



## MARITIME AND PORT AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE

### PORT MARINE CIRCULAR NO. 19 OF 2020

27 Mar 2020

Shipping Community

### **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**

1. The Port of Singapore remains open for cargo operations and marine services, including bunkering, ship supplies and shipyard repairs, in order to maintain commerce by sea and not disrupt global supply chains.
2. Since the onset of COVID-19, Singapore has and remains committed to ensuring the smooth operations of our port. We have ensured that operations can run smoothly and efficiently, while adopting many precautionary measures including thermal screening, disinfection of ships and safe distancing. To protect seafarers, we have also put in place procedures to quarantine ships, and treat suspected and confirmed cases<sup>1</sup> of COVID-19.
3. With a recent heightened risk of imported cases, Singapore introduced a slate of measures on short term visitors entering or transiting in Singapore. We will need to suspend crew change for the time being.

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<sup>1</sup> In Feb 2020, a crew member working onboard a cargo ship was diagnosed to have the COVID-19 infection. Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore, National Environment Agency's Port Health and Ministry of Health worked together to treat the crew and the remaining crew were quarantined onboard the ship for 14 days. The ship was cleaned and disinfected. For full details, please refer to MPA press release at <https://www.mpa.gov.sg/web/portal/home/media-centre/news-releases/detail/e7a16c6a-fe5c-47bb-b9ad-03538c6d9fa0>

4. MPA recognises that seafarers play a critical role in global seaborne trade. We have worked closely with international organisations, shipping associations and unions over the years to address the needs and welfare of both local and foreign seafarers. We also hear the feedback from our unions and the industry. We understand that there would be special circumstances where crew will need to disembark or embark the ship, such as:

- (a) the crew has served his/her maximum time on board and no further extension of the employment contract is granted by the flag State; or
- (b) compassionate grounds e.g. death of family member; or
- (c) the crew is no longer medically fit to work onboard the ship.

5. Under such special circumstances, cargo ships may submit their requests to MPA for consideration:

- a) Supporting documentary evidence, e.g. crew's articles of agreement, doctor's certification that crew is no longer able to serve on board the ship;
- b) Travel itinerary;
- c) Fit-to-travel certificate; and
- d) Assurance that the signing on and/or the signing off crew must be well for the last fourteen (14) days before joining or leaving the ship and has not been in contact with a known or suspect case of COVID-19 in those 14 days.

6. Shipowner/agents are advised to plan and apply to MPA at [shipping@mpa.gov.sg](mailto:shipping@mpa.gov.sg) and [pms@mpa.gov.sg](mailto:pms@mpa.gov.sg).

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