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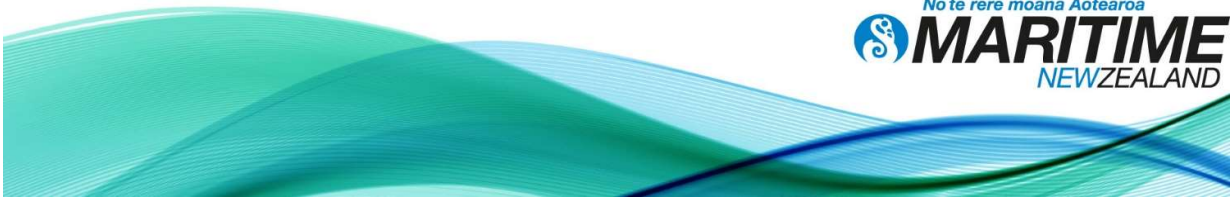
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Circular nº 4248/Add.8
28 septiembre 2020

A: Todos los Miembros de la OMI
Organizaciones intergubernamentales
Organizaciones no gubernamentales con carácter consultivo

Asunto: **Comunicación recibida del Gobierno de Nueva Zelanda**

El Gobierno de Nueva Zelanda ha enviado la comunicación adjunta, con fecha de 25 de septiembre de 2020, en la que se solicita que sea distribuida por la Organización.



25 September 2020

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H. E. Mr Kitack Lim

Secretary General

International Maritime Organization

Secretary-general@imo.org

D20/30628

By email

Dear Secretary General

New Zealand would like to draw your attention to our management of the COVID-19 pandemic. New Zealand's response has consequences for maritime activities and up to date guidance is being issued regularly through the Ministry of Health [website](#).

We ask that you please disseminate this information to all other member states.

New Zealand Strategy to COVID-19

New Zealand has successfully implemented an elimination strategy for COVID-19 achieved through:

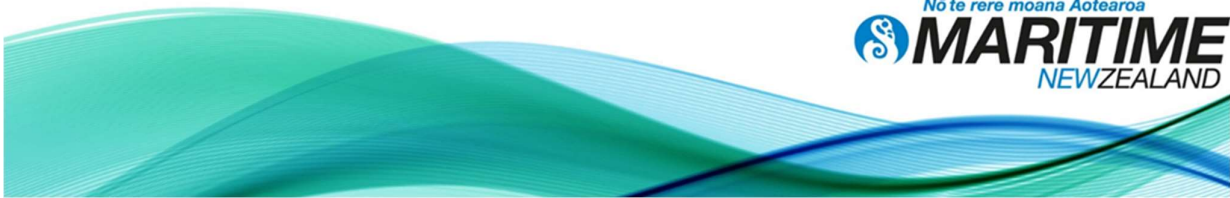
- controlling entry at the border to just New Zealanders with few exceptions
- disease surveillance
- physical distancing and hygiene measures
- testing for and tracing all potential cases
- isolating cases and their close contacts
- broader public health controls depending on the level of risk.

Our national strategy can be seen on the Ministry of Health website (<https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-current-situation/covid-19-elimination-strategy-aotearoa-new-zealand>).

Maritime Border Restrictions

The New Zealand Government, for the purposes of preventing and limiting the risk of an outbreak or spread of COVID-19, is

- (a) restricting which ships may arrive in New Zealand; and
- (b) putting in place isolation or quarantine requirements for people who arrive in New Zealand by sea.



Ships are not permitted entry to New Zealand unless exempted as detailed in the “COVID-19 Public Health Response (Maritime Border) Order (No 2) 2020” which is available at: <http://legislation.govt.nz/regulation/public/2020/0240/latest/LMS403466.html#d10390270e3145> . A cargo ship that is arriving in New Zealand for the purpose of loading or unloading cargo is an example of such an exemption.

The right of innocent passage through the territorial sea, and transit passage through straits used for international navigation is unaffected.

