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### **Latest update on disembarkation of injured/ill crew**

Dear Sirs or Madam,

In view of the rapid spread of COVID-19 across the world, the Chinese government has implemented a strict entry policy. With effective from March 28th, 2020, foreign nationals holding valid visas or residence permits were temporarily suspended the entry into China. When it comes to marine industry, according to the “Guidance on the prevention and control of COVID-19 on board (V2.0)” (please kindly refer to Huatai Circular PNI[2020]05), sending crew ashore is strictly restricted. It is doubtless that these policies are helpful to contain COVID-19 case importation. On the other side, the policies bring obstacles in situations involving the disembarkation of injured/ill crew from ships.

We have recently received inquiries from Clubs/Shipowners regarding disembarkation of a crew who need urgent medical assistance in China. Upon checking with China MSA, a multi-sectoral joint guideline has been published on April 12th, 2020 by the Ministry of transport, Ministry of foreign affairs, State Health Commission, General Administration of Customs and State Administration of Immigration to solve the difficulty in injured/ill crew disembarkation. The Guideline gives guidance on emergency rescue and treatment of

injured/ill crew during the epidemic prevention & control period. In terms of treatment of injured/ill crew in Chinese ports, the Guideline requires that:

#### Treatment of injured/ill crew in Chinese ports

1) When a ship requests for rescue in a Chinese port, rescue measures shall be implemented for injured/ill crew regardless of whether they belong to the “four categories of personnel” or not. If necessary, the crew shall be transferred to the relevant medical institutions where the port is located for medical treatment to ensure that the crew is rescued in time. After receiving the ship’s rescue request, the Maritime Search and Rescue Center under its jurisdiction shall timely collect the information of the crew to be rescued and the health status of all the crew on board. Relevant Maritime Administration shall report to the Customs, Border Inspection and local people’s government (including health department) according to the procedures and cooperate with relevant departments to confirm the epidemic situation on board. When COVID-19 infection case is confirmed on board, proper treatment methods for “four categories of personnel” shall be implemented.

Four categories of personnel refer to:

AA. the COVID-19 confirmed patients

BB. suspected COVID-19 infected patients

CC. patients who can not be excluded from COVID-19 infection

DD. close contacts of COVID-19 confirmed patients

2) The Maritime Search and Rescue Center shall coordinate the rescue operations in

accordance with the relevant emergency response procedures, cooperate with the relevant departments in accordance with the relevant provisions of the local people's Government and rescue the injured crew in a timely and safe manner.

3) When necessary, the Maritime Administration shall focus on maintaining the traffic order at sea in the process of crew transfer and rescue and cooperate with the relevant departments to carry out rescue work.

4) The relevant local departments shall inform foreign crew's embassy and consulate in China according to the rescue conditions.

Our branch offices have recently successfully handled some cases relating to disembarkation/repatriation of injured/ill crew. For example, our Dalian office successfully arranged repatriation of an Ethiopian 1/E who suffered suppurative synovial arthritis. Our Guangzhou, Xiamen, Shanghai, Ningbo colleagues also handled crew injury cases and arranged proper treatment for the crew ashore. According to our experiences, we have to go through complex procedures of getting permission from various local authorities, such as Border-Port Quarantine Department, Marine Safety Administration, Exit and Entry Administration Department, Immigration Inspection Station, which as far as we understand, not a single one can be omitted.

In response to the Guideline, the local authorities of Chinese ports are optimizing the crew rescue procedures. We are optimistic and trust that the obstacles in disembarkation of an injured/ill crew in Chinese ports shall be overcome step by step.

In addition, the joint guideline raises requirements in situations involving Chinese injured/ill crew on Chinese flag ships abroad and Chinese injured/ill crew on foreign flag ships abroad. We also summarize the relative contents for Clubs/Shipowners' kind consideration.

## Treatment of Chinese injured/ill crew on Chinese flag ships abroad

1) The Chinese flag ship shall report to the shipping company in the first time, and the shipping company shall report to the Chinese Maritime Administration timely after receiving the report. At the same time, the ship may apply for remote medical assistance in accordance with the procedures and relevant international guidelines.

2) If the crew requires emergency rescue ashore, the ship can seek assistance from local Chinese embassy/consulate to coordinate with local government and medical department to fulfill the international obligations stipulated in the Maritime Labor Convention 2006, International Health Regulations, etc. to rescue the injured/ill crew according to the ship's requirements, the crew's situation and local medical conditions. As the obligator, the shipping company shall provide necessary resource support.

3) Chinese Maritime Administration shall urge the shipping company to provide necessary support for injured crew's emergency rescue in accordance with the emergency response procedures.

4) If a confirmed or suspected COVID-19 infection case is found on the ship, and the coastal state or port state refuses to provide emergency assistance, the Ministry of Transport shall inform the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in a timely manner and urge the foreign side to render emergency assistance through diplomatic channels. The crew can also seek assistance from local port authorities in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Maritime Labor Convention 2006.

## Treatment of Chinese injured/ill crew on foreign flag ships abroad

1) After receiving the report, according to the principle of "dispatching party shall be

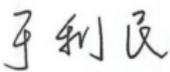
responsible”, the crew’s manning agent shall firstly report to the relevant embassy and consulate for assistance. A timely report of the relevant situation to the Chinese Maritime Administration is also necessary.

2) Chinese Maritime Administration shall urge the crew’s manning agent to provide all necessary resource support to the injured/ill crew in accordance with the emergency response procedures, and report the relevant situation to the Ministry of Transport in a timely manner.

3) If necessary, the Ministry of Transport may contact the competent authority of the flag state for coordination.

As a result of our continuous efforts in dealing with such cases, our Huatai Marine Team has established close cooperation relationship with local authorities and a smooth channel in disembarkation of a crew who need urgent medical assistance ashore. If any similar occasion occurs when your vessel calls at a Chinese port, please feel free to contact us.

Best regards,



Yu Limin

President