



Crew Change Protocols at Asian Ports / Countries due to COVID-19

Latest update – 14 October 2020

AUSTRALIA

Australian Maritime COVID-19 Border Closures Information Table provided by MIAL on 9 October

[MIAL Australian Maritime COVID-19 Border Closures Table for 9 October 2020](#)

This table is based on the best information and understanding at the time of publication and is subjected to frequent updates.

Biosecurity Requirements in Australia

Incoming seafarers **MUST** declare what they are bringing in and if they bring food products it is highly likely these will be confiscated from them. To not declare goods could result in their visa being cancelled and immediate deportation. Please ensure your crew and your crewing companies understand the compliance with Australia's strict biosecurity requirements.

CHINA

Information provided by Waypoint Port Services and CSA

- Only Chinese Nationality Crew Change is available
- Foreigner crew change are prohibited at any port, even for on board crew medical visit when berthing period – also need approval firstly.
- CTM delivery and Spare Parts custom clearance/delivery is allowed.

Now it is confirmed that the ten major ports in China where non-Chinese crew change is permitted by the administrative authorities are Dalian, Tianjin, Qingdao, Shanghai, Ningbo, Fuzhou, Xiamen, Guangzhou, Shenzhen, Haikou.

However, strict restrictions are also imposed, including:

1. the leaving crew should hold confirmed departure ticket that can enable them to leave China directly in the same city, non-stop, using no public transportation vehicle during the local transit;
2. after the ship has left the previous port for 14 days or more;
3. within the latest 14 days in isolation on board, all the crew members on board show no symptoms of Covid-19;
4. after calling a Chinese port, all the crew members should be tested, with the result being negative.

CHINESE TAIPEI

Information provided by NACS

- The Taiwanese crews are allowed for crew change.
- Foreign crews who serve on Taiwanese vessels are also allowed for crew change.
- All crews arriving Taiwan by flight for crew change should issue entry visa, submit PCR negative test results, and need to have 14-days period of compulsory Quarantine and Medical Surveillance.
- All crews arriving Taiwan by vessels for crew change should issue entry visa, submit PCR negative test results, and depart by flight in 3-days.

The above measures are subjected to change according to risk level by Maritime and Port Bureau, MOTC and Taiwan Centers for Disease Control and will update in due course.

HONG KONG

Information provided by Waypoint Port Services and HKSOA

Full Government Press Release:

- March 18th: [Compulsory Quarantine of Persons Arriving at Hong Kong from Foreign Places Regulation](#)
- March 31st: [Update Summary Table from Department of Health](#)

UPDATED SUMMARY TABLE OF QUARANTINE ARRANGEMENT FOR VISITING VESSELS TO HONG KONG

INDIA

Information provided by Waypoint Port Services

- Only Indian Crew Sign On/Off is possible at all Indian ports.
- Relief and repatriation of Sign OFF Foreign Nationals are possible.
- SOP from DG Shipping for repatriation of foreign seafarers from Indian ports > [Click Here](#).

INDONESIA

Information provided by Waypoint Port Services

SIGN ON

A) FOREIGN CREW

As of now due to Covid-19 pandemic, the Indonesian government does not issue any entry visa to foreigners such as Pre-Arrival Visa Approval (PAVA), Visa on Arrival (VOA) until further notice.

However, our Waypoint Port Services Indonesia office we can get an exemption from the Indonesian Immigration to issue entry-visa for foreign crews who need to join vessels in Indonesian Ports but the entry-visa must be applied for at the nearest Indonesian Embassy and this application process will take time (maximum 2-weeks depending on each embassy) as opposed to previously which for entry-visa, our office can apply at the Immigration Head Office in Jakarta within 2-hours. Besides for entry-visa requirement, we must also ensure to check that crew-change is allowed at port of call of the vessel.

Therefore, for any crew-change palling to be done during this Covid-10 situation, please observe the followings:

- 1) Crew change notification must be informed to our office, 14-days prior to planning.
- 2) Vessel' name and tentative port of vessel call.
- 3) Full details of on-signer crew and their country of origin.
- 4) Once planning can be done, we will apply for an exemption from the Indonesian Immigration Head Office who will notify the Indonesian Embassy to process the entry-visa for the said crew (which without it, the embassy will not accept entry-visa application).
- 5) Once entry-visa is received, on-signer crew can depart to join vessel and must carry with them a certificate of health (free from Covid-19 with PCR/ Swab Test).

