



**INTERTANKO**



**INTERTANKO  
Crew Change  
Management Plan**

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**INTERTANKO**

# **Crew Change Management Plan**

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## Introduction

As the scale of difficulties with effecting regular crew changes became apparent, INTERTANKO Members and its Secretariat collated and analysed the challenges faced by our industry. In collaboration with other Associations and industry partners, UN bodies and coastal states, priorities have been highlighted and are starting to be addressed. Much of the information, e.g. on port- or country-specific rules currently in force, is fluid and rapidly changing. Up-to-date specifics can therefore be found on the INTERTANKO Covid Information Centre, which can be found on our website at: <https://www.INTERTANKO.com/topics-issues/issue/coronavirus>

The following guidance aims to provide a generic summary of issues to consider when planning crew changes in the current environment.

## Key Worker Status

The International Maritime Organization (IMO), working with the International Labour Organisation (ILO) and the World Health Organization (WHO), has issued guidance outlining seafarers' importance to the world's economy and how they should be designated a special status as key workers. Through this status, seafarers should have appropriate exemptions from national travel or movement restrictions in order to facilitate their joining or leaving ships.

### Definition of a key worker

The ILO Maritime Labour Convention (2006) provides the global definition of who a seafarer is, and this is contained in Article 2 (f) as:

*"Seafarer means any person who is employed or engaged or works in any capacity on board a ship to which this Convention applies."*

IMO circular letter 4202 Add.6 provides details of how to determine if a person is a seafarer and so should be classed as a key worker.

"Proof of this status as a seafarer will be provided by any of the following documents:

- official seafarers' identity documents
- discharge books
- STCW certificates
- seafarer employment agreements."

In addition, the seafarer must also hold a letter of appointment from their maritime employer. The aim of this is to permit seafarers to disembark or join ships in port and transit through the Port State's territory direct to an airport for the purposes of crew changes and repatriation. The maritime employer should use this guidance in conjunction with the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) published 'Coronavirus (Covid-19) Guidance for Ship Operators for the Protection of the Health of Seafarers' and the 'INTERTANKO Outbreak Management Plan' (both downloadable from INTERTANKO's website (<https://bit.ly/2XTGMli>)). There will be cases where a vessel may require calling at a port purely for the purposes of the crew change.

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## Flights

The number of flights has been severely curtailed by the major airlines. The maritime employer may need to utilise chartered aircraft to facilitate a crew change rather than rely upon scheduled airlines. The Port State must be assured that the flight will take place as it will be in no-one's interest for the seafarers to be stuck ashore and unable to embark an aircraft for their flight home. In arranging these flights, the airport and associated authorities must allow the operation of these flights and the associated ground transportation to facilitate the crew change. In cases where the destinations for seafarers are the same, the maritime employers may pool the flight to reduce expenses. In arranging flights, care needs to be taken to ensure that onward connections are available and that differences between regions within one country should be taken account of.

Seafarers should be provided with the emergency contact telephone number for the consulate of their nationality for each country they pass through.

## Coordination

Coordination between all parties will be key in facilitating the crew transfer. The maritime employer must first inform the port authority and their local agents, if used, of the intention of undertaking a crew change. All relevant information must be passed to the port, immigration, health, airport and other authorities as needed. At every stage, open and free communication must be assured.

Where required, maritime employers should work with the designated authorities to ensure that the embarkation/disembarkation routes for the affected seafarers to/from the ships and the airports, as well as from the airports to the seafarers' place of residence, are approved. Maritime employers should adhere to requirements set by the designated authorities to facilitate smooth coordination in the movements of the affected seafarers.



## Pre-arrival information

The maritime employer must provide all necessary information to the authorities relating to the seafarers who are both embarking and disembarking. In addition to the usual information such as seafarer name, document numbers and certification information, the maritime employer must also provide a health declaration form.

The health declaration form must detail that the seafarer is not suffering from any flu-like symptoms nor have a fever. The form must also detail the places that they have visited in the last 14 days and this should be backed up with a declaration from the maritime employer. A sample form is included in the annex. The maritime employer must also detail any isolation measures that the seafarer has undertaken prior to the flight.

Key to ensure trust between all parties is that the shore authorities must have all information and be made aware of any health issues relevant to this global pandemic.

## Embarking seafarers

The following section details the procedures and practices to be adopted for seafarers joining a ship. As an overriding principle, any additional costs involved in facilitating the transfer of seafarers should be borne by the maritime employer.

