**PANAMA – Covid-19 measures**

Correspondents C Fernie update 23 December 2020

Available space in both private and public hospital has become very limited and

due to strain on health care personnel the Panamanian government is contemplating bringing medical personnel from other countries to supplement health care needs.

Due to the high numbers of daily new cases, the Ministry of Heath has announced

a full lock down beginning at 1900 hrs Dec 24th until 0500 hrs Dec 28th and again

from 1900 hrs Dec 31st until 0500 hrs Jan 04th. Only essential movements will be

permitted during these periods.

- Outside the above full lock down periods, a nationwide curfew from 1900 hrs until

  0500 hrs is in force.

- All Government offices (Immigration/Customs) and banks will be closed from Dec

  24th-27th and again from Dec 31st-Jan 03rd.

- The local Health Authorities announced the temporary suspension to enter the

  country by any person who has travelled from or through the United Kingdom

  and/or South Africa due to the new strains of the virus reported in these countries.

- The Panama Canal and Port Terminals continue operating normally

PANAMA CANAL SITUATION

- The waiting time for Northbound vsls is currently running at approx 3-4 days and

  for Southbound vsls the waiting time has increased to 5 days.

- Projected arrivals are heavy for Dec 26th-28th which could result in delays increasing to 5-6 days.

The PCA continue their best efforts to reduce the current backlog of Panamax-Plus

vessels

- The waiting time for these vessels has improved slightly to approx 15 days.

- Preference will always be given to NeoPanamax vsls when programming transit

   schedules via NEW locks.

- Panamax-Plus vessels can NOT be prebooked and must wait their turn to transit.

The maximum authorized drafts currently as follows:

- PANAMAX (Old) Locks:             12.04m (39ft 06in) TFW - In Effect Until Further Notice

- NEOPANAMX (New) Locks:     15.24m (50ft 00in) TFW - In Effect Until Further Notice

- The level of Gatun lake is currently at 88.27ft

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Correspondents C Fernie update 13 October 2020

The total number of cases stands at 120,802 since the start of the pandemic and the death toll stands at approx 2,502.

There has been a rise in cases per week since the country started reopening

commerce and other activities.  There remain restrictions of movement with

evening curfews and lockdown on Sundays.

Airports reopened 12 October 2020 and international flights resumed. It is expected the resumption of flights to be gradual. There are restrictions on international travelers entering Panama such as the need for Covid-19 tests 48 hours prior arrival. People traveling to Panama should check requirements before embarking.

**PANAMA CANAL**

The waiting time for non-booked vessels is currently at 7-8 days Southbound

and 7 days Northbound.

The Prebooking system continues to be utilized at 100% with Customers taking

2nd period slots as many as 14 days in advance or even more (when/if possible).

The Booking AUCTION still remains an option for ONE slot. The latest winning

bids as follows:

Oct 8th: $85,400/Oct 9th: $68,300/Oct 10th: $70,100/Oct 11th: $150,600/Oct

12th: $102,200/Oct 13th: $200,100

The waiting time for Panamax-Plus vessels is approx 8 days. This is still subject to changes as the PCA will continue prioritizing the Neopanamax vessels over Panamax-Plus for the use of the NEW Locks.

- Reminder that Panamax-Plus vessels can NOT prebook their transit via the NEW

locks.

The maximum authorized drafts currently as follows:

- PANAMAX (Old) Locks:          12.04m (39ft 06in) TFW - Until Further Notice

- NEOPANAMX (New) Locks:   15.24m (50ft 00in) TFW - Until Further Notice

The level of Gatun lake is currently at 86.67 ft

- Panama Canal Authority has published the Gatun Lake Water Levels dashboard with the 60 days projection. The tool can be used as reference to estimate the variable component of the portion of the canal tolls, ranging from a minimum of 1% up to a maximum of 10 %. You can access the tool at the following link:

<http://www.pancanal.com/eng/h2o/index.html>

From: Correspondents C.Fernie & Co S.A. September 9th 2020

The Ministry of Health report the total number of confirmed cases now at approx 98,407 of which 70,751 have recovered and 2,107 deaths

- The International airport remains closed and commercial flights suspended

   until Sept 22nd, and this is still subject to changes. Presently only humanitarian

   flights are departing Panama and some inbound flights restricted to repatriate

   stranded Panamanian citizens. There are also some inbound flights only for

   passengers connecting to an oncarrying flight with passengers not allowed

   to leave the airport.

- Some crew changes are allowed via humanitarian flights provided certain

   protocols and documentation are received well in advance in order to be presented

   to the local Panama Maritime Authorities & Ministry of Health for their review and

   approval. If you have any queries on these procedures just let us know.

- It is still generally not allowed for ship personnel to land ashore with the exception

   of urgent medical attention in which case permission has to be requested to the

   Ministry of health.

- Launch services are in operation and surveyors and other ship service companies

   are able to operate.

- Port Terminals and the Panama Canal continue to operate normally.

- As covid-19 cases appear reduced the last few weeks, there has been a gradual

  opening of local commerce and movement restrictions. Provided that the situation

  does not deteriorate it is expected that next week will see the elimination of local

  movement restrictions except for night time curfew and total lockdown on

  Sundays except for persons whose nature of work (such as shipping) require

  their attendance in which case special passes are provided.

- We shall continue to keep you updated with further developments as conditions

   here improve and further measures are implemented and restrictions lifted.

PANAMA CANAL

The Panama Canal Authority continue to limit the max number of daily transit to

approx 28 ships/day and still no information for how long they intend to continue with

these measures.

Delays holding at approx 5 days.

