

INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER OF SHIPPING
NOTE OF CREW CHANGE TASK FORCE MEETING
TUESDAY 16 JUNE 2020 AT 1200 UK TIME

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH COMPETITION RULES

Welcome and Introduction.

How can lobbying efforts be ramped up now that the IMEC/ITF agreement has expired?

Meeting with ITF, who are supportive and want to work with shipowners to resolve the crew change problem. ITF will support seafarers to be repatriated where possible.

Further targeted communication is needed.

Issues continue with labour supply countries, such as getting crew out from the Philippines, however expect restrictions may be eased over the next 30 days in the Philippines for both joiners and those being repatriated.

Egypt are looking to develop Cairo into a crew change hub and have passed on the ICS protocols for use with the government.

1. CREW CHANGES

Simon – ICS facilitated a meeting with IATA Singapore office to discuss how to move forward regarding crew changes in Singapore.

Singapore do not want seafarers ashore and have to remain on board until they can travel direct to the airport, however a lack of flights makes this difficult. SSA will send some data to IATA regarding demand for flights, so IATA can encourage airlines to make flights available.

Stuart – continuing efforts with the media and ICS are calling on members for business leaders/senior leadership of companies to comment on the impact to national and local media. A draft note has been circulated on the narrative. Looking at ramping up the media campaign and have had a number of organisations willing to contribute financially. Need enough critical mass to take forward to roll out in the next few weeks to support existing efforts. It would be an industry led activity, not ICS specifically.

Alex (Cyrus) – match ships arrival with flights but can accommodate ashore if necessary prior departure. Incoming crew need a COVID test prior departure and sign a self-declaration but no test or visa required on arrival.

Jonas (Sweden) – working well in Sweden without any protocols. 2 flights each day from Gothenburg to Amsterdam and Hamburg. Working on sign-off without a valid Schengen visa. No quarantine requirements.

Tim (Singapore) – still some issues with the Singapore protocol related to the Ministry of Health. MPA issues are resolved. Now looking to resolve 3 issues; 1. the vessel having to stay in port and a holding facility, 2. doctor needing to issue a fit to travel document and 3. a test 48 hours prior departure country of origin. Flights remain a problem to India but flights are returning to/from Manila. Hopefully there will be a revised protocol issued next week. Singapore elections are due in the Autumn and some of the issues are being politically driven.

Thomas (Cyprus) – concern regarding the end of the ITF/IMEC agreement on crew contract extensions and were ICS involved? Are ICS aware of how practical ITF will be regarding any industrial action? CSA members are under pressure to effect crew changes and an ICS response to the ITF announcement is requested to have a clear narrative, such as a joint ICS/ITF statement post 16 June regarding any potential industrial action.

Guy – ICS had no involvement in the ITF announcement but were aware that the announcement would be issued. ITF are playing to their own audience regarding any industrial action, which is aimed at governments and not shipowners and ITF are trying to be pragmatic regarding getting seafarers repatriated but will not agree to any further blanket extensions to crew contracts.

Igor (ISE) – at the limit of capacity to keep double ranks on board once on-signers have joined and airline cancellations are contributing to the problem. ITF should be aware that shipowners are not the cause of the problem.

Guy – need to remove administrative restrictions for crew changes.

Tim (UK) – Schengen treaty visa waiver is being considered and working on governments to apply it. EU member governments looking to the EC for guidance. Guidance issued last week by the EC on resumption on issuing visas, no justification for geographical limitations, but it did not go as far as encouraging the application of visa waivers. Letter has been issued to EU Health Ministers to recognise their role in keeping trade moving but no response received yet. Continuing to press as hard as possible for action by the EC to advise EU member States to remove the hurdles on travel for seafarers.

2. CHARTERING AND INSURANCE ISSUES

Peter (BIMCO) – still working on the clause and it may take another week before it will be published.

3. TESTING

Guy – continuing to press for a unified and coordinated testing regime. Testing capacity in the Philippines is starting to increase.

4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

ATTENDANCE

Representatives of following national and international associations:

Australia
Bahamas
Belgium
Canada
Cyprus
Denmark
France
Greece
Hong Kong
Japan
Liberia
Netherlands
Norway
Philippines
Singapore
Spain
Sweden
Switzerland
United Kingdom

With

ICS
CLIA
ECSA
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INTERCARGO
INTERTANKO
IG P&I
IMEC
WSC
WaterFront