Throughout the process of embarkation, seafarers must maintain social distancing as advised by the WHO with a minimum of 1m between themselves and another person. No hand shaking or other physical contact must be permitted throughout the transfer period. Seafarers should maintain hand hygiene through hand washing or use of hand sanitiser. Seafarers should also carry their own pens so that they do not need to share.

Seafarers are neither allowed to go to their shipping company's office nor allowed to meet friends or relatives during their transits. Their stay at port or transit at airports should be minimised to reduce the interaction with their surroundings. In cases where they are required to stay at a hotel, then the chosen hotel should be as close to the airport as possible and the seafarer should confine themselves to their room.

Much of this guidance revolves around the precautions to ensure that seafarers cannot either transmit or be exposed to infection. In applying these measures, seafarers should be given professional respect and their human rights must be upheld.

### Arrival from aircraft

The seafarers must don appropriate personnel protective equipment (PPE) as required by the country of arrival. All seafarers must have with them the correct documentation held within a transparent plastic bag, which must include the health declaration form. The seafarers should then be escorted to a dedicated arrivals area where they will be screened for fever and have their health forms checked. Any seafarer found to have a fever above 37.3 degrees Celsius or breach any health requirements by the country of arrival must be isolated and be referred for appropriate medical treatment. The arriving seafarers should have their baggage disinfected if required.

If single-use PPE is used, then the seafarers must carry spare PPE with them to replace any that has been used. The used PPE must be stored in zipped plastic bags and be carried by the seafarer.

### Immigration screening

Following the initial health screening, the country of arrival's immigration should complete their arrival checks. Taking into account the fact that the seafarers will not undertake work in that country and that they will be classed as key workers, the immigration authorities would be invited to waive the immigration procedures and pass the seafarers directly to the ship. This procedure would also reduce any exposure for the immigration officials. Records of those passing through the border would be maintained through the pre-arrival information.

### Departure to port

The seafarers must pass directly from the arrivals area to a closed and disinfected vehicle for onwards transportation. The driver of the vehicle must be in a closed off area. The vehicle must have a sufficient number of seats to ensure seafarers do not sit next to each other so social distancing can be maintained. The vehicle must go directly from the airport to the jetty for transfer to the ship. Once the seafarers have departed, the vehicle must be thoroughly disinfected.

### Embarkation to ship

Whilst embarkation could be undertaken alongside to minimise interaction with shore personnel, it is anticipated that the safest manner to avoid any risk of transmission would be by launch. Further, in many ports where crew changes occur, the ship will be at anchor and the use of a launch would be the only means of transfer.

The route from the vehicle to the launch must be planned to avoid interaction between seafarers and shore personnel. The launch operators must maintain social distance between themselves and the seafarers. The launch must be of sufficient size to ensure that the seafarers can also maintain social distance between themselves and other seafarers. If the launch returns immediately to the shore then it must be disinfected prior to berthing.

Once on board the ship, any soiled or used PPE carried in zipped containment during transit is to be disposed appropriately. Personal 'high touch' equipment frequently used during the transit i.e. smartphones, personal laptop is to be sanitised. Social distancing must be maintained, particularly during any hand-over process with the off-signing crew.

### **On-going monitoring**

The ship must continue to monitor the health of the seafarers who have joined and keep a medical log. In the 14 days after joining the ship, any seafarer feeling ill, exhibiting flu-like symptoms or having a fever must report this to the maritime employer. The maritime employer must then immediately report this to the shore authorities.

## Disembarking seafarers

The following section details the procedures and practices to be adopted for seafarers leaving a ship. As an overriding principle, any additional costs involved in facilitating the transfer of seafarers should be borne by the maritime employer.

Throughout the process of disembarkation, seafarers must maintain social distancing with a minimum of 1m between themselves and another person. No hand shaking or other physical contact may be permitted throughout the transfer period.

There may be cases where seafarers can disembark from a vessel, but cannot fly back to their home country due to local restrictions. In such cases, agreement must be gained from the authorities of the state of disembarkation for the off-signers to stay in their territory. If this agreement cannot be reached, then the seafarers must remain on board.

Much of this guidance revolves around the precautions to ensure that seafarers cannot transmit any infections. In applying these measures, seafarers should be given professional respect and their human rights must be upheld.

### Personal Protective Equipment

Prior to departure, all seafarers must have with them the correct documentation held within a disinfected transparent plastic bag. This must include the health declaration form. The form must also detail the places that they have visited in the last 14 days and this should be backed up with a declaration from the master. Seafarers must be instructed to maintain social distancing protocols and no handshakes nor is physical interaction permitted.

