



## Novel Coronavirus Information Sheet

There is currently an outbreak of novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV) in mainland China.

**This fact sheet is for vessels which have been in mainland China on or after 1 February 2020, or have people on board who have been in mainland China on or after 1 February 2020, or have people on board who have been in contact with a confirmed case of novel coronavirus in the past 14 days.**

Vessels that are not subject to the coronavirus requirements will follow the standard reporting and arrival procedures for Australia including reporting of ill or deceased persons.

### What are the symptoms of 2019-nCoV?

Symptoms of coronavirus include fever, cough, sore throat and difficulty breathing. Difficulty breathing is a sign of possible pneumonia that requires immediate medical attention.

### What is Australia doing?

Australia has put in place extra border measures, health screening and isolation recommendations for people and vessels travelling to Australia from mainland China.

The Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment is in contact with international vessels to ensure they understand the requirements and comply with pre-arrival reporting of ill travellers.

Information is being provided to travellers at international ports explaining the symptoms of coronavirus and encouraging them to report to biosecurity officers if they have symptoms while in the port.

On 1 February 2020, Australia introduced isolation and additional border recommendations for people arriving in Australia who have left or transited through mainland China on or after this date.

For the marine industry, these new requirements only apply to vessels which meet the additional coronavirus requirements listed below.

### What vessels have additional coronavirus requirements?

- Vessels that have left, or transited through, mainland China on or after 1 February 2020 and less than 14 days ago.
- Vessels with crew or passengers who have left, or transited through, mainland China on or after 1 February 2020 and less than 14 days ago.
- Vessels that have had ill crew or passengers on board in the past 14 days.
- Vessels that have crew or passengers who have been in contact with a confirmed case of novel coronavirus in the past 14 days

### What happens to vessels subject to the coronavirus requirements?

Crew and passengers on board these vessels may be subject to additional health screening and self-isolation requirements when disembarking in Australia. More detailed information about when

these additional measures may be implemented has been provided under the “Scenarios” heading in this fact sheet.

## What should commercial vessels do if a passenger or crew member is ill?

As per the normal process, all passengers and crew who have been ill in the past 14 days are legally required to be reported on the pre-arrival report through the Maritime Arrivals Reporting System (MARS).

A biosecurity officer will then meet the vessel to screen for coronavirus and other serious infectious diseases. Biosecurity officers do this by administering the Traveller with Illness Checklist (TIC) to the ill passenger or crew member, or by discussing case diagnoses with the vessel’s doctor.

Depending on the outcome of the TIC, a state and territory human biosecurity officer will provide advice to the biosecurity officer. The biosecurity officer will then tell the person what they need to do next. A biosecurity officer or human biosecurity officer may also issue directions for the management of a suspected case of coronavirus and contacts of that person.

## What if someone requires medical attention?

If a person is very ill and needs further medical attention, notifying a biosecurity officer will not interfere with having a vessel met by medical or ambulance services. The operator of the vessel is responsible for requesting medical or ambulance services. The operator should inform medical or ambulance services if anyone on board has travelled to mainland China or been in contact with a confirmed case of coronavirus, or if the vessel has been in, or transited through, mainland China.

## What is self-isolation?

If any crew and passengers are entering Australia and are required to self-isolate, they must self-isolate in their intended residence or accommodation. Self-isolation means they should not attend public places, in particular work, school, childcare or university. Also, they should not have visitors to their residence or accommodation. Detailed information can be found at [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)

## Can disembarking crew or passengers who are required to self-isolate fly home within Australia?

Yes. They may have to undergo health screening at the port after disembarking. Providing they have no signs or symptoms of coronavirus, people can fly domestically in Australia to reach their home. However, they must wear a surgical mask until they reach their home.

## Is coronavirus information available for passengers and crew?

The Department of Health is providing additional communication material for travellers (including passengers and crew) at Australian international airports and seaports. This material informs travellers about coronavirus and what to do if they have come from a risk area and are ill. The information sheets are updated regularly and are available at <https://www.health.gov.au/health-topics/novel-coronavirus-coronavirus#resources>

## Does a vessel need to do any additional pre-arrival reporting?

All vessels entering Australian territory may be asked additional questions about:

- whether the vessel left, or transited through, mainland China on or after 1 February 2020 and less than 14 days ago.