B) INDONESIAN CREW

- 1) On-signer must undergo PCR / Swab test before being allowed to join vessel and sign a statement letter for willing to be quarantined if found to be positive Covid-19.

SIGN OFF

A) FOREIGN CREW

- 1) Off-signer from vessels that have previously called to any ports in China, Iran, northern Italy or the Republic of Korea in the last 14days are not allowed to be signed-off in any Indonesian ports.
- 2) Off-signer must have ticket with at least 1 (working) day before disembarkation for arranging exit permit formalities (EPO).
- 3) Off-signer must undergo PCR / Swab test once disembark from vessel to show Covid-19 free.
- 4) Off-signer must sign a statement letter for completion of their employment contract as supporting document required by immigration and airlines.

B) INDONESIAN CREW

- 1) Off Signer must undergo PCR / Swab test once disembark from vessel

JAPAN

Information provided by Waypoint Port Services and JSA

As of 1st September 2020, it would be mandatory required for crews (who travel from target areas) to have a PCR test result (taken 72 hours prior their plane boarding), when they arrive JP airports. Among one crew batch, even in case one crew being detected with positive result, as long as the others have negative result (upon their arrival JP airport), then other crews can still join vessel.

> [Download Certificate of Testing for COVID-19 \(Japan\)](#)

- All vessels arriving Japan ports will be required to submit a health questionnaire. This report should be accomplished by the vessel captain and submitted to the relevant quarantine officer before arriving at any Japanese port.
- Notice from Immigration Services Agency of Japan, foreigners who cannot enter Japan has been expanded. It will be as follows (effective from 00:00 19th Mar):
 - China – Hubei, Zhejiang
 - Korea – Daegu Metropolitan City, Gyeongsang City North Gyeongsang Province, Andong City, Yeongcheon City, Cheongdo County, Chilgok County, Uiseong County, Seongju County, Gunw County.
 - Iran – Qom, Tehran, Gilan Provinces, Mazandaran Province, Isfahan Province, Alborz Province, Markazi Province, Qazvin Province, Semnan Province, Golestan Province, Lorestan Province.
 - Italy – Lombardy, Veneto, Emilia-Romagna, Marche, Piedmont Republic of San Marino – All region
 - Switzerland – Ticino, Basel-Stadt
 - Spain – Navarre, Basque, Madrid, La Rioja Iceland – All regions
- People arriving in Japan from below countries from midnight on March 21, 2020, returning residents in Japan will be required to use private cars, not to use public transportation to go home in addition to China and republic of Korea:
 - (They need to take our taxi for moving to anywhere.) Iceland, Ireland, Andorra, Italy, Iran, UK, Egypt, Estonia, Austria, Netherlands, Cyprus, Greece, Croatia, San Marino, Switzerland, Sweden, Spain, Slovakia, Slovenia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Germany, Norway, Vatican, Hungary, Finland, France, Bulgaria, Belgium, Poland, Portugal, Malta, Monaco, Latvia, Lithuania, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Romania.

MALAYSIA

Information provided by Waypoint Port Services

Effective 20th March 2020, there is a not to land Order on all crew members on the ships calling Malaysian seaports. In cases of serious illnesses requiring hospital admission, the Agent can request the Port Health and / or Immigration for relevant approval to disembark. The approval is being given on a case by case basis by the Government Officials. For requesting this approval, the Agent will need to make a formal request with below documents at a minimum,

- Letter of requisition duly stamped and signed by master to immigration for emergency purpose for crew medical.
- IMO Crew list
- Voyage memo (last 10 port calls)
- Crew Passport / Seaman book (originals and copy)
- A Hospital Admission Letter will also be collected from the Hospital and submitted to Officials subsequently by the Agent.
- Foreign seafarers are NOT ALLOWED to sign-off or go ashore in any Malaysia ports and water.
- All seafarers are NOT ALLOWED to sign-on, in any Malaysia ports and water.
- Only Malaysian seafarers, who have not developed COVID-19 symptoms, from Malaysia flagged vessels are ALLOWED to sign-off and disembark at the DESIGNATED PORT (International Port of Kuala Linggi, Melaka). Online sign-off must be done at the nearest Port Office.
- Seafarers must carry out thorough pre-screening test by the Port Health Inspector at ship/port area, and subject to any instructions provided by the Port Health Officer.

