transaction shall be made good by means of an indemnity bond by the Importer/Vessel Agent of the vessel. Format of the indemnity bond is enclosed as **Annexure-A** and **Annexure-B**.
41. The Stevedore shall comply with the rule 15 & 18 of MSIHC rules.  
In case of any accident, loss or theft of ammonium nitrate, license holder should take necessary action as per sections 52 & 53 of ammonium nitrate rules, 2012. A copy of the report shall also be submitted to Traffic Manager, VPA  
The importer and vessel agent will inform Inspector of Dock safety regarding import consignment of ammonium nitrate and obtain acknowledgement of receipt of the same.
42. The Stevedore shall comply with the central Motor vehicle rules 1988 framed under the provisions of Motor Vehicle Act, 1988.
43. Strict procedure shall be followed for maintaining cleanliness at the jetty while handling Ammonium Nitrate to prevent contamination with any reactive substance containing carbonaceous, hydro-carbonaceous material and any other incompatible material.
44. The code of practice prescribed by United Nations guidelines on transportation of hazardous substances and chemicals will be strictly followed.
45. The bagged cargo shall be directly taken delivery from hook point itself and shall not be stored either in dock area." or any other godown constructed in the land allotted by VPA and circulated vide Traffic Department Circular No.371 dt 04-02-2013 of a file ITRA/SHP/FAMN.
46. The Vessel Agent/Stevedore/Importer will be required to furnish the documents checklist below:

Format for Indemnity Bond to be submitted by the Importer (Submit on Stamp paper of value not less than Rs.100/-)

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This deed of indemnity is made by ....., having its Registered Office at .....(hereinafter referred to as the Importer which expression shall unless repugnance to the condition or meaning there of include its heirs, successors, legal Representatives and executors) in favor of the Board of Visakhapatnam Port Authority having its office at Visakhapatnam Port Authority, Administrative Building, Visakhapatnam - 530035 (herein after called as Board) whereas the importer have requested the Board for import of Ammonium Nitrate.

And whereas necessary permission from all the concerned authorities including Andhra Pradesh Pollution Control Board were taken for importing Ammonium Nitrate.

Now this indenture witnesses that the importer agrees and Undertakes that they will indemnify and keep the Board indemnified if suffered directly or indirectly towards handling of import of Ammonium Nitrate.

The Importer further agrees to indemnify and keep the Board indemnified against any/all claims /demands /actions/ deamager/ recoveries/ judgements/ costs /charges and expenses which may be made or brought or commenced against the Board or which the Board may/may have to bear, pay or suffer directly or indirectly on account of such import of Ammonium Nitrate. The Importer further agrees to indemnify Board and its employees against all consequences that may arise out of third party loss/damage/injury/death etc. towards of handling of import of Ammonium Nitrate.

The Importer also agrees to indemnify and keep the Board indemnified against any liability/loss claim that may arise owing to environment pollution as a result of handling of import of Ammonium Nitrate within the conservancy jurisdiction of the Port of Visakhapatnam and undertake to bear all expenses/penal action as result of environmental pollution consistent with all loses with the territory of India.

A liability may arise by or arising due to the entry of vessel into the Port till the vessel completely leaves the Port for beginning of another transaction. The liability in respect of each and every act of the import of Ammonium Nitrate till it is totally free from this transaction shall be made good by the Importer.

SIGNED, SEALED AND DELIVERED

Witness: 1 )  
2)

Format for Indemnity Bond to be submitted by the Vessel Agent (Submit on Stamp paper of value not less than Rs.100/-)

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This deed of indemnity is made by .....having its Registered Office at ....., who have been duly authorized by the owners/charterers of the vessel..... to execute this Bond on his/their behalf (hereinafter referred to as the Agent which expression shall unless repugnant to the condition or meaning thereof include its heirs, successors, legal representatives and executors) in favor of the Board of Visakhapatnam Port Authority having its office at Visakhapatnam Port Authority, Administrative Building, Visakhapatnam - 530035 (herein after called as Board). And that I/We have been duly authorized by the owner of the vessel to execute this Bond on their behalf.