- whether any crew or passengers left, or transited through, mainland China on or after 1 February 2020 and less than 14 days ago.
- whether any crew or passengers have been in contact with confirmed cases of novel coronavirus in the previous 14 days.

## How can the marine industry reduce the risk to passengers, crew and marine industry staff (e.g. stevedores)?

Person-to-person spread of the coronavirus can occur, but it is not yet understood how easily this happens. The following measures will help reduce the risk of illness on board commercial vessels:

- Commercial vessels should promote good cough and sneeze hygiene among crew and passengers.
- Commercial vessels should undertake appropriate cleaning and disinfection activities.
- People should wash their hands frequently with soap and water or use alcohol-based hand sanitiser.
- People should avoid touching their mouth, eyes, and nose with unwashed or gloved hands.
- If personal protective equipment (PPE) is recommended, it should be worn properly.
- Where possible, people should stay one metre or more away from passengers or crew with symptoms of coronavirus unless wearing appropriate PPE as per employer work instructions.
- Marine industry staff temporarily boarding a vessel that is subject to additional coronavirus requirements should stay one metre or more away from crew unless wearing appropriate PPE (surgical mask and gloves).
- Awareness should be increased by providing the Department of Health's fact sheets on coronavirus to passengers and crew.

Crew on vessels that are subject to additional coronavirus requirements should be advised to continue following existing employer infection prevention work instructions when in contact with crew or passengers, including using personal protective equipment (PPE) when recommended.

## Are Australian marine industry staff subject to health screening and isolation requirements if they board a vessel with additional coronavirus requirements?

As a precautionary measure, appropriate PPE must be worn when interacting with people while on board a vessel with additional coronavirus requirements. By complying with this guidance, Australian marine industry staff are exempt from Australia's health screening and isolation recommendations on arrival into Australian ports.

If staff have been in contact with people with symptoms of coronavirus while on board the vessel, staff should make themselves known to the biosecurity officer when possible.

It is not necessary for marine industry staff to wear PPE if they are not boarding a vessel subject to additional coronavirus requirements, or not interacting with crew or passengers. Regular hand washing or use of alcoholbased hand sanitiser is always recommended.

## What should marine industry staff do if they develop symptoms after disembarking the vessel?

With appropriate precautions, it is extremely unlikely that any illness or symptoms marine industry staff develop will be related to this virus. If, however, marine industry staff become ill, they should inform their doctor or clinic when making an appointment that they have had some contact with people who may have had exposure to coronavirus.

They should also:

- Wash their hands frequently.
- Use good cough and sneeze hygiene – cover their mouth and nose when coughing or sneezing and wash their hands afterwards.
- Inform their supervisor of symptoms.

## Will people be contacted if they have been exposed to someone with coronavirus?

When someone is diagnosed with coronavirus in Australia, health authorities conduct contact tracing. Public health staff contact people who had close contact with the ill person during their contagious period. Close contact is when a person has spent more than 15 minutes face-to-face or more than two hours in a closed room with an infected person, without PPE.

You will be notified by public health staff if you have been in close contact with someone who has coronavirus and you will be given information and advice relevant to your exposure. It is most unlikely that a marine industry worker following the guidance given in this document will have close contact with an ill person.

## Other information

While coronavirus is of concern and we remain vigilant, it is currently influenza season in the northern hemisphere. It is more likely that travellers displaying infectious symptoms have a common respiratory infection, rather than coronavirus.

## Who should vessels contact if they need further advice?

For human biosecurity questions:

- Contact the Maritime National Co-ordination Centre 1300 004 605 (operating hours 6am-6pm Australian Central Standard Time, for urgent after hours enquiries, call +61 417 666 648)

For general coronavirus questions:

- Visit [www.health.gov.au](http://www.health.gov.au)
- Call the National Coronavirus Health Information Line on 1800 020 080. The line operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week.
- If you need to communicate with a non-English speaking person, contact the Translating and Interpreting Service (TIS National). Telephone interpreters are available immediately on 131 450.