These maritime border restrictions will remain in force until further notice and may be amended or updated at short notice. The latest information, which includes advice on when and how to apply for exemptions, is available on the Ministry of Health’s website: <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-information-specific-audiences/covid-19-resources-border-sector/covid-19-maritime-sector>

Supporting Seafarer Welfare

The New Zealand government recognises the important role the maritime community plays in maintaining global supply chains and has been a strong multilateral advocate during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Border restrictions in many countries are preventing ship’s crew leaving the ship which may exacerbate the health and resilience challenges these essential maritime workers now face. These workers support the wellbeing and prosperity of New Zealanders by keeping supply chains and the economy flowing. The New Zealand government has, therefore, taken steps to enable seafarers to disembark from their ship in New Zealand.

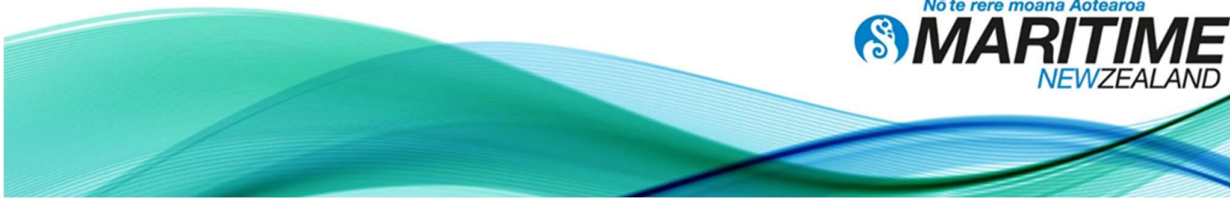
Guidance on the testing and quarantine criteria for disembarkation can be found at <https://www.health.govt.nz/our-work/diseases-and-conditions/covid-19-novel-coronavirus/covid-19-information-specific-audiences/covid-19-resources-border-sector/covid-19-maritime-sector>

The website also provides information on specific protocols to enable crew changes whereby seafarers can be repatriated at the first available opportunity (noting the currently reduced availability of flights and border restrictions internationally).

Additional welfare support is also available to crew while in New Zealand ports including:

- offering on-board pastoral care, counselling and mental health support
- providing communication on-board for online counselling and communication to home, and
- ensuring seafarers have essential supplies, such as personal grocery needs delivered.

A full list of assistance services in New Zealand ports is available from the relevant Port management.



Further action to reduce risk

There is the potential for COVID-19 to be spread between seafarers and port workers. New Zealand has therefore implemented a comprehensive surveillance testing regime for port workers to ensure any infections are rapidly detected and isolated. In return we ask that ships report any signs of illness amongst crew and wear PPE in spaces on-board where non-crew are working.

This program is supported by updated guidance on appropriate practices and use of PPE by port workers. NZ ports will be implementing this guidance as part of their obligations under the Health and Safety at Work Act so it is strictly enforced.

Safety first

Restrictions at the maritime border have been developed to manage the health risks posed by the COVID-19 pandemic. They do not, however, override the fundamental premise of safety of life at sea.

The Director General of Health has discretion to admit ships and crew into New Zealand ports in limited circumstances where a compelling need has been established, which includes humanitarian grounds, although these will still be subject to strict risk management measures.

Seafarer fatigue is also a significant factor in safety management. Now that crew change processes are established New Zealand will be looking closely at compliance with the Maritime Labour Convention (MLC). Ship owners/operators with seafarers whose Seafarer Employment Agreement is near or over the 11 month maximum allowable employment period, will need to have evidence of credible plans for repatriating these crew. Those lacking appropriate evidence will be subject to Port State Control action under the MLC.

New Zealand would like to take this opportunity to thank you and the IMO secretariat for your ongoing efforts to ensure shipping and seafarers can continue to safely support global supply chains. As a member state we appreciate the information sharing IMO has facilitated which has supported our ongoing efforts to improve our border management for everyone's benefit.

Yours sincerely

Keith Manch

Director and Chief Executive

Maritime New Zealand