

Department: Chief Harbour Master

20 March 2020

To: SAASOA Members
Ship Owners and Agents
Bunker Operators
Ship Chandlers
Off shore Operators
Vessel Crew Shuttle Services
Stevedore Companies

CC: Executive Manager SHE
Port Managers
Harbour Masters
Deputy Harbour Masters
Senior Operations Managers
Marine Health & Safety Manager
Port Health
SAMSA

TO BE COMMUNICATED INTERNALLY & EXTERNALLY

CHIEF HARBOUR MASTER – NOTICE No. 4 - HEALTH RISK ALERT – COVID-19

Note the previous notice no. 3 is hereby revoked after careful consideration of the Gazetting of regulations by the Department of Transport. **NATIONAL PORTS ACT, 2005 (Act No. 12 of 2005) REGULATIONS IN TERMS OF SECTIONS 80 (1) (g) 2020**

1. BACKGROUND

As per the World Health Organisation(WHO) daily situation reports regarding Covid-19, there has been an increase in the number of global cases reported and the number of fatalities related to the disease. WHO has declared the coronavirus a global epidemic and has rated the risk as very high.

The risks of contracting the Coronavirus, if not managed properly, are very high at land, air and seaports where foreign visitors & crew transit- but is fast becoming a locally transmitted disease

Transnet National Ports Authority is responsible for the management of the 8 commercial ports in South Africa and we value our employees, stakeholders and port users. It is important for us to review the risks and address any gaps, in preventing the spread of the disease. Due to the risks this global pandemic poses, and the rapid increase of cases in South Africa, Transnet National Ports Authority(TNPA) has implemented additional measures to regulations published by the Department of Transport and the directives from the Department of Health which became effective from 18 March 2020. The President has declared the outbreak of the Coronavirus in South Africa as a National State of Disaster.

2. ADDITIONAL MEASURES

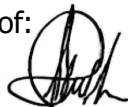
The following additional measures will be effective immediately:

- 2.1. It is important that all vessel Masters make accurate declarations of the health and wellbeing of all onboard to the Authorities, and if in doubt, consult with a Port Health Officer. Masters unable to communicate in English stand the risk of not receiving services until a translator is arranged by the vessel agent. Any false declaration will be viewed in a serious light and reported to the South African Maritime Authority and Port Health Officials for further action.
- 2.2. Masters of all vessels are required to display the "Q" Flag if all onboard are healthy and Free Pratique has **not been** granted by Port Health – means the master declares that all crew & personnel onboard are healthy and he/she requests Free Pratique.
- 2.3. The Q Flag is to remain raised on the main mast until the vessel has been cleared by Port Health and Free Pratique has been granted.
- 2.4. Marine Pilots and any other TNPA profession rendering services to vessels and or who may come into contact with vessels auxiliary equipment (tow-lines / mooring ropes / accommodation ladders / hotwork permit issuers) are to make use of personal protective equipment (PPE) when boarding any vessel to protect themselves and the vessel's crew, even if the master has declared all onboard are healthy.
- 2.5. The disposable PPE is to be removed after every vessel and placed in dedicated sealed containers / plastic bag and disposed off in such container / plastic bag. The latter will be arranged and provided by the port SHE portfolio at the port. The waste removal service provider will collect, replenish, transport and dispose the potentially contaminated PPE.
- 2.6. All waste removal including galley waste from Off Port Limit vessels and vessels at anchorages are to cease immediately until advised otherwise – waste from local and coastal vessel will be considered on application.
- 2.7. The transfer of stores and spares for Off Port Limits vessels only are permitted under strict conditions and must be approved by the Harbour Master. A risk assessment must be conducted and adequate mitigation measures put in place to stop the spread of the virus. As a minimum adequate PPE must be used and minimal interaction with the crew. Stores and spares will only be permitted to be transferred from shore to the vessel for vessels from high risk areas with stringent measures and permission from SAMSA and Port Health.

- 2.8. Permission from Port Health and the Harbour Master's office is required prior to any interaction with vessels (i.e. vessels with any person having any illness). This also applies to bunker barges/ships and small vessels. NSRI – to consult with Port Health before any medical evacuation is conducted.
- 2.9. Stevedoring operators' personnel, are limited to assigned stevedoring activities only, and shall at all times adhere to the PPE requirements, and disposal thereof as provided by its employer.
- 2.10. Shore leave for crew is discouraged and limited to only essential matters and no visitors without any official business are to be allowed on vessels.
- 2.11. Limited interaction between bunker barge operator and vessels is permitted. Crew to ensure gloves are provided and used when handling mooring lines and all preventative precautions are upheld – no crew changes are permitted for bunker barges or foreign vessels taking fuel from foreign countries. Strict hygiene control is to be put in place for all activities conducted onboard. Bunker barges to ensure washing facilities & sanitation is provided onboard.
- 2.12. No passenger embarkation & disembarkation and vessel crew changes will be permitted for all ports including vessels at anchorage or Off Port Limits – only exceptional circumstances will be considered on application as per the COVID National Ports Act Regulations 2020 in force from 18 March 2020 or any SAMSA Notices.
- 2.13. All vessels shall ensure that the bridges are sanitized before and after the pilot boards the vessel.
- 2.14. Any cases of Coronavirus or other sickness are to be reported immediately to the nearest Port Office and to the Port Health Officer.
- 2.15. Any vessel from a high risk area is required to quarantine for a minimum of 14 days if the transit time was less than 14 days from the last port to the first South African Port.

Suspected cases should be discussed with public health call line no. **0800 029 999. The local Port Health Office, Harbour Master and Agency must be informed of any suspected cases.**

By order of:



Captain Sabelo Mdlalose
Acting Chief Harbour Master
Transnet National Ports Authority
DATE: 20/03/2020