

MSQ VTS Direction 03/20

Novel Coronavirus Threat

Issued 2 February 2020

Background

In light of Australia's escalated response to the current threat of the Novel Coronavirus, I have directed that Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ) adopt a proactive stance in managing the risks associated with incoming shipping to Queensland's ports.

Direction

Effective immediately, Queensland's Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) will require all foreign trading ships scheduled to arrive at Queensland ports or picking up a Reef Pilot to provide the following information until further notice.

- 1) Report if any Crew Member or passenger has visited Hubei Province, China within the past 14 days;
- 2) Report if any Crew Member or passenger has visited mainland China since 1 February 2020;
- 3) Report if any Crew Member or passenger is showing any of the Novel Coronavirus symptoms that include fever, flu-like symptoms cough, sore throat, headache or difficulty breathing.

Ships **MUST** provide this information to VTS **2-3 hours** prior to embarking a Pilot and/or going to anchor, and with the Reef VTS Pre-Entry report (**1 hour** prior to entering the Reef VTS area).

Negative Response

If answers to all **above** questions are **NO**, MSQ will then inform all parties including Marine and Reef Pilots, port authority and ships agent of the clear declaration.

Positive Response

If the answer is **YES** to any question for inbound vessels to a port or anchorage, VTS is to advise the respective Regional Harbour Master (RHM) immediately and follow any instructions given.

If the answer is **YES** to any question for vessels picking up Reef Pilot, Reef VTS is to notify the pilotage provider immediately, Regional Harbour Master Townsville, and AMSA

operationscoastalpilotagemanager@amsa.gov.au

Any crew member identified as having visited Hubei Province, China within the past 14 days OR having visited mainland China since 1 Feb will be asked report to the Captain and to self-isolate on board the vessel for the period of their stay in the Australian port or for a period that spans 14 days since leaving the province or mainland China (whichever is shortest). **Such crew members are not to have personal interaction with Australian based maritime industry staff.**

MSQ will make the appropriate notifications to State health authorities for further advice if any crew reports as falling in these categories.

If in the event of a ship is non-compliant by;

- a) not providing a Pre-entry report, or
- b) not providing answers to the questions

the ship is to be directed to remain outside the VTS area or port limits until such time as the above questions have been answered.

If in the situation arises where Reef VTS are unable to contact the ship prior to pilot boarding, Reef VTS will notify the pilotage company advising that Reef VTS has attempted to contact the ship but were unsuccessful and requesting the pilot company to communicate with the ship on VHF 16.

VTS is to record the number of ships vetted with identifying the result of the questioning. A report from each VTS centre is to be provided to Townsville VTS centre every 12 hours at 0430 and 1630 daily. Townsville VTS is to submit collated reports to the General Manager MSQ by 0500 and 1700 daily.

If in the event a member of the public or boating community contact VTS regarding any response from a ship they are to respond *with "MSQ will make the appropriate notifications to State and Federal agencies for further advice"*.

These precautionary measures are consistent with Queensland Health's posture on the need to minimise risk across the state. Queensland's Regional Harbour Masters can be contacted for further advice or information as required.

This direction is subject to change based on advice provided by the Australian Department of Health.

This direction will remain in effect until further notice.