



International Chamber of Shipping (China) Liaison Office

國際航運公會中國辦事處

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ICS (China) Liaison Office Monthly Report

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1. Crew changes – Mainland China

(1) China has restored foreign crew repatriation

As reported by the ICS on 19 October 2020 in its circular COVID-19(20)167 – Annex A, the Chinese government has opened up 10 ports for crew change. These ports are Dalian, Tianjin, Qingdao Shanghai, Ningbo, Fuzhou, Xiamen, Guangzhou, Shenzhen and Haikou.

The crew change notice, issued by the Ministry of Transport, introduces a quarantine circuit-breaker mechanism.

It stipulates that a shipping company's foreign crew change operations will be suspended for 15 days if there are five COVID-19 cases detected in their fleet; or suspended for 30 days if there are 10 COVID-19 cases in their fleet. If there are more than 10 positive cases found in its fleet, the shipping company will not be allowed to undertake crew change until it passes a fresh assessment conducted by the relevant authorities.

Foreign crew signing off must comply with Chinese entry and staying regulations during the epidemic period.

The disembarking point must have a facility to arrange “point-to-point” transfers to the outbound gate within the same city. The ship must have left the last foreign port of call in more than 14 days.

The crew on board must maintain a sound health and quarantine record, and the on-signing and off-signing seafarers have to produce a negative COVID-19 test.

The shipping company is also required to rent a car to transfer the foreign crew from the disembarking point directly to the outbound gate point within the same city, or to embark another outbound ship immediately upon disembarking.

The ICS Secretariat and the Office have already received a number of enquiries about the implementation of the above announcement. As we recommended, shipowners and/or operators planning to carry out crew change in China shall consult their local port or ship agents for the latest requirements implemented by the port in question. In practice, the final say lies ultimately with the local government.

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