

INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER OF SHIPPING
CREW CHANGE TASK FORCE
SUMMARY OF MEETING ON TUESDAY 14 APRIL 1200 – 1330

STATEMENT OF COMPLIANCE WITH COMPETITION RULES

The statement in the meeting papers was noted.

1. AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The purpose of the Task Force would be to address challenges with regard to conducting crew changes and to develop possible solutions. Some initial 'high level' political progress had already been made, such as statements made by the G20, and IMO/ILO recommendations on designating marine personnel as key workers.

It was noted many crew changes would need to be postponed at least until mid-May 2020 (as agreed, for example, between IMEC and ITF); the focus was on developing medium term solutions, although to achieve this rapid progress was required now.

It was noted that the ICS Secretary General had recently met by video with the Director General of IATA, which was interested in co-operation (which would begin with the issue of a joint press communication).

The Task Force confirmed it should focus on three separate but interconnected issues:

1. Establishing accepted protocols – that could be recommended to Governments by IMO, ICAO and WHO – to allow crew changes to take place.
2. Exploring possible solutions (and their implications) to the question of providing flights for crew changes should normal commercial flights not have been re-established, including the identification of major airports via which crew changes could initially take place.
3. Maintaining political pressure on governments to facilitate crew changes.

2. A FRAMEWORK OF PROTOCOLS FOR FACILITATING CREW CHANGES

It was noted that ICS had started to develop a generic 'Framework of Protocols', applicable to both shipping companies and national authorities, in a format that bodies such as IMO and ICAO might be able to promote as recommendations to Governments, building on the earlier recommendations IMO had circulated on 27 March.

This work would take account of various materials already developed by governments and shipping companies, including, among others, those recently agreed in the EU and those soon to be implemented by the Philippines.

It was envisaged the framework would set out the procedures that shipping companies should undertake for the conduct of crew changes in return for which national authorities should be willing to facilitate crew changes, even if health restrictions or screening protocols might continue to apply.

The importance of addressing other marine personnel was noted.

The importance of working with other industry associations was emphasised (which would be discussed at the next weekly meeting with them) as well taking account of work between IMEC and ITF, in addition to working with WHO.

It was noted that governments would primarily follow the advice of their health authorities, which would also need to be addressed.

Infrastructure support was also required to protect local workers, not just the seafarers. Social distancing on flights also needed to be considered. The possible need for dedicated holding areas for seafarers in airports was noted.

The need to address the issue of testing was recognised, including work ICS was currently doing with the International Maritime Health Association and the situation with regard to the likely availability of different tests in a few weeks' time.

The possibility of trialling the protocols between two key airports, such as Singapore and Manila, was suggested, while the need to aim for worldwide acceptance was also recognised.

The ICS Secretariat hoped to circulate a preliminary draft as soon as possible.

3. ADDRESSING THE POTENTIAL LACK OF FLIGHTS

The meeting papers were noted.

Following tentative ICS discussion with IATA, it was noted that the current immediate focus was on developing a list of major crew change airports on which efforts might be focused, in discussion with airlines and governments, rather than seaports – several of which might be served by the same airport. Reference to 'hub' sea ports was therefore now being avoided.

Members were nevertheless invited to suggest those seaports which were most important for crew changes, while recognising that the number of airports on which efforts might initially be focused might need to be limited, and that the likelihood of the nation concerned being amenable to the resumption of crew changes also needed to be taken into account.

A number of passenger planes were now switched to cargo flights, and one possibility was to use these for crew changes too.

Another possibility was charter flights, but these were probably unsuitable for cost reasons, the numbers of seafarers involved, and they faced the same problems with regard to permission to take off and land.

The need to develop estimates of the total demand for crew flights to and from principal seafarer supply nations was noted, and it was agreed that ICS would try to refine its rough estimates in conjunction with IMEC.

It was noted that surveys among seafarers about their preferences for remaining on board needed to be taken into account. But this had to be balanced with the needs of seafarers waiting to return to work.

The closure of consulates and medical examination centres was also an issue.

Most members agreed that priority airports should include those close to major shipping lanes (including South America) which also have direct air connections to principal seafarer countries of residence (such as China, India and the Philippines as well as destinations in western and eastern Europe).

It was suggested that crew travel agents should be involved in the discussion.

It was emphasised that if ships had to deviate to make crew changes at only a limited number of airports, this would also require the co-operation and support of other stakeholders including charterers and insurers.

The problems *inter alia* from a safety, commercial and insurance perspective that would affect ships using the option to divert to ports in proximity to a limited number of airports available for crew flights were noted.

ICS had had preliminary discussions with the International Group of P&I Clubs on potential solutions and was looking at the development of a model charter party clause, in conjunction with BIMCO and INTERTANKO, to address deviation to make crew changes.

The issue of increased costs of the deviation for crew changes was noted and it was agreed that efforts should be made to engage with charterers and explore some sharing of these costs/additional charges as it would be in all parties' interests to allow the crew changes and for international trade to continue.

It was suggested that seafarers might lower wages during extended transit periods, and members were invited to advise on other issues that needed to be addressed.

It was agreed that before formally approaching IMO or ICAO, work on the possible Framework of Protocols should be progressed.

However, it was also agreed that discussions with IATA about airports should continue in parallel, as should work on chartering and insurance aspects.

4. ANY OTHER BUSINESS

It was agreed to have a further meeting on **Tuesday 21 April** at 1200.

ATTENDANCE

Guy Platten	Chairman
Teresa Lloyd	Australia
Sarah Cerche	Australia
Hilde Peeters	Belgium
Petros Monogios (ric)	Cyprus
Alex Josephides	Cyprus
Bertil Hohlmann	Denmark
Henrik Lykkegaard Madsen	Denmark
Flore Noirot	France
Wiebke Petersen	Germany
Robert Hengster	Germany
Dimitris Fafalios	Greece
Evelyn Petaloti	Greece
Andreas Bisbas	Greece
Capt. Gautam Ramaswamy	Hong Kong
Capt Akira Ohmori	Japan
Capt Toshihiro Takana	Japan
Marcello Pica	Italy
Igor Segeda	Liberia
Niels van de Minkelis	Netherlands
Ole Steinbach	Netherlands
Line Falkenberg Ollestad	Norway
Edgar Milla	Philippines
Michael Phoon	Singapore
Araiz Basurko	Spain

Nita Jha	Switzerland
Christina Palmén	Sweden
Ender Kahya	Turkey
Tim Springett	United Kingdom
Andreas Bisbas	Chairman Insurance Committee
Claudia Vella Casagrande	ECSA
Francesco Gargiulo	IMEC
Tim Wickmann	WSC

with

Simon Bennett	ICS
Kiran Khosla	ICS
Chris Oliver	ICS
Stewart Inglis	ICS