

PARANA RIVER LOW WATERS

Ingosstrakh’s P&I Correspondent in Argentina Messrs. Pandi Liquidadores S.R.L reports about the critical situation observed on the Parana River due to historically low water.

The situation remains critical and the forecasts do not anticipate for any relevant improvements soon. See as an example below graph the level of the water on a period of 1 year at Rosario port (Sept 2019 – Sept 2020):



The rainfalls relevant to the Parana River basin are still expected to be ‘deficient’ during the last quarter of the year. The rainfalls are one of the main factors affecting the height of the water in the Parana River. Therefore, neither of the forecasts issued by the National Weather Service (SMN) nor the National Institute of Water (INA) foresee any relevant improvement soon. As the condition of the Parana River continues to be critically low, the significant reduction on groundings seen the last 60 days compared to previous months would be explained by the effect of alert and awareness raised to all relevant parties. However, we would suggest reminding to those shipowners trading to Argentina of the current situation on the Parana River and to continue maximising all precautions and taking all measures as previously recommended:

- it is very important for the passage plan to be discussed with the pilot with all the crew that will be on the bridge during navigation even in ballast condition and to keep a good record in writing of the discussed navigational plan.
- When loading, the Master should be alert of the condition of the river bearing in mind the maximum permissible draft - which are based on the critical points that the vessel has to sail through depending the port/terminal she is in. This information is provided by the Undersecretary of Ports and Waterways every morning around 9 or 10 am so a vessel which is going to complete overnight could be sailing with the information provided during the morning and must be checked with agents daily.
- Be reminded that the vessels should keep a 2" (0.60m) UKC at all times and it is of utmost importance to consider the ship's squat especially when crossing critical passages bearing in mind this time of low water levels.
- In case of any doubt the Master should always get in touch with the designated port agents before entering the River Plate basin and before departing from the designated terminal as to obtain accurate/updated information to be confirmed then with the pilot on duty.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE COVID 19 IN THE CARIBBEAN AREA SEPTEMBER UPDATE

Ingosstrakh's Correspondent for Caribbean region Messrs. Caribbean Marine provides update on recent changes regarding restrictions due to pandemic.

ARUBA:

The government of Aruba has not announced any changes regarding the measures taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

The restrictions and protocols related with the prevention of the spread the COVID 19 announced by the authorities at all Ports remain applicable and compulsory (please see last update).

Crew change is allowed under specific conditions; the details are stated in the previous update.

In case that a crew member presents a Non-COVID 19 injury or illness, health authorities has to be informed and they will be the one who authorized the disembark to shore medical assistance in the public or private hospital system.

BAHAMAS:

The government of The Bahamas has not announced any changes regarding the measures taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19. The restrictions and protocols related with the prevention of the spread the COVID 19 announced by the authorities at all Ports remain applicable and compulsory (please see last update). Crew changes is allowed.

In case that a crew member presents a Non-COVID 19 injury or illness, health authorities has to be informed and they will be the one who authorized the disembark to shore medical assistance in the public or private hospital system.

COLOMBIA:

On September 15, 2020, the Minister of Transportation, Ángela María Orozco, announced that on September 19, international flights will resume, complying with the established biosecurity protocols. Air operations will begin initially with the following countries: United States, Mexico, Dominican Republic, Brazil, Ecuador, Bolivia and Guatemala.

- To enter Colombia, passengers must comply with the PCR test and the result must not be greater than 96 hours before the stipulated flight time.
- In order to leave Colombian territory, passengers must comply with the requirements agreed by the country of destination.

The restrictions and protocols related with the prevention of the spread the COVID 19 announced by the authorities at all Ports remain applicable and compulsory (please see last update).

Crew changes are allowed with restrictions.

In case that a crew member presents a Non-COVID 19 injury or illness, health authorities has to be informed and they will be the one who authorized the disembark to shore medical assistance in the public or private hospital system.

CURACAO:

The government of Curacao has not announced any changes regarding the measures taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

All crew changes are subject to approval by the Covid Crisis team and they will arrange all transportation. The following documents must be presented at least 5 days before the crew change: copy of passport, navigation book, medical certificate, ship's maritime health status, any other information.

The restrictions and protocols related to the prevention of the spread of COVID 19 established by the authorities in all ports remain mandatory (see previous updates).

In the event that a crew member presents an injury or illness other than COVID 19, the health authorities must be informed and they will authorize the landing to receive medical assistance in the hospital system.

DOMINICAN REPUBLIC:

The government of the Dominican Republic has not announced changes in relation to the measures taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19.

Free pratique will be granted once the ship has docked and has been approved by the authorities. The requirements part of the COVID19 Protocol consists: the crew list, the last ten ports, the P&I certificate and the declaration of maritime health must be sent to PFSO before the arrival of the ship. A vessel that comes from ports in China, Italy, Spain, the United States and other places infected with COVID 19, must arrive at the ports of the Dominican Republic after 14 days of departure from said port, must wait the 14 days of quarantine at sea, the Medical Commission evaluate and will approved to berth, if there is no sick crew on board.

Crew changes are allowed, however, authorization from the High Level Presidential Commission is required. Required documents: crew details, passport copy and preliminary flight details to request authorization.

The restrictions and protocols related to the prevention of the spread of COVID 19 announced by the authorities in all ports continue to be applicable and mandatory (see the latest update).

Medical assistance is possible, but must be approved by the authorities, at this time it is analyzed on a case-by-case basis and is very restrictive.

