



Abstract

In the 21st century greater emphasis have been given in the shipping industry to address the issues such as enhancing door-to-door transportation, streamlining the documentation processes with the rapid expansion of electronic data interchange (EDI) and achieving both the uniformity in related laws and sustainability. The Rotterdam Rules do seek to provide solution for those prevailing unaddressed matters, by creating a secure legal environment or framework. When the electronic bills of lading are concerned this rule provides a great impetus towards acceptance and full scale legal recognition for the use of electronic bills of lading.

Bill of lading is the most important document that used in carriage of goods by sea, among other compendium of related documents. The importance of the bill of lading in international trade is clearly self-evident when viewed against its inherent functions (Arguably, the most important function of the bill of lading relates to its negotiability). Replicating all those functions in the electronic version of the bill of lading in a legally recognizable manner does help to eliminate the existing uncertainty in the minds of all the stakeholders in the maritime transport industry. i.e.: shipper, carrier, consignee and banks (who finance the trade).

This factor along will not help to secure the survival of the electronic bill of lading in the competitive shipping industry, how well its suits to the needs of modern shipping practices and concepts also have to be concerned. So implementation of the electronic bill of lading holds many challenges. The success of electronic bills of lading will depend on the work and effort of all the interested parties. Ultimately however, a wide scale acceptance will depend on practical results. This research is carried out with the intention of in-depth discussion of these issues from both the practical and theoretical approach in order to **formalize the use of electronic bill of lading through Rotterdam Rule.**