

To Brokers, Shipmanagers and Shipowners,

As most of you will be aware, funding negotiations between US lawmakers were concluded on Friday February 15th 2019, preventing a new shutdown after the US President signed legislation approved by Congress to fund the US Government through to September 30th, 2019. This news was well-received as it ended months of uncertainty for US Federal Government employees, which includes personnel working at the National Pollution Fund Center (“NPFC” is the government department that handles COFR applications), but it also meant that the NPFC would continue, uninterrupted in their effort to expeditiously clear the backlog of work accumulated as a result of the original 35-day shutdown which began on December 22nd, 2018.

We have recently been advised that the NPFC have finished working through the backlog of COFR applications and are once again able to resume normal operations. At this time, SIGCo would like to remind its members that the NPFC may take up to 21 days to process a COFR related request and that if a COFR is required, this timeframe must be taken into consideration in order to avoid unexpected delays. Please do not hesitate to contact us if a vessel’s COFR entry has not appeared on the NPFC’s website after the 21 day period has elapsed or if the vessel is due to enter US waters within this 21 day period. In the event that a vessel is expected to enter US waters imminently and its COFR record is not on the NPFC’s website, it is critical that SIGCo are advised of the vessel’s expected port of call as well as the estimated date and time of arrival as soon as possible. In these circumstances, we will be happy to follow up with the NPFC on your behalf.

As always, we remain at your disposal for any additional information you may require concerning this matter.

Nigel Shimmin
Vice President
SIGCo Group