Foreign Seafarers:

- Who are currently serving on board of Malaysia flagged vessels, and not having any explicit COVID-19 symptoms, not a COVID-19 suspect, have not gone ashore at China, Italy, South Korea, Iran or Japan within 14 days, are ALLOWED to continue their normal service on board Malaysia flagged vessel
- PROHIBITED to change vessel in any Malaysia ports and water:
- Those who already possessed COVID-19 explicit symptoms, a COVID-19 Suspect, or have been going ashore at China, Italy, South Korea, Iran or Japan within 14 days. MUST UNDERGO proper health screening and isolation on board as mentioned in ANNEX 1, MSN 05/2020.

Seafarers of Malaysian nationality:

- Who are serving on board Malaysia flagged vessels but not having any COVID-19 symptoms, not a COVID-19 suspect, have not gone ashore at China, Italy, South Korea, Iran or Japan within 14 days can continue their services on-board.
- Who are having explicit COVID-19 symptoms, or determined as COVID-19 suspects, or have been going ashore at China, Italy, South Korea, Iran, or Japan within 14 days, MUST UNDERGO further health screening and isolation ONLY at the Designated PORT (International Port of Kuala Linggi, Melaka) and their contract at SEA shall be terminated.

Full documentation from the Ports: [Johor Port](#) – [Northport](#)

PHILIPPINES

Information provided by FSA

- As early as April, 2020, the Philippine government has opened the Port of Manila for crew change purposes.
- Merchant ships passing at the West Philippine Seas / South China Sea are diverted to Manila to conduct crew change. About 99% of crew change involves Filipino seafarers.
- For the months of June & July, 2020, there are days when about 40 or more ships are calling at the Port of Manila for crew change per day. Number of crew change per ship ranges from 10 or more, for on-signers and equal number of off-signers per ship. At present, ships diverting to the Port of Manila averages to 10–20 ships per day for crew change purposes.
- On-signers are required to undergo RT-PCR Covid test. Crew with negative results will be allowed to board their ships. Those with positive results are confined in isolation facilities for rehabilitation and treatment.
- Off-signers are also required to undergo RT-PCR test upon their arrival, either at Ninoy Aquino International Airport (in Manila) or at the Port of Manila. Covid-19 testing is being conducted by the authorities (Philippine Coast Guard & National Red Cross). While waiting for their RT-PCR test, Manning agents must arrange isolation place for the returning seafarers (usually hotel facilities). Off signers with negative results will be allowed to go home to their respective place of domicile with instructions that they should practice self-quarantine for at least 14 days at home. Off-signers with positive results are confined in government designated isolation/quarantine facilities for rehabilitation and treatment, if necessary. Percentage wise, returning seafarers from merchant ships tested positive for Covid-19 virus infection is less than 1% of the total returning crew. Almost all of them are suffering mild infection and are able to recover after about a week of isolation.
- In early September, 2020, the Philippine authorities allowed crew change to be conducted in two additional ports (Port Capinpin in Bataan - this is at the entrance of Manila Bay and at the Port of Subic).
- From the time that the authorities implemented Covid-19 quarantine regime, arrival at the airports has been controlled / limited to a few hundred passengers a day. This has posed a challenged for booking of Filipino seafarers being repatriated by air. When the government increased the number of arrivals from foreign ports, some international flights are being diverted to:
 - Clark International Airport (about 60 kilometres north of Manila) where returning seafarers are required to undergo arrival protocols of Covid-19 test
 - Cebu City in the Visayas, where returning seafarers are also required to undergo RT-PCR testing protocols.
- The Philippine authorities through the Department of Transportation and Department of Foreign Affairs issued the “Green Lane” for on-signers and off-signers of foreign seafarers who may join/disembark when their ships call at Manila.

