



**INTERNATIONAL SHIP REGISTRY OF GABON
COMMISSIONAIRE OF MARITIME AFFAIRS**

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To :Representatives of Gabon flagged vessels, Deputy Commissioners, Ship-owners & Ship-operators. Masters, Flag State Surveyors and Recognized Organizations.

Scope: The purpose of this “Merchant Marine Circular” is to inform all interested parties on the attached Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance for ship operators for the protection of the health of seafarers, prepared by the International Chamber of Shipping in response to the coronavirus outbreak.

References:

[IMO Circular Letter No.4204/Add.4, 5 March 2020](#)

1. The IMO Secretary-General has received the attached Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance for ship operators for the protection of the health of seafarers, prepared by the International Chamber of Shipping in response to the coronavirus outbreak. Gabon International Register interested parties are invited to make use of the Guidance, as they see fit.
2. In response to the current coronavirus (COVID-19) outbreak, the concrete Guidance has been produced by the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) to support all types of ships which operate in international waters. The purpose is to help shipping companies follow advice provided by United Nations agencies including the World Health Organization (WHO), the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Labour Organization (ILO), as well as the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC).
3. The Guidance among others points out that many governments have now introduced national and local restrictions including: Delayed port clearance; Prevention of crew or passengers from embarking or disembarking (preventing shore leave and crew changes); Prevention of discharging or loading cargo or stores, or taking on fuel, water, food and supplies; and Imposition of quarantine or refusal of port entry to ships (in extreme cases).

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4. While such measures can severely disrupt maritime traffic – and may well be in breach of the IHR, the Convention on Facilitation of International Maritime Traffic (FAL Convention) and other maritime principles regarding the rights and treatment of seafarers and passengers – the reality is that shipping companies may have little choice but to adhere to these national and local restrictions due to the serious concern about COVID-19 and the potential risk to public health.

5. The International Ship Registry of Gabon strongly urges all interested parties of the International Ship Registry of Gabon to follow the guidance provided in response to the coronavirus outbreak.

Applicability: The Notice applies to all commercial vessels registered in the International Ship Registry of Gabon, as well as to other interested parties related to the International Ship Registry of Gabon.

To be read in conjunction with this Circular

[IMO Circular Letter No.4204/Add.4, 5 March 2020](#) *(Please click on the link)*