

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.



No. 40-10/2020-DM-I(A)/Part-1
Government of India
Ministry of Home Affairs

North Block, New Delhi-110001
Dated: 22nd May, 2020

Office Memorandum

Sub: Repatriation and travel abroad of Indian seafarers and crew.

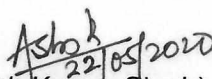
The undersigned is directed to refer to Ministry of External Affairs' UO Note No. 138 dated 15.05.2020 & D.O. letter dated 18.05.2020 and D.O. letter No. ST-16011/13/2020-MA dated 08.05.2020 from Hon'ble MoS (I/C) for Shipping regarding repatriation of stranded Indian seafarers/crew to India through charter flight arranged by their employing companies.

2. The aforesaid matter has been examined in this Ministry. In this regard, the movement of stranded Indian seafarers/crew is hereby permitted through charter flight arranged by their employing companies in accordance with the Standard Operating Protocol (SOP) for movement of Indian nationals stranded outside the country, dated 05.05.2020, with the following modifications:

- a) In para 2(ii) of the SOP, travel to India can be by special charter flights to be arranged by employers or by hiring firms. Such flights would be scheduled after full consultations between MEA, MoCA and the concerned States to which such flights are being proposed.
- b) In para 2(iv) of SOP, the cost of travel will be borne by such travellers, or by their employers.
- c) In para 2(viii), all travellers shall give an undertaking, before boarding, that they would undergo mandatory institutional quarantine for a minimum period of 14 days on arrival in India at their own cost or at the cost of the employer.
- d) Upon completion of 14 days quarantine, Director General of Shipping would enable e-passes, if required, for intra-State/inter-State movement to their native places.

3. Indian seafarers/crew seeking to accept contracts to serve on vessels abroad can travel on the non-scheduled commercial flights departing from India under the Vande Bharat Mission or the charter flights arranged by their employers subject to their clearance given by Ministry of Shipping.

4. This issues with the approval of Union Home Secretary.


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To

1. Secretary, Ministry of External Affairs, South Block, New Delhi
2. Secretary, Ministry of Shipping, Parivahan Bhawan, New Delhi
3. Secretary, Ministry of Civil Aviation, Rajiv Gandhi Bhawan, New Delhi
4. Additional Secretary (Foreigners), MHA