SINGAPORE

Source: [Ministry of Health](#) / [Immigration & Checkpoint Authority](#) / MPA Singapore and SSA

Crew Change

[SINGAPORE CREW CHANGE GUIDEBOOK VERSION 5 \(Sep 24th\) supersedes Version 4](#)

Maritime Port Authority of Singapore

- 1) [BEST PRACTICES FOR SINGAPORE-REGISTERED SHIPS TO MINIMISE RISK OF CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 \(COVID-19\) ON BOARD.](#)
- 2) [REVISIONS TO CREW CHANGE FOR CARGO SHIPS UNDER SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES IN THE PORT OF SINGAPORE, TO MINIMISE RISK OF COMMUNITY SPREAD OF THE CORONAVIRUS DISEASE 2019 \(COVID-19\) IN SINGAPORE \(SUPPLEMENTARY TO PMC NO.s 26 AND 27 OF 2020\).](#)
- 3) [ADVISORY FOR SHORE PERSONNEL AND SHIP CREW VISITING OR WORKING ONBOARD VESSELS ALONGSIDE WHARVES, IN SHIPYARDS AND AT ANCHORAGES.](#)
- 4) [ADVISORY ON MARINE SERVICE PROVIDERS ATTENDING TO VESSELS AT ANCHORAGES AND TERMINALS IN THE PORT OF SINGAPORE](#)
- 5) [FURTHER ENHANCEMENTS TO CREW CHANGE FOR CARGO SHIPS IN THE PORT OF SINGAPORE](#) *updated*

Air Travel

- Returning Singapore residents (i.e. Singapore citizens, permanent residents) will be issued with a 14-day Stay-Home Notice (SHN) upon entry into Singapore.
- Travellers with travel history within the last 14 days to Hubei province of Mainland China will be issued Quarantine Order (QO).
- From 27 March 2020, 0900 hours, all travellers must submit a health declaration via the SG Arrival Card [e-Service](#) before proceeding with immigration clearance^[1]

For visitors seeking entry into Singapore

- All short-term visitors will not be allowed to enter or transit through Singapore.
- Visitors who need to visit Singapore due to extenuating reasons may submit the completed [Form 14](#) (Part V is optional). to ICA_nCoV_request@ica.gov.sg, together with the following documents:

For long-term pass holders seeking entry into Singapore

- From 29 March 2020, 2359 hours, all foreigners holding ICA-issued long-term passes (i.e. Long-Term Visit Pass (LTVP) or Student's Pass (STP), or In-Principle Approval (IPA) letters for LTVP/STP, who plan to enter Singapore from any country must obtain permission from the relevant agency before they commence their journey.

For more information please visit : <https://www.ica.gov.sg/covid-19>

SOUTH KOREA

Information provided by KSA and Waypoint Port Services

> Latest Sign-On & Sign-Off restrictions and requirements.

Visa-free entry for crew change is temporarily suspended in Korea.

All crew arriving Korea by flight for crew change should issue visa and submit PCR negative test results.

The test results should be issued within 48 hours prior to departure from their home country or from the country prior to arrival in Korea.

The recent series of changes are due to the recent COVID 19 cases that a number of crew, arriving Korea by flight for crew change, found to be positive in PCR test.

On 12th of Jul., for instance, it was reported that 37 % of COVID 19 overseas inflow was from crew change.

THAILAND

Information provided by TSA

Crew Change in Thailand krub:

- Foreign and Thai nationals are allowed to conduct crew changes in Thailand, however the following conditions apply:
 - Thai crews after disembarking from vessels requires mandatory 14 day quarantine at state-manded facilities and COVID-19 testing
 - Foreign crews are required to fly home as soon as they sign off, direct from the vessel to the airport
- Some resumption of international flights, however only Thai crew members are allowed to fly back into Thailand from other countries
- Crew changes can be conducted at all Thai ports, with the exception of Rayong port

VIETNAM

Information provided by VSA

Crew change via ships:

- Only Vietnamese nationals are allowed for crew change. Immediately after getting ashore, crew members shall have 14-day period of compulsory health quarantine and medical surveillance (with the inclusion of taking medical tests) at a separated place nominated by the relevant provincial authority.
- In the emergency case that a crew member needs to go ashore for urgent medical care, this will be carried out according to the requirements of the quarantine and medical authorities

The above measures are subjected to change according to risk levels assessed from time to time by the concerned local administration following the directions from Vietnam Ministry of Health

Crew change via flights:

Not available at present. There are plans to re-open the sky for international passenger flights to/from chosen destinations in the near future which will be announced.

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