



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.

Subject: I.M.O. Circular Letter No.4204/Add.14, 5 May 2020 Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Recommended Framework of Protocols for Ensuring Safe Ship Crew Changes and Travel during the Coronavirus (COVID-19) Pandemic.

Scope: This Merchant Marine Circular aims to inform all interested parties upon an I.M.O. recommended framework of protocols for ensuring safe ship crew changes and travel during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic, proposed by a broad cross-section of global industry associations in consultative status with the Organization representing the maritime transportation sector.

References:

- a. I.M.O. Circular Letter No.4204/Add.14 of 5 May 2020.
 - b. I.M.O. Circular Letter No. IMO Circular Letter No.4204/Add.6 of 27 March 2020.
 - c. International Ship Registry of Gabon: COVID-19 – Implementation and enforcement of relevant IMO instruments / IMO Circular Letter No.4204/Add.1, 19 February 2020
MARCIR 05/2020 dated 25th February 2020.
1. IMO issued a Circular Letter No.4204-Add.14 (as per attachment) on 5 May 2020, informing maritime administrations, national authorities, and shipping companies of the recommended framework of protocols for ensuring safe ship crew changes and travel during the coronavirus (COVID-19).
 2. Further to IMO Circular Letter No.4204/Add.6 of 27 March 2020 which contains, inter alia, recommendations to IMO Member States about measures to facilitate ship crew changes in seaports during the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic and expanding on these recommendations, the Secretary-General has received a “*Recommended framework of protocols for ensuring safe ship crew changes and travel during the coronavirus (COVID-*



19) *pandemic*”, proposed by a broad cross section of global industry associations in consultative status with the Organization representing the maritime transportation sector.

3. The protocols with a 12-step solution set out the responsibility of governments, shipowners, transport providers, and seafarers. The 12-step solution provides governments with the global framework to facilitate changeovers of ships’ crews, including the lack of available flights and to assist governments to put in place coordinated procedures to facilitate the safe movement of seafarers. The detailed document is a roadmap to free to the extent possible seafarers from their COVID-19 lockdown and allow appropriate exemptions for them to join or leave ships. It has been advanced by a broad coalition of seafarer unions, and international shipping industry associations, with input from airline industry representatives, international organisations, and the insurance sector, to provide a comprehensive blueprint of how governments can facilitate crew changeovers and resolve safety concerns throughout the entire process.
4. This protocol is a necessary and important step in ensuring the safety of the seafarers at sea, the goods they carry, and the environment in which they sail. Like most of the world, the COVID-19 pandemic has brought about unimaginable disruption, and the seafarers at sea have been incredibly impacted by this. The challenges facing the shipping industry are numerous at this time, and this issue is amongst the most urgent in need of an international solution.
5. The International Ship Registry of Gabon supports the careful facilitation’s of the world’s seafarers conducting safe crew changes and is expressing its appreciation for the support of the international community in their efforts to facilitate the causes facing the world seafarers and the respective work put into this among others by IMO, ICS & ITF

To be read in conjunction with this Circular (Please click on the link)

[http://www.imo.org/en/MediaCentre/HotTopics/Documents/COVID%20CL%204204%20adds/Circular%20Letter%20No.4204-Add.14%20-%20Coronavirus%20\(Covid-19\)%20-%20Recommended%20Framework%20Of%20Protocols.pdf](http://www.imo.org/en/MediaCentre/HotTopics/Documents/COVID%20CL%204204%20adds/Circular%20Letter%20No.4204-Add.14%20-%20Coronavirus%20(Covid-19)%20-%20Recommended%20Framework%20Of%20Protocols.pdf)