



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

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**MARCIR: 16/2020**

**DATE: 04<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

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

**Subject: “INTERNATIONAL CHAMBER OF SHIPPING – CORONAVIRUS (COVID-19) UPDATED GUIDANCE FOR SHIP OPERATORS FOR THE PROTECTION OF THE HEALTH OF SEAFARER (Version 3.0 – 29<sup>th</sup> September 2020”).**

**Scope:**

This Merchant Marine Notice aims to inform all interested parties related to the I.S.R. of Gabon on the issuance of the I.C.S. document: “Coronavirus (COVID-19) Guidance for Ship Operators for the Protection of the Health of Seafarers (Version 3.0 – 29 September 2020)”. In the new guidance document, the International Chamber of Shipping ICS explains the right protection measures for the novel coronavirus and how to react if a case of illness or a suspect case occurs on board. 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).

**References:**

- A. “COVID-19-Guidance for ship operators for the protection of the health of seafarers MARCIR 07/2020”, dated 11th Mar 2020.
- B. “I.M.O. Circular Letter No.4221, 18 March 2020: Communication from the Government of the People's Republic of China, Guidance on the prevention and control of COVID-19 on board (Version 1.0) MARCIR 08/2020, dated 28th Mar 2020”.
- C. “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. MARCIR 10/2020, dated 12th May 2020”.
- D. IMO Marine Guidance – Recommended Coronavirus (COVID-19) Framework of Protocols for Safe Crew Change and Travel.



1. Further to previous MARCIR's as per reference a. to c., issued by the I.S.R. of Gabon and taking under consideration substantial experience gathered by the international maritime community, knowledge of COVID-19 has substantially increased, and the International Chamber of Shipping has now published a new, fully updated version of Coronavirus (COVID-19) - Guidance for Ship Operators for the Protection of the Health of Seafarers, reflecting the latest thinking and advice on the virus. Version 3 of the I.C.S Guidance includes an updated introduction reflecting the situation nine months on from the start of the global pandemic and adds two new annexes on PCR testing (polymerase chain reaction test) and Managing Multiple Cases of COVID-19 on Board Vessels.<sup>1</sup>
2. The amended Guidance has been developed with support from a number of prominent international bodies including: the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the European Centre for Disease Prevention and Control (ECDC), the International Maritime Health Association (IMHA), the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) and INTERTANKO
3. The measures highlighted in the Guidance include among others advice on managing port entry restrictions, shipboard measures to address risks associated with COVID-19, managing cases of COVID-19 on board ship when at sea, assistance for all seafarers to access medical care when in ports, and dealing with other medical issues during COVID-19. The Guidance is for use on all types of ship and aims to recognize the needs of both cargo and passenger ships.
4. International Ship Registry of Gabon strongly urges all interested parties related to the I.S.R. to follow the guidance provided in response to the coronavirus outbreak.

**To find more details about “Guidance for Ship Operators for the Protection of Seafarer’s Health” published by International Chamber of Shipping, please click on the link below:**

<https://www.ics-shipping.org/docs/default-source/resources/covid19-guidance-for-ship-operators-for-the-protection-of-the-health-of-seafarers-v3.pdf?sfvrsn=4>

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<sup>1</sup> This replaces version 2, published in May, and should be read in conjunction with COVID-19 – Protocols to Mitigate the Risks of Cases on Board Ships.