## Scenarios

For your reference, the following scenarios outline situations when people may be required to undertake health screening or self-isolation.

### 1. Commercial vessels that departed, or transited through, mainland China before 1 February 2020

- Standard biosecurity requirements and restrictions apply.
- You must report any ill or deceased travellers as per usual processes.

## 2. Commercial vessels, from any destination, with any passengers or crew who have been ill in the previous 14 days

- The vessel will be put into negative pratique. No people may disembark during this time.
- A biosecurity officer will administer the TIC to all ill people.
- A biosecurity officer or the master of the vessel (via the Maritime National Coordination Centre) will arrange for a fact sheet to be provided to all people on board.
- Depending on the outcome of the TIC, a biosecurity officer will either grant pratique or provide the vessel with further information or direction.

## 3. Commercial vessels, from any destination, with any passengers or crew who have been in contact with a proven case of novel coronavirus in the previous 14 days

- Crew and passengers who are Australian citizens, permanent residents, their immediate family, legal guardians and spouses, will be allowed to disembark the vessel. They may be required to follow self-isolation recommendations from health staff at the border.
- At some ports, where state and territory health authorities are in attendance, a health worker will conduct a health screen for any disembarking crew and passengers.
- Any crew not disembarking in Australia are advised to wear a surgical mask and gloves while not on the vessel when performing vessel functions. They must not leave the port or they will be subject to health screening and self-isolation requirements.
- Crew changes may only take place at ports where there is capacity to undertake the screening. The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment will advise whether a crew change may go ahead at a particular port following application to undertake a crew change via MARS.

## 4. Commercial vessels that departed, or transited through, mainland China on or after 1 February 2020

- AND it has **been less than 14 days** since the vessel departed, or transited through, mainland China
  - A biosecurity officer may board the vessel. Fact sheets will be distributed to every passenger and crew member or provided to the vessel to distribute to passengers and crew.
  - Crew and passengers who are Australian citizens, permanent residents, their immediate family, legal guardians and spouses will be allowed to disembark the vessel. They will be required to self-isolate at their home or accommodation until it has been 14 days since the vessel departed, or transited through, mainland China.
  - At some ports, where state and territory health authorities are in attendance, a health worker will conduct a health screen for any disembarking crew and passengers.
  - Any crew not disembarking in Australia are advised to wear a surgical mask and gloves while not on the vessel when performing vessel functions. They must not leave the port or they will be subject to health screening and self-isolation recommendations.
  - Crew changes may only take place at ports where there is capacity to undertake the screening. The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment will advise whether a crew change may go ahead at a particular port following application to undertake a crew change via MARS.

- These measures are valid until it has been 14 days since the vessel departed, or transited through, mainland China.
- AND it has **been more than 14 days** since the vessel departed, or transited through, mainland China
  - Providing no people have been ill in the previous 14 days (refer to Scenario 2), no additional requirements apply.
  - Crew and passengers will be able to disembark as per usual processes.

## 5. Commercial vessels from any destination with crew or passengers on board who were in, or transited through, mainland China on or after 1 February 2020

- AND it has **been less than 14 days** since the person was in, or transited through, mainland China
  - Crew and passengers who are Australian citizens, permanent residents, their immediate family, legal guardians and spouses, will be allowed to disembark the vessel. They may be required to follow self-isolation recommendations from health staff at the port.
  - At some ports, where state and territory health authorities are in attendance, a health worker will conduct a health screen for any disembarking crew and passengers.
  - Any crew or passengers not disembarking in Australia are advised to wear a surgical mask and gloves while not on the vessel when performing vessel functions. They must not leave the port or they will be subject to health screening and self-isolation requirements.
  - Crew changes may only take place at ports where there is capacity to undertake the screening. The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment will advise whether a crew change may go ahead at a particular port following application to undertake a crew change via MARS.
  - These measures are valid until it has been 14 days since any person was in mainland China.
- AND it has **been more than 14 days** since any person was in, or transited through, mainland China
  - Providing no people have been ill in the previous 14 days (refer to Scenario 2), no additional requirements apply.
  - Crew and passengers will be able to disembark as per usual processes.