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Oasis Circular No.: 2301

Date: 09 Jan 2023

Subject: China relieves Covid-19 control

Since the end of December 2022, China has adopted a series of measures to relieve Covid-19 control, which include those that will have an impact on ships that call China.

PCR test report for newly joining crewmembers is no longer required

Since 24 Sep 2020, if a ship has changed crew at the last port of call before arrival in China or within 14 days before arrival in China, the newly joined crew members should obtain PCR negative test reports when joining the vessel. Since then, there have been cases from time to time where a ship encounters problem to get into a Chinese port because the PCR test report doesn't meet with relevant requirements.

From 12 Dec 2022, according to the 12th version of Guidance on Crew Covid-19 Prevention and Control issued by China MSA, such PCR test report for newly joining crewmembers is no longer required.

Local customs gradually stops to conduct PCR test on crewmembers upon ships' arrival

During the pandemic, local customs at various Chinese ports may, at their discretion, conduct PCR tests to part of or whole crew on board the ship. Since 2020, there have been a lot of cases involving positive crew members who will either be asked to sail away with the ship or be disembarked for treatment or quarantine before cargo operation can be commenced.

Since December 2022, according to the information collected from various ports, we understand local customs have gradually stopped conducting PCR test on crewmembers, so there have been very few, if not none at all, positive crewmember cases.

Crew change including foreign crew will be resumed

Very recently, the government issued a notice on crew change of international sailing vessels, announcing updated measures that will make crew change more convenient,

effective from 08 Jan 2023, including:

1. Crew change of international sailing vessels no longer need prior approval of local authorities. The procedures will be the same as before the pandemic, i.e. inspection of border control as well as issuance of temporary entry permit, etc.
2. Crew members who are to sign off in China no longer need to be quarantined or receive PCR test upon arrival at China. If the health declaration is normal and the customs' routine check finds no abnormality, the crew members can move freely. If there is any abnormality, the customs will decide on measures to be taken depending on the situation.
3. Crewmembers who are to come to China for crew disembarkation, should receive PCR test within 48 hours before the ship leaves the last foreign port. If tested positive, the crew members should be treated locally. If there is indeed difficulty in arranging PCR test because of itinerary, antigen test result is also acceptable.

Surveyors' attendance on board will become possible gradually

During the pandemic, in most Chinese ports, surveyors were either not allowed to attend on board, or need to be quarantined for a certain period of time after attending on board international sailing ships.

Following the latest notice, we understand that some ports such as Shanghai, Qingdao, Dalian, etc. have changed their policy on this; namely, boarding permit can now be applied following normal procedures as before the pandemic, and no quarantine will be required after the surveyor's attendance on board. Currently, not all ports have implemented this change; however, we anticipate it will spread to more and more ports soon.

In the meantime, crew members are suggested to take appropriate preventive measures when there are shore personnel attending on board.

We hope the above is of assistance. Owners are always recommended to check with the local agent for the latest requirement and information in case of need.

If there is any query, please feel free to contact us at oasis@oasispandi.com anytime.

Best regards,

Oasis P&I Services Company Limited