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Circular Letter No.4295
22 May 2020

To: All IMO Members
Intergovernmental organizations
Non-governmental organizations in consultative status

Subject: **Communication from the Republic of Iceland**

The Government of the Republic of Iceland has sent the attached communication, dated 15 May 2020, with the request that it is circulated by the Organization.



Icelandic Transport Authority
Ármúli 2, 108 Reykjavík Iceland
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No. 2001978

Date: 15.5.2020

To: His Excellency Kitack Lim
Secretary General
International Maritime Organization
4 Albert Embankment
London
SE1 7SR United Kingdom
Email: info@imo.org

Secretary General,

Subject: Iceland's measures in response to the novel corona virus COVID-19 pandemic

The Icelandic Transport Authority thanks you and supports wholeheartedly your pragmatic approach and guidelines to ensure that the flow of shipping by sea is not disrupted in these times of trouble for the shipping, fishing and commercial community of the world.

The Icelandic Government took early measures to fight the pandemic and has fortunately been able to flatten the curve considerably by strict measures of social distancing, quarantine and extensive testing as well as applying unprecedented health care measures.

This circular is intended to inform you and the international maritime community that the Icelandic Transport Authority has issued guidelines and recommendation for our fleet, seafarers, inspectors, Port State Control officers and Recognised Organisations as a response to the effects of the current COVID-19 pandemic on maritime transport, fisheries and shipping operations in general. Also, the circular contains other COVID-19-related information by the Icelandic Government.

The Icelandic Transport Authority would like to request that the Secretariat issue a Circular Letter to all Member States, NGOs and IGOs containing the enclosed Maritime Notice.

The Icelandic Transport Authority would like to thank you in advance for your effort and takes this opportunity to assure of its highest cooperation.

Kind regards,

Jón Gunnar Jónsson

Director-General

Icelandic Transport Authority



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MARITIME NOTICE IMO-1-2020

Issued 30 April 2020, with later amendments

1. General

1. Vessels arriving in Iceland are required to transmit the Captain's Declaration of Health via SafeSeaNet. This declaration shall generally be transmitted no later than 24 hours before arrival in port. The Customs service monitors this system and informs the office of the Chief Epidemiologist (CE) if there is suspicion of infection aboard a vessel.
2. Additionally, the Icelandic Coast Guard (ICG) shall contact the vessel before the vessel docks and request the Captain to transmit a Declaration of Health as regards COVID-19 to the ICG. See image 1 in instructions.
3. The pilot will ask the same questions through the communications channel of the relevant port, upon arrival of the vessel.
4. Further information and the Health Declaration Form can be found in this linked: [Instructions for ports and vessels](#).
5. Iceland has implemented the travel restrictions imposed for the Schengen Area and the European Union. Further information can be found at this [News Bulletin](#). See update on travel restrictions [here](#). See also further update on travel restrictions contained in paragraph 6 of this Maritime Notice.
6. Please note that according to regulation 238/2020 the travel restrictions do not apply to essential travel, including passengers in transit; health and care workers on professional travel; transportation crews (airlines and cargo ships). The Regulation can be found at [Regulation 238/2020](#)
7. More information on the Novel Coronavirus COVID-19 can be found at the [Directorate of Health](#) website.

2. Port State Control (PSC)

1. Iceland will continue inspections as per PMoU procedures with some additional precautions.
2. Before each individual inspection, the Icelandic Port State Control Coordinator (PSC) will request the vessels agent to provide a Crew List, which includes detailed information about crew changes - where and when embarked, etc. Vessels in quarantine will not be inspected unless absolutely necessary and an "overriding factor" exists. The Port State Control Officer (PSCO) shall in such circumstances be equipped with proper overall Personal Protective Equipment, etc., as recommended by the Office of the Chief Epidemiologist.
3. The PSCO shall use proper gloves when inspecting the vessel, change gloves when needed, wash hands thoroughly and use disinfecting gel. Face masks are recommended, no food or drink shall be consumed on board and no handshakes will be conducted. The number of personnel needed to accompany the PSCO during inspection will be minimised. All paperwork and process of the inspection will take place on the bridge except walk around and operational controls.
4. These procedures will be in place until further notice from the Department of Civil Protection and Emergency Management's Coordination Centre.

3. Flag state surveys and extension of ship certificates - summary

1. At the request of the owner/operator, statutory surveys may be postponed and relevant ship certificates extended up to 3 months from their date of expiry. Note should be taken of any outstanding issues. This shall apply to all Icelandic flagged vessels registered on the national Ship Register.
2. This extension applies to certificates issued by the Administration and the recognised organisations. The extension also applies to certificates issued by service providers conducting services on behalf of the Administration, including, but not limited to service providers re-certifying life-saving equipment, fire-fighting equipment or radio equipment.
3. Extension of statutory ship certificates will be reflected in the national ships survey and certification database. The certificate in question need not be physically endorsed or replaced by a new certificate on board the vessel.
4. The shipowner is at all times responsible for ensuring that all its ships are operating according to all the applicable regulations, domestic, international Conventions, and EU legislation.
5. Statutory surveys should only be carried out after careful assessment of the situation with COVID-19.

4. Measures by Iceland regarding Ship Certificates and Inspections due to the COVID-19 pandemic

Below is a list of the measures which have been taken by the Icelandic Transport Authority regarding ship certificates and inspections due to the COVID-19 pandemic. It should be noted that the current ban on gatherings does not extend to ships. It is recommended that aggressive hygiene measures are strictly followed and operators take utmost measures to reduce the possibility of infection. Companies and inspectors assessing are recommended to assess the situation, taking into account the instructions previously provided before ship inspection is carried out and prioritise accordingly.

