

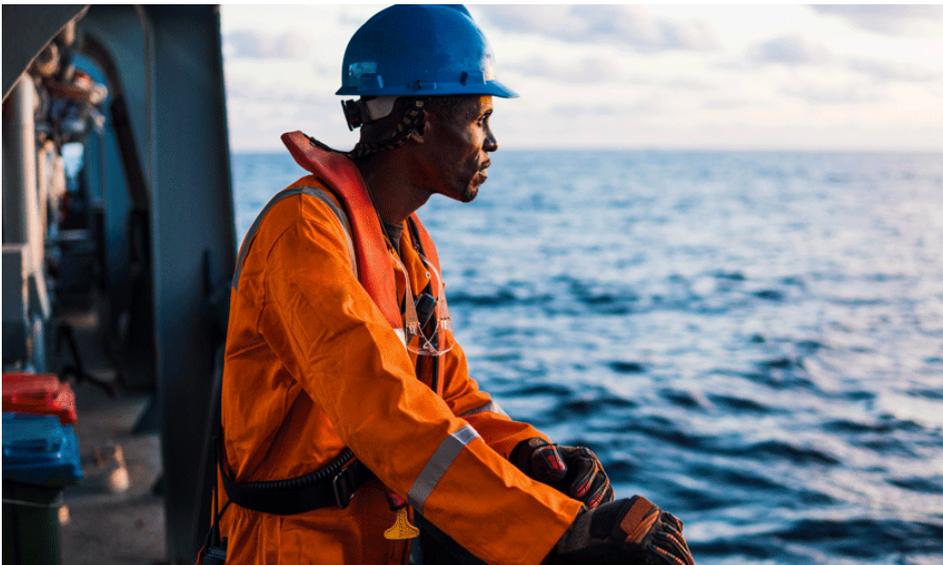


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## CHANGEOVER GUIDELINES FOR PANDEMIC

Posted by David Sexton | 4th May, 2020



Mariners are working hard to ensure sea lanes remain open during the pandemic. Credit:

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MARITIME Safety Queensland has published a **'best practice' guideline checklist** for terminals and port operators for crew changeovers during the COVID-19 crisis.

The purpose of the document is to ensure measures limit the introduction of infection into a crew's workplace.

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In a letter to Ports Australia, MSQ general manager Angus Mitchell said the ability for ships to conduct crew changeouts had been restricted during COVID-19.

A directive from the Queensland Chief Health Officer allowed for 'exempt personnel' (including maritime workers) to enter and leave Queensland, albeit they must self-quarantine if they have been outside Australia in the past 14 days.

This quarantine period can be observed on their vessel, and in the case of incoming crew the period begins at time of departure from last port.

"MSQ has undertaken a consultation process with a range of affected parties with the aim of providing some assistance in addressing this complex but important health and welfare issue," Mr Mitchell wrote.

"As a result, MSQ has now published a 'best practice' guideline checklist that can be implemented by terminals and port operators in assessing the crew changeover to ensure measures undertaken by incoming crew limit the introduction of infection into their workplace.

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"This is aimed at helping facilitate the receiving of incoming crew, as well as giving confidence to terminals and local authorities that a consistent assessment is being undertaken throughout Queensland."

He said the challenge for individual terminal operators and port authorities was in managing the risk of incoming personnel as well as facilitating the smooth departure of outgoing crew.

"It is important to note that the process is not an approval for a crew changeover to occur; this

approval is already contained under the Border Restrictions Directive,” Mr Mitchell wrote.

“The decision to allow incoming crew entry through terminals is solely at the discretion of the terminal or port operator. This process simply allows a state-wide consistent assessment.”

MSQ recommends terminals maintain a record of the Crew Change form and any other statistical information which supports ongoing risk assessments.

ITF Australia coordinated Dean Summers congratulated MSQ on its initiative.

“There is disappointing absence of a nationwide response to this problem and so hopefully the example set by Queensland can be adopted around the country,” Mr Summers said.

“In many ways COVID- 19 has become a class problem with seafarers ,as always at the bottom of the totem pole.

“We hear of up to 150,000 mariners needing to get home and for each one there is a replacement waiting to get back to work and on the pay role.”

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