Whereas, I/We, the Agent/Agents representative of the owner of the vessel have requested the Board for Import of Ammonium Nitrate.

Now This Indenture Witnesses that I/We, the Agent on behalf of the owner of the vessel agree and undertake that we will indemnify and keep Board indemnified against any/all loss/ liability/ injury that the Board may suffer towards Import of Ammonium Nitrate.

I/We, Agent on behalf of the owners of the vessel further agree to indemnify and keep the Board indemnified against any/all claims/ demands/ actions/ proceedings/ damages/ recoveries/ judgments/ costs/ charges and expenses which may be made or brought or commenced against the Board or which the Board may have to bear, pay or suffer directly or indirectly on account of such import of Ammonium Nitrate. I/We, further agree to indemnify the Board and its employees against all consequences that may arise out of third party loss/damage/injury/death etc. towards of handling of import of Ammonium Nitrate.

I/We, the Agent also agrees to indemnify and keep the Board indemnified against any liability/loss claim that may arise owing to environment pollution as a result of handling of import of Ammonium Nitrate within the conservancy jurisdiction of the Port of Visakhapatnam and undertake to bear all expenses/penal action as result of environmental pollution consistent with all loses with the territory of India.

A liability may arise by or arising due to the entry of vessel into the Port till the vessel completely leaves the Port for beginning of another transaction. The liability in respect of each and every act of the import of Ammonium Nitrate till it is totally free from this transaction shall be made good by the Agent.

SIGNED, SEALED AND DELIVERED

Witness: 1)  
2)

TO BE SUBMITTED BY VESSEL AGENT  
FORM (A)

(In terms of sub-Regulation (1) of Regulation-76 of Dock Workers (Safety, Health, Welfare) Regulation, 1990).

(Special Notice for Dangerous and Hazardous Goods).

Name of the Vessel :

Voyage No. :

VCN No.

Date of Entry with Customs :

Expected date of Arrival (ETA) :

Vessel Agent :

Sl. No.	Mrks and No. of bags/ Cont. No.	No. of Packages	Quantity Gr.Wt/Net Wt.(Kgs)	IMDG Code (Class)	UN No.	Chemical Name	Name of Importer	Name of MLO	Stowage	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11

[Signature of Vessel's Agent with Office Seal]

VISAKHAPATNAM PORT AUTHORITY  
TRAFFIC DEPARTMENT

MANDATORY CHECKLIST FOR COMPLIANCE BY STAKEHOLDERS OF  
VESSELS CARRYING AMMONIUM NITRATE (AMN)

**A. To be submitted by vessel Agent**

SI.No	Document	Status
1	Vessel related charges	
2	P & I Certificate & Wreck Removal	
3	Crew list	
4	Last 10 port of calls	
5	PANS (pre-arrival notification)	
6	Corona undertaking letter	
7	Maritime declaration	
8	COVID CHECK LIST	
9	Ship registry	
10	RBRIS (Risk based random inspection system)	
11	ISPS (International Safety Management Certificate)	
12	ANF No. (Advance notification form)	
13	Ship particulars	
14	Import General Manifest	
15	Letter to Fire Officer for fire tender	
16	Indemnity confirmation	

**B. To be submitted by Stevedore**

SI.No	Document	Status
1	Import application	
2	Bill of entry & duty payment	
3	Intimation letter to VPT, Collector, Commissioner of Police, Intelligence Bureau, Dock safety, CISF	
4	CHD gang payment	
5	Working plan	
6	Stevedoring License of VPT	
7	NOC to be issued by Police	
8	Sanctioned Quantity for delivery by PESO	

**C. To be submitted by Receivers**

SI.No	Document	Status
1	29 points undertaking	
2	P5 License (PESO)/ P4 License issued by PESO	
3	Intimation to APPCB	
4	Intimation to District Magistrate	
5	Quality ,Quantity inspection certificate	
6	Maritime cargo insurance	
7	Public liability insurance	