1. At the request of the owner/operator, in accordance with laws and regulations, statutory ship inspections may be suspended for 1 to 3 months and the validity of the relevant ship certificate is extended accordingly (Certificate of Seaworthiness or other certificates). Taking into account the guidelines by the International Maritime Organization, the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and the European Commission related to the COVID-19 epidemic, the Icelandic Transport Authority has decided, in the light of the unprecedented situation, to make use of the aforementioned extension of validity, except in exceptional circumstances. If the postponement of the ship's inspections is approved and extend the validity of a ship's certificate, it shall be extended for a maximum of 3 months regardless of the rules applicable to the ship. The period of validity of the extensions then takes into account the period of validity of the inspection which first expires. Vessels for which inspections expired prior to 26.12.2019 cannot be granted a postponement of inspection or extension of the validity of the vessel's certificate. Application for an extension shall be submitted by electronic means through the Icelandic Transport Authority's website "Application for the issue of a certificate of seaworthiness" and listed under "Message". Fees are subject to the applicable tariff of the Icelandic Transport Authority.
2. The aforementioned extensions shall cover all ship's certificates issued by the Icelandic Transport Authority or a recognized classification society. The extension of the ship's certificates also covers the certificates issued by marine equipment service providers, such as life rafts, life jackets, fire protection and fire-fighting equipment and telecommunications equipment. Recognised classification societies must notify the renewal of the certificates they issue on behalf of the Icelandic government to the e-mail address: ro@icetra.is
3. The renewal of a ship's certificate will be recorded in the Ship Register. The complete list of inspections will be e-mailed to the relevant operator, stating the validity of the Certificate of Seaworthiness. Ship certificates will not be printed and mailed. The original of a ship certificate is not required to be signed in cases where a certificate is required to be renewed (such as a fishing vessel's safety certificate).
4. Operators shall, however, be required to keep the ship and its equipment in the condition required

by applicable laws and regulations and to ensure that the ship is seaworthy.

5. Guidelines on seafarers' and fishermen's certificates of competency in response to the COVID-19 pandemic

In spite of challenges related to the coronavirus COVID-19, the Icelandic Transport Authority is accepting online applications for all personal licenses and processing complete applications.

STCW Certificates

Seafarers who are unable to extend the validity of their certificates of competency and endorsements attesting the attainment of the competence necessary to perform functions on board ships are granted a general extension for up to three months, but no longer than until 1 September 2020. This applies to STCW certificates of competency, certificates of proficiency and endorsements confirming or recognizing a certificate of competency.

STCW medical certificates

Due to challenges related to the coronavirus, validity of medical certificates for seafarers, essential for ships operations, expiring during the period of the state of emergency are extended from the end of their validity for up to three months, but no longer than until 1 September 2020.

STCW-F Certificates

Due to challenges related to the coronavirus, fishing vessel personnel may be unable to present a valid medical certificate. In response to this, ICETRA will grant an extension to the validity of STCW-F certificates of competency for a period of 3 months, but no longer than until 1 September 2020.

6. Announcement regarding requirement that everyone arriving into Iceland from risk areas will be subject to mandatory self-quarantine for 14 days due to COVID-19. Faroe Islands and Greenland no longer considered risk areas.

Governmental measures aiming to prevent the coronavirus causing COVID-19 from being carried by travellers to Iceland. Please note that, there will be strict conditions for traveling to the country **from 15 May through 15 June 2020.**

- All passengers traveling to Iceland, from an area defined as risk by the Chief Epidemiologist, will be subject to mandatory self-quarantine for 14 days upon arrival. The Chief Epidemiologist shall regularly revalue which countries and areas are defined as risk having taken into consideration information from international organisations such as WHO and ECDC.
- The Chief Epidemiologist has determined that the Faroe Islands and Greenland are no longer considered as high-risk areas. Those who have arrived in Iceland in the past 14 days from the Faroe Islands or Greenland no longer need to remain in quarantine upon arrival to Iceland. However, individuals who travel to Iceland with **layover** in the Faroe Islands or Greenland but who have been in other countries **still considered risk areas** within the 14 days prior to arrival in Iceland, must enter quarantine on arrival in Iceland until 14 days after they left the risk area.
- Travelers will be required to quarantine at designated places (home or other accommodation) and they are responsible for their own expenses during the quarantine,

including housing and living expenses, as they have traveled to the country voluntarily despite the governments quarantine requirements.

- Airline passengers are required to complete Passenger Locator form (PLF for aircrafts) before arrival.
 - Passengers on cruise ships and ferries are required to complete Passenger/crew locator form (PLF for ships).
 - Aircraft and ship operators are responsible for all passengers to complete the appropriate form prior to arrival.
 - A completed PLF must be presented to law enforcement authorities at border points for review upon arrival. Travelers will simultaneously be informed about the quarantine requirements.
 - Law enforcement authorities at border points register the information in the database of the contact-tracing team of the Civil Protection and Emergency Management.
 - Border control at the internal borders will be extended according to the decision of the Ministry of Justice until 15th of June 2020.
 - It must be ensured that quarantine requirements have been presented securely to travellers that have already booked tickets to Iceland. The requirements should also be available for all travellers booking tickets to Iceland, including on booking sites, from the day the quarantine requirements enter into force.
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