VENEZUELA:

On September 12, 2020, the National Institute of Civil Aeronautics (INAC), according to NOTAM C0790 / 20, announced the extension of the restriction of air operations in the national territory from September 12 to October 12, 2020, the closure of airports remains unchanged according to NOTAM C0789 / 20 and A0362 / 20. Operations in a state of emergency such as cargo, mail flights, technical landing, humanitarian flights, repatriations or flights authorized by the United Nations, and commercial / cargo overflights are excepted.

From September 21 to 27, 2020 the quarantine measures will be released.

The restrictions and protocols related to the prevention of the spread of COVID 19 announced by the authorities in all ports remain applicable and mandatory (see last update).

In the event that any crew member presents an injury or illness other than COVID 19, the health authorities must be informed and they will authorize the landing of medical assistance on the ground in the public or private hospital system.

The issuance of safe conducts to key workers in the sector (seafarers and personnel associated with the port-ship interface) continues, to guarantee their mobilization on land, as indicated by the Maritime Authority in Circular No. 014 (Special Notice 011 COVID-19) of April 27, 2020.

CHINA. SPECIAL EPIDEMIC PREVENTION AND CONTROL MEASURES ON VESSELS HAVING CHANGED CREW OVERSEAS WITHIN 14 DAYS

Ingostrakh's P&I Correspondent in China Messrs. Huatai Insurance Agency & Consultant Service Ltd. provides new information on limitations and requirements for recently changed crewmembers.

As Insureds are well aware, Chinese ports are still strengthening epidemic prevention and control measures on vessels having changed crew overseas within 14 days, especially for Pilipino seafarers or vessels that have changed crew members in the Philippines.

The updated control measures at Chinese main ports include but not limited to the followings:

1. Dalian

If the vessel has changed its crew overseas within 14 days before its arrival, whether the crew were changed in the Philippines or not, all/part of the crew members on board need to receive nucleic acid test.

2. Bayuquan

If the vessel has changed its crew overseas within 14 days before its arrival, whether the crew were changed in the Philippines or not, she has to drop anchor at the anchorage and entry application will only be granted 14 days after the date of crew change.

3. Tianjin

If the vessel has changed its crew overseas within 14 days before its arrival, whether the crew were changed in the Philippines or not, the Customs shall conduct sampling and testing on the newly changed crew members. The vessel is only permitted to commence cargo operation if the test results are negative.

4. Qingdao

If the vessel has changed its crew overseas within 14 days before its arrival, whether the crew were changed in the Philippines or not, she has to drop anchor at the anchorage and entry application will only be granted 14 days after the date of crew change.

5. Shanghai

No specific regulations for Pilipino crew members or crew members embarked in the Philippines.

6. Inland ports close to Shanghai

- Zhenjiang

If the vessel has changed its crew within 14 days before its arrival, the vessel is required to report to the Customs in advance and wait for further instructions. Quarantine may be conducted at the anchorage first.

- Changshu

If the vessel has called at a foreign port or changed its crew within 14 days before its arrival, the Customs shall conduct sampling and testing on the crew members. The vessel is only permitted to commence cargo operation if the test results are negative.

- Zhangjiagang

If the vessel has called at a foreign port or changed its crew within 14 days before its arrival, the Customs shall conduct sampling and testing on the crew members. The vessel is permitted to commence cargo operation while waiting for the test results.

7. Ningbo

If the vessel has changed its crew overseas within 14 days before its arrival, the Customs and other departments will carry out risk assessment on the vessel. The nucleic acid test will be conducted if the Customs deem necessary. Berthing schedule will only be fixed if the test results are negative.

8. Zhoushan

If the vessel has changed its crew overseas within 14 days before its arrival, whether the crew were changed in the Philippines or not, she has to drop anchor at the anchorage and entry application will only be granted 14 days after the date of crew change.

9. Xiamen

If the vessel has changed its crew overseas within 14 days before its arrival, whether the crew were changed in the Philippines or not, newly changed crew members should receive nucleic acid tests and the cargo operation could only be commenced if the results are negative.

10. Guangzhou

If the vessel has changed its crew overseas within 14 days before its arrival, whether the crew were changed in the Philippines or not, all/part of the crew members on board have to receive the nucleic acid test. The vessel is only permitted to commence cargo operation if the test results are negative.

11. Zhuhai

Though there is no official declaration, vessels that have recently changed crew in the Philippines are not permitted to call at the port. If the vessel has changed her crew in other countries within 14 days before its arrival, she is only permitted to take her berth 14 days after the date of crew change.

Test method/item

Generally, the Customs collect throat swab from the crew and conduct nucleic acid testing for the novel Coronavirus. If the nucleic acid test result is positive, the crew member will be sent to the hospital for further tests. The test method is throat swab + blood test and the test items are novel Coronavirus nucleic acid + antibody. CT scan may also be conducted for diagnosis.

When crew are tested positive to COVID-19

Crew members with positive test results will be sent to the designated hospital ashore for medical treatment and the vessel will be disinfected. The Customs will conduct further test to the remaining crew members and the cargo. The vessel will be allowed to commence cargo operation if the test results are negative. The vessel may sail if the crew member receiving medical treatment ashore obtain entry permit. In case the vessel becomes undermanned as a result of the confirmed cases of her crew member, she has to arrange replacement of crew. Alternatively, the vessel may apply her flag state for an exemption before sailing. If the crew member receiving medical treatment ashore fails to obtain entry permit, the vessel is only permitted to sail after recovery and returning to the vessel of the crew. Our experiences suggest that the following factors will determine whether the affected crew member receiving medical treatment ashore will be granted for an entry permit:

- 1) Policies/measures implemented by the local government/port authorities
- 2) Medical condition of the crew member
- 3) Number of affected crew members
- 4) Vessel's schedule, etc.