

Republic of the Marshall Islands

MARITIME ADMINISTRATOR

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MARINE SAFETY ADVISORY No. 05-20

To: Owners/Operators, Masters, Nautical Inspectors, Recognized Organizations

Subject: NOVEL CORONAVIRUS PRECAUTIONS

Date: 31 January 2020

1.0 Novel Coronavirus (2019-nCoV)

The Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) Maritime Administrator (the “Administrator”) is providing the following information and advice on the 2019-nCoV for RMI-flagged vessels and seafarers calling in China. This outbreak has been declared a worldwide emergency by the World Health Organization (WHO). Global surveillance is in the early stages and cases have been discovered across the globe. These cases are directly connected to individuals who have visited the affected region in China.

2.0 Vessel Calls in Chinese Ports

2.1 WHO remains the primary source of [information](#) for advice on trading and traveling to regions and countries where 2019-nCoV risks exist. They have stated that, if certain measures are taken, there should be no “unnecessary restrictions of international traffic.” Nevertheless, RMI-flagged vessels are advised to adopt precautionary measures and seek updated information and requirements from local sources prior to making port calls in such areas.

2.2 Follow WHO’s standard recommendations to reduce exposure to, and transmission of, the disease, including:

- Cleaning hands frequently by using alcohol-based hand rub or soap and water;
- When coughing and sneezing, cover mouth and nose with flexed elbow or tissue, then immediately throw the tissue away and wash hands;
- Avoiding close contact with anyone who has fever and cough; and
- Avoiding the consumption of raw or undercooked animal products and the cross-contamination of uncooked foods as per good food safety practices.

This MSA expires one (1) year after its issuance, unless otherwise noted, extended, superseded, or revoked.

- 2.3 Limit or restrict access to vessels when calling at affected areas. Under the Convention of Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), steps may be taken to ensure vessel and crew safety. These could include but are not limited to:
- Refusing entry to anyone appearing ill; and
 - Mandating washing or alcohol hand sanitizing regimes for stevedores and others at the base of the gangway.
- 2.4 Scrupulously clean and disinfect the ship according to its cleaning regime, but particularly spaces used by visitors.
- 2.5 Vessels calling at ports in 2019-nCoV affected areas should consider whether the ships security plan is correctly implemented, and the crew should be extra vigilant for any stowaways trying to board the ship. It is strongly recommended that a 24-hour security watch be maintained while in port and that additional searches are carried out before departing the port. Specific instructions should be given to watch standers to only allow people to board as required for the ships business. Visitors should not be allowed to access the crew accommodation area without permission and at a minimum an initial screening.
- 2.6 Make certain that there are adequate food, medicines and fresh water supplies aboard the vessel prior to calling on China. This is to preclude any hardships that may arise due to limited or delayed victualling.

3.0 Vessel Inspections and Other Boardings

As of this writing, but subject to daily review:

- The Administrator is temporarily suspending all vessel inspections and other boardings within Chinese ports.
- The Administrator will not inspect vessels arriving at an overseas port from China until 14 days (the incubation period) has elapsed from leaving the last Chinese port.

4.0 Additional Information and Resources

More information including situational reports and technical guidance can be found at the following web addresses:

- <https://www.dco.uscg.mil/Portals/9/DCO%20Documents/5p/MSIB/2020/MSIB-01-20-Novel-Coronavirus-Precautions-USCG.pdf?ver=2020-01-24-192641-323>
- <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019>
- <https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/index.html>