Expect reach 7-8 days soon

The Prebooking system continues to be heavily utilized with 2nd period slots still

being taken quickly.

The maximum authorized drafts currently as follows:

- PANAMAX (Old) Locks:             12.04m (39ft 06in) TFW - In Effect Until Further Notice

- NEOPANAMX (New) Locks:     14.94m (49ft 00in) TFW - In Effect Until Further Notice

The level of Gatun lake is currently at 85.69t

- Panama Canal Authority has published the Gatun Lake Water Levels dashboard

  with the 60 days projection. The tool can be used as reference to estimate the

  variable component of the portion of the canal tolls, ranging from a minimum of 1%

  up to to a maximum of 10 %. You can access the tool at the following link:

<http://www.pancanal.com/eng/h2o/index.html>

We will keep you informed of any information of relevance.

Best regards

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Update 17 July from correspondents Fernie

- Civil Aeronautical Authority of Panama (AAC), in conjunction with the Ministry of

  Health, announced that, after evaluation of the current situation in Panama, they

  have decided to further extend the closure of the   airport and suspension of all

  international flights for a further 30 days, until July 22nd. However, it is expected

  that this will be extended.

- Humanitarian/chartered flights are still being arranged between local embassies

  and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

- Crew changes and attendance by overseas technicians or superintendent remains

  suspended until further notice. We do not expect restrictions on crew changes to

  be lifted before August.

- We shall continue to keep you updated with further developments as conditions

  here improve and further measures are implemented or restrictions lifted.

PANAMA CANAL

Based on arrivals and reduced demand for Prebooking transits, the waiting time for

non-booked vessels remain At 2 days for Northbound transits while Southbound

transits have increased to approx 3 days.

The maximum authorized drafts currently as follows:

- PANAMAX (Old) Locks:             12.04m (39ft 06in) TFW - In Effect Until Further Notice

- NEOPANAMX (New) Locks:     14.33m (47ft 00in) TFW - In Effect Until Further Notice

It continues to rain periodically but we are still well below the average for this time

of year.

The level of Gatun lake is currently at 83.87 ft

- Panama Canal Authority has published the Gatun Lake Water Levels dashboard

  with the 60 days projection. The tool can be used as reference to estimate the

  variable component of the portion of the canal tolls, ranging from a minimum of 1%

  up to to a maximum of 10 %. You can access the tool at the following link:

<http://www.pancanal.com/eng/h2o/index.html>

Update 31 March from correspondents Fernie

The Government extended the complete 24hr curfew (lockdown) limiting movement even further. Exceptions remain for basic public services, some services to vessels, Terminal and Panama Canal operations which continue uninterrupted. All other measures remain in place as listed in our earlier circular.

As of last night the number of confirmed cases of Covid-19 in Panama was

u to 1,075 and 26 deaths.

Our personnel continue to work from home with minimal staff in office. We

continue to attend normally however appreciate your patience as arrangements

such as surveyors can take longer or limited due to restrictions of movement

and health protocols.

Update 25 March from Correspondents Fernie

The President of Panama announced Executive Decree 504 coming into effect at 0501 25 March 2020, by which a complete mandatory 24hr curfew  nationwide is implemented. Exceptions remain for basic public services, some services to vessels, Terminal and Panama Canal operations which continue uninterrupted. All other measures remain in place as listed in our circular of 24 March.

Our personnel continue to work from home with minimal staff in office. We

continue to attend normally however appreciate your patience as arrangements

such as surveyors can take longer or limited due to restrictions of movement

and health protocols.

Best regards

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**Update 24 March 2020 from correspondents Fernie**

- The number of confirmed cases of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Panama

   has increased to 345.

- A nationwide curfew has been extended from 1700 hrs to 0500 hrs is in effect

  until further notice. The government is still considering taking more drastic

  measures which includes the possibility of a 24hr curfew.

- Local police are deployed with roadblocks to enforce the "stay at home" policy.

- The health authorities have restricted travel between the provinces affecting

   mainly the Panama and Colon provinces.

- All international flights are suspended for at least 30 days.

- There is an ordered temporary shutdown of all companies and commercial

  establishments nationwide excepting those involved in basic services, shipping,

  Terminals and the Panama Canal.

- Local services, personnel, deliveries etc are still being allowed on board vessels

  at this time.

- Our offices are working with a skeleton staff with personnel working from home.

  Our attendance is not interrupted but is restricted on basis of measures taken

  by officials.

- Port cargo Terminals and the Panama Canal continue to operate.

Conditions change daily and we expect further measures to be implemented in the coming days that could impact on the maritime industry in Panama.

Best regards

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**Update 17 March 2020 from correspondents Fernie**

- The number of confirmed cases of the Coronavirus (COVID-19) in Panama has increased to 69.

- Air travel to and from Europe and Asia remain suspended. This has caused

  problems for ship personnel who land ashore for medical reasons and once fit

  to fly are unable to be repatriated until flight restrictions are lifted.

- As of 00:001hrs only Panamanian citizens and/or residents are allowed to enter

  the country.

- The Maritime Courts have suspended all terms and operations limited to matters

   of urgency including ship arrests.

- Only local personnel, suppliers, surveyors etc are allowed to board vessels at the

  anchorages and Terminals. It is not known at present when/if this will change.

- Our offices are working with a skeleton staff with personnel working from home.

  Our attendance is not interrupted but may be to some extent restricted depending

  on future measures taken by officials.

- The Panama Canal continues to operate normally.

Conditions here continue to change daily and it should be expected that further

measures may be implemented in the coming days or near future which could

have an impact on the maritime industry