

INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER OF SHIPPING
NOTE OF CREW CHANGE TASK FORCE MEETING
TUESDAY 1 SEPTEMBER 2020 AT 1200 UK TIME

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH COMPETITION RULES

Welcome and Introduction.

1. CREW CHANGES

Guy – some progress is being made. Singapore appears to be fully engaging in the process.

The medium/long term solutions for testing and quarantine need to be considered.

Michael (Singapore) – August has been difficult in Singapore for crew changes. ASA have been engaging with the Singaporean authorities to get crew changes restarted. Last Friday Singapore issued Port Circular 36 related to crew changes in Singapore and qualifying criteria have been updated. Three additional quarantine facilities have been provided to address timing issues around flights and vessel schedules, two of which are for sign-on crew and one as a stand-by facility. Following isolation and quarantine procedures is still required but this allows an increased capacity. For sign-off crew one floating hotel and an additional hotel are available as before. Crew arriving in Singapore need to quarantine for 14 days and undertake PCR testing, with some countries such as Malaysia and Brunei being exempt. Singapore has also set up a STAR fund (Government, MPA, SSA and 2 unions) to help bring resolutions to issues to occur, e.g. assisting with PCR testing if testing becomes restrictive and supporting other countries in complying with Singapore requirements. The criteria for crew coming from all countries (regardless if they appear to not have full control) will be subject to the same criteria as in the processes laid out in the latest Port Marine Circular. No exceptions and 14 days quarantine still required for off-signers, i.e. no change in requirements. ASA will follow up with the Philippines SSA regarding assistance on verification of testing facilities. There is a current huge backlog of crew change applications including fresh applications which MPA has to wade through, so the expectations need to be set that there will be some delays until the backlog is cleared.

Francesco (IMEC) – trying to address concerns from a number of governments, particularly related to Filipino seafarers and testing status. Effective quarantine will be served in the Philippines and confirmation that tests are verifiable through a secure accredited facility in the Philippines through AMOSUP.

Edgar (Philippines) – Philippines SSA is in support of the process from IMEC and the accreditation of testing and quarantine facilities.

Gautam (Hong Kong) – no further update from Hong Kong but working on a new set of protocols to provide to the government.

Simon – ICS are relooking at the protocols, particularly with respect to updating testing and quarantine procedures. IMO Council have requested ICS to send a proposal to FAL 44 regarding amendments to the FAL Convention regarding pandemics. IMO extraordinary sessions of the 5 main committees will take place 16-17 September, followed by an extraordinary session of MSC 18 September to discuss crew changes and the potential issuing of an MSC Resolution including the existing crew change protocols. Last week there were reports of some charterers requiring “no crew change” clauses in C/P’s.

Kiran – it would be good to know from shipowners whether charterers are requesting “no crew changes” clauses being requested or required so this could be discussed with some of the bigger charterers.

Stuart – continuing to push media coverage related to crew changes. ICS also has a leadership webinar programme starting next Wednesday (9 September) focused on COVID-19 issues.

Teresa (Australia) - Bloomberg have been speaking to me for a few days - they appear to be preparing an article that will have a considerable CSR angle.

Phillip (Intertanko) – Middle East crew changes has increased, particularly through Dubai. Saudi Arabia has just announced that medical treatment for seafarers has been suspended. Concerns have been expressed about the centres for quarantine in the Philippines sounding similar to detention centres and need to consider seafarers human rights so the right balance needs to be found.

Tim (UK) – ECSA have had a meeting yesterday with ETF and DG Move, the EC is seeking information as to where in the EU most problems exist in making crew changes and reasons why so they can target their efforts, along with ongoing visa problems.

Damian (WSC) – have been making enquires with shippers’ groups and will keep all posted.

Jakob (BIMCO) – no data available regarding take up of the deviation clause.

Rajesh (Singapore) - I understand there is a quota restriction in Australia for incoming seafarers and it is been very difficult to send people even with Australian Visa. Can we work on this?

Teresa (Australia) – the problems in Australia remain the same.

Natalie – medical guide update and protocols have now been issued as has an IMO Circular Letter. Looking to work on a “white list” of ports for testing and will distribute to the group to add to the list as appropriate.

2. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday 8 September, an invite will be sent out as usual.

ATTENDANCE

Representatives of following national and international associations:

Australia
Belgium
Canada
Cyprus
Denmark
Germany
Greece
Hong Kong
Japan
Netherlands
Norway
Philippines
Singapore
South Africa
Sweden
United Kingdom

With

ICS
BIMCO
INTERCARGO
INTERTANKO
IG P&I
IMEC
WSC
WaterFront