

26 June 2020

Information for Maritime Freight on Coronavirus Public Health Order and Exemption

This factsheet contains a summary of restrictions to commercial maritime vessels and their crews in response to Coronavirus from the following Orders:

- *Public Health (COVID-19 Maritime Quarantine) Order (No 2) 2020* [here](#) (published on 25 June)
- *Exemption under Public Health (COVID-19 Maritime Quarantine) Order 2020 [NSW]* [here](#) (published on 8 April 2020)
- The Australian Border Force has also issued the *Restrictions on Commercial Maritime Vessels and Crew* (published on 1 April 2020)

Maritime transport plays an essential role in the import and export of goods and the public health orders and exemptions are designed to ensure the safe and efficient movement of freight through our ports.

Crew and shore-based workers must continue to practice social distancing, hygiene and other health and safety measures required by NSW Health and the Australian Government.

What should I know for crews on ships arriving in NSW?

- A person arriving in NSW on a vessel that has come from a port outside of NSW must not disembark from the vessel unless the person is authorised to do so by the Commissioner of Police or it is an emergency (*Public Health (COVID-19 Maritime Quarantine) Order 2020*).
- A crew member of a vessel is exempt from the above Order to undertake **essential tasks** of: loading and unloading cargo, vessel maintenance, safety checks and activities, and preparing the vessel for sailing. These tasks include, but are not limited to, rigging and stowing gangways, reading drafts, completing ship to shore checklists, connecting and disconnecting fresh and fire water, receiving stores and quarantine waste disposal. (*Exemption under Public Health (COVID-19 Maritime Quarantine) Order 2020 [NSW]*).

Are there restrictions on where these activities can be conducted?

Yes. Crew members disembarking a vessel to conduct activities included in the exemption must remain as close to the vessel as reasonably possible, and are to remain within 13 metres

from the vessel. The crew must take reasonable steps to reduce the risk of spread of Coronavirus and return to the vessel immediately after completing their task.

What should I know for boarding and then disembarking from vessels?

A person may board the vessel:

- to assist in the docking or departure; refuelling or restocking; loading or unloading cargo;
- to exercise border security; customs or quarantine functions; and to enforce this Order
- if a medical practitioner or other health practitioner who is required to board the vessel to provide medical treatment or testing to a person on board the vessel;
- if required to board the vessel in an emergency.

Further exemptions have been given for persons required to board and disembark the vessel, including:

- to carry out repair work and/or maintenance of the vessel; a ship agent; a ship classification society surveyor; a member of staff of the Terminal who is required to board the vessel to undertake ship to shore requirements; an Australian Maritime Safety Authority inspector;
- if the Commissioner for Police has approved then a person can board the vessel to undertake insurance functions or a cargo surveyor; a union official; or another approved person.

What happens if a person is disembarking in NSW?

A person disembarking a vessel arriving in NSW from outside of NSW, unless authorised by or under the Order or the Exemption, must go to a quarantine facility or hospital or other medical facility for 14 days (*Public Health (COVID-19 Air Transportation and Maritime Quarantine) Amendment Order 2020*).

How do operators seek exemptions or approvals for activities which are not permitted?

Operators can apply through the Port Authority of New South Wales, who will work with the NSW Police Force, to consider the request where appropriate. Applications can be made via email to MHOExemption@portauthoritynsw.com.au and should include the following details:

- Name of vessel
- Location of vessel
- Date/time exemption requested for and duration of request
- Activity to be undertaken
- Name and contact details of applicant.