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Oasis Circular No.: 2201

Date: 05 Feb 2022

Subject: An update on Covid-19 testing requirements for vessels that plan to arrange crew change in China

Following the notice issued by the State Council of PRC regarding epidemic control and assistance to crew members on ocean going vessels ([Oasis Circular 2109](#)) and as a detailed implementation guidance regarding crew change in particular, on 28 Jan 2022, the Ministry of Transportation, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and General Administration of Customs jointly published a notice regarding remote epidemic control on ocean going vessels, setting out the detailed testing requirements for **vessels that plan to arrange crew change in China**.

Testing requirements

Vessels shall arrange Covid-19 tests to all crewmembers on board within 48 hours before the vessel's departure from the last foreign port, and any crew members who are tested positive should be treated locally in a timely manner. During the voyage from the last foreign port to China, vessels should implement regular tests on the crew and arrange emergent quarantine and treatment if any crew member is tested positive.

As to the regular tests mentioned above, vessel can use self-test kits to test crewmembers on board on the 1st, 4th, 7th, and 14th (if applicable) as well as one day before arrival, keep proper test records and submit them to the relevant maritime and customs authorities at the first port of call in China as soon as the one-day-before arrival testing is completed.

Nucleic acid testing is the preferred method when arranging Covid-19 tests. If unavailable,

other quick test methods can be used such as antigen detection. Fast test kits that are to be used should have been approved by the drug administration authorities of PRC or any related countries and regions.

It is clearly stated that the above testing requirements shall not be considered as a pre-condition for crew change arrangement. It doesn't exempt the NAT conducted by the customs either.

Effective date

This notice shall take effect from 15 Feb 2022. Ocean going vessels which plan to arrange crew change in China and sail from the last foreign port after 15 Feb 2022 shall follow the requirements in this notice.

General situation of crew change in China

This notice sets out the details of the testing requirement which was mentioned in the State Council's Notice dated 10 Dec 2021, aiming to provide further epidemic control guidance and also to facilitate the crew change in China, especially Chinese crew members.

Currently, the signing off and signing on of Chinese crew members are generally allowed at most Chinese ports, although in particular cases factors such as the duration of the vessel's stay at the port, availability of the quarantine hotels, etc. may affect the process.

Signing off of foreign crew members is possible at major ports such as Shanghai, Tianjin, Guangzhou, etc., subject to strict procedures and epidemic control requirements. However, signing on of foreign crew members is still very difficult, mainly because of visa issues.

We hope the above is of assistance. If there is any query, please feel free to contact us at oasis@oasispandi.com anytime.

Best regards,

Oasis P&I Services Company Limited