The seafarers must don appropriate PPE as required by the country of arrival. Care must be taken that any PPE does not interfere with the safe egress from the ship.

### Departure from ship

It is anticipated that departure will be via launch. Social distancing must be maintained and the launch must be of sufficient size to ensure that all may maintain a minimum of 1m from each other and the launch crew.

The launch must be met at the jetty and the seafarers escorted off the launch to a dedicated arrivals area. The seafarers should be subject to a health screening at the arrivals area. Their temperatures should be measured and health forms checked. If a seafarer exhibits a temperature above 37.3 degrees Celsius then an assessment must be undertaken as to the cause of the increased temperature. In determining the cause of the temperature being above normal levels, the health screeners should consider the travel and exposure history of the seafarer. For example if the seafarer has just completed a voyage where the last port was more than 14 days prior to arriving, then they could not have been exposed to Covid-19. IMO Circular letter 4204 add.3 provides detailed guidance from the WHO.

The launch must be thoroughly disinfected once the seafarers have departed.

### Transfer to airport

The transfer to the airport must be via a dedicated vehicle of sufficient size to maintain social distancing and no seafarer may sit next to another. The driver of the vehicle must be in a closed off area. The vehicle must go directly from the jetty to the airport. Once the seafarers have departed, the vehicle must be thoroughly disinfected.

**Arrival at security point at airport**

The seafarers must be met and escorted throughout their processing through the airport. The seafarers' baggage should be disinfected if required.

**Security screening**

The seafarers and their baggage should pass through a dedicated security screening process. PPE should be removed and replaced as required to pass through the security screening. If single-use PPE is used, then the seafarers must carry spare PPE with them to replace any that has been used. The used PPE must be stored in zipped plastic bags and be carried by the seafarer.

**Immigration screening**

Immigration provides a vital service in ensuring that those who have entered the country have also departed. Taking into account the fact that the seafarers have not arrived in the country beyond being in the closed environment of the ship, nor did they undertake work in the country and that they will be classed as key workers, the immigration authorities would be invited to waive the immigration procedures and pass the seafarers directly to the aircraft. This procedure would also reduce any exposure for the immigration officials. Records of those passing through the border would be maintained through the pre-arrival information.

**Embarkation on board aircraft**

The seafarers must pass directly from the security and immigration area directly to the ship using a dedicated route. As with the arriving seafarers, the maritime employer may need to utilise chartered aircraft to facilitate the crew change rather than rely upon scheduled airlines. The Port State must be assured that the flight will take place as it will be in non-one's interests for the seafarers to be stuck ashore and unable to embark an aircraft for their flight home.

Seafarers should be provided with the emergency contact telephone number for the consulate of their nationality for each country they pass through.

**On-going monitoring**

The maritime employer must continue to monitor the health of the seafarers who have departed the ship. The seafarers must also inform local authorities of their arrival and travel history, monitor their health and adhere to any applicable quarantine rules as required in their home state. Any seafarer feeling ill, exhibiting flu-like symptoms or having a fever must report this to the maritime employer. The maritime employer must immediately report this to the shore authorities and the ship.

## Annex – Health Declaration Form



# INTERTANKO Seafarer Health Declaration Form

Name:

Ship's name:

<b>1.</b>	<b>Do you have any of the following flu-like symptoms?</b>		
	Fever	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Cough	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Breathlessness	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Sore throat	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Running nose	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Muscle joint pain	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Chest pain	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	Others: please specify:		
<b>2.</b>	<b>List the countries that you have been in during the last 14 days</b>	<b>From</b>	<b>To</b>
	1.		
	2.		
	3.		
	4.		
	5.		
<b>3.</b>	<b>Did you come in close contact with any person suffering from COVID-19 in the last 14 days?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>4.</b>	<b>Have you ever been admitted to or visited a hospital in the past one month?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
	If yes, please specify the reason for the admission or visit:		
<b>5.</b>	<b>Have you been in contact with farm or non-domesticated animals in the past one month?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>6.</b>	<b>Declaration: I hereby declare that, to the best of my knowledge the information provided is true and correct</b>		
<b>Signature:</b>		<b>Date:</b>	

*The personal data contained in this form will be used solely for the purpose of compliance with legal/statutory requirements of port and other authorities. The personal data will be stored and processed by the operator in accordance with any applicable data privacy laws.*



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