



Technical Circular

No.: 061/2020

Date: 22nd April 2020

Subject: Govt. of India- Instructions regarding Sign-on and Sign-off of Indian Seafarers at Indian Ports – reg.

1. Considering the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, various guidelines have been issued by Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA), Govt. of India that are being implemented as a control measure while dealing with COVID-19.
2. Change of onboard seafarers is an important measure for operation of ship. The Ministry of Home Affairs, vide order No. 40-3/2020-DM-I (A) dated 21/04/2020 has provided revised guidelines under clause “Movement of persons” in addressing this issue.
3. The order provides a Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) to be followed in order to streamline the Sign-on and Sign-off of Indian Seafarers at Indian Ports and their movement for the purpose.
4. SoP provides guidelines outlining the role of individual seafarer, ship owner/Recruitment & Placement Services (RPS) as well as State Government/ Union Territory where seafarer resides during Sign-on and Sign-off.
5. The SoP during Sign-on contains verification of travel and contact history of seafarer, examination of seafarer by DGS approved medical examiner, COVID-19 test at port of embarkation and procedures related to social distancing, hygiene norms, transit pass and other documentation.
6. The SoP during Sign-off contains information from master regarding health of seafarers onboard, undergoing COVID-19 test, stay in quarantine period till result of test is received, and procedures related to transit pass and other documentation to the place of seafarer’s residence.
7. The detailed protocol with regard to sign-on and sign-off will be prescribed by DG Shipping, India in due time. In the meantime, ship owners/operators, Masters and RPS providers are advised to take note of above and be guided by the attached MHA order for detailed information.

Encl.:

Ministry of Home Affairs Order No. 40-3/2020-DM-I (A) dated 21/04/2020

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No. 40-3/2020-DM-I(A)
Government of India
Ministry of Home Affairs

North Block, New Delhi-110001
Dated 21st April, 2020

ORDER

In continuation of Ministry of Home Affairs's Order No. 40-3/2020-DM-I(A) Dated 15th April, 2020, 16th April 2020 and 19th April 2020 and in exercise of the powers, conferred under Section 10(2)(l) of the Disaster Management Act 2005, the undersigned, in his capacity as Chairperson, National Executive Committee, hereby orders **to include** the following in the consolidated revised guidelines for strict implementation by Ministries/ Departments of Government of India, State/Union Territory Governments and State/ Union Territory Authorities:

- I. **Sub-clause (ix), (x) & (xi) under Clause 6 'A' on All Agricultural and horticultural activities:**
 - ix. Facilities for export/ import such as Pack houses, inspection and treatment facilities for seeds and horticulture produce.
 - x. Research Establishments dealing with the agriculture and horticulture activities.
 - xi. Inter and intra State movement of planting materials and honey bee colonies, honey and other beehive products.
- II. **Sub-clause (xi) and (xii) under Clause 14 on Commercial and private establishments:**
 - xi. Shops of educational books for students.
 - xii. Shops of electric fans.
- III. **Sub-clause (iii) under Clause 17 on Movement of persons:**
 - iii. Sign-on and sign-off of Indian Seafarers at Indian Ports and their movement for the aforesaid purpose as *per attached Standard Operating Protocol (SOP)*.
- IV. **Clause 19 (v) on Forest offices includes forestry plantation and related activities, including Silviculture operations.**


Home Secretary

To

1. The Secretaries of Ministries/ Departments of Government of India
2. The Chief Secretaries/Administrators of States/Union Territories

(As per list attached)

Copy to:

1. All members of the National Executive Committee.
2. Member Secretary, National Disaster Management Authority.

Standard Operating Procedure (SoP) for sign-on and sign-off of Indian Seafarers at Indian Ports and their movement for the aforesaid purpose

[As per Ministry of Home Affairs (MHA) Order No. 40-3/2020-DM-I (A) dated 21st April, 2020]

Change of crew of ship (seafarers) is an important measure for operation of merchant ships. This SoP has been formulated to streamline the sign-on/sign-off of Indian Seafarer at Indian Ports for merchant shipping vessels. The following guidelines may be followed:

I. For Sign-on

- i. Ship owner/ Recruitment and Placement Service (RPS) agency will identify the Indian seafarers for joining a vessel.
- ii. The seafarers will intimate their travel and contact history for last 28 days to the ship owner /RPS agency by email, as per procedure laid down by Director General of Shipping (DGS).
- iii. The seafarer would be examined by a DGS approved medical examiner, as per the guidelines prescribed for this purpose. At the same time, the seafarer shall also be screened, and his travel and contact history examined for the last 28 days; seafarers found to be asymptomatic for COVID-19 and otherwise suitable may be processed for sign-on.
- iv. The local authority in the area where the seafarer resides will be intimated about his clearance for sign-on and for issue of a transit pass from the place of residence to the place of embarkation on the shipping vessel.
- v. The transit pass for such movement by road, for the seafarer and one driver, may be issued by the Government of the State/Union Territory where the seafarer resides.
- vi. The transit pass (to and fro) will be issued for a fixed route and with specified validity and will have to be adhered to strictly. Such transit pass would be honoured/ allowed by the authorities of the State/ Union Territory along the transit route.
- vii. The social distancing and other hygiene norms, as per standard health protocol, would be followed by the vehicle transporting the seafarer to his destination.
- viii. At the port of embarkation, the seafarer shall be tested for COVID-19; the seafarer would be ready for sign-on only if the COVID-19 test is negative, failing which, action as per guidelines of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare (MoHFW) would be taken.

II. For Sign-off

- i. The master of a vessel, coming from any foreign port, or a coastal vessel from any Indian port, while arriving at its port of call in India, shall ascertain the state of health of each person on board the vessel and submit the Maritime Declaration of Health to the health authorities of the port and to the port authorities. In addition, the information required by the local health authorities of the port, like temperature chart, individual health declaration, etc. shall also be provided by the master as per the directives of the health



authorities of the port. Port health authorities shall grant pratique to the vessel prior to berthing as per necessary health protocols.

- ii. The Indian seafarer arriving on the vessel would undergo the COVID-19 test for confirmation that he/ she is negative for COVID-19. After disembarking and till the time the seafarer reaches the testing facility, within the port premises, it will be ensured by the ship owner that all safety precautions as per standard health protocol are observed.
- iii. Till the time test reports of the seafarer are received, the seafarer shall be kept in the quarantine facility by the Port/ State Health Authorities.
- iv. If the seafarer is tested as positive for COVID-19, he/ she will be dealt with as per the procedures laid down by MoHFW.
- v. For the seafarer tested negative and signed off, the Local Authority in the area where the seafarer disembarks will be intimated about his/ her clearance for sign-off, and for issue of a transit pass from the place of disembarkation to the place of his/ her residence.
- vi. The transit pass for such movement by road, for the seafarer and one driver, may be issued by the Government of the State/Union Territory where the seafarer disembarks.
- vii. The transit pass (to and fro) will be issued for a fixed route and with specified validity and will have to be adhered to strictly. Such transit pass would be honoured/ allowed by the authorities of the State/ Union Territory along the transit route.
- viii. The social distancing and other hygiene norms, as per standard health protocol, would be followed by the vehicle transporting the seafarer to his destination.

Note: DG (Shipping) will prescribe the detailed protocol with regard to sign-on and sign-off to be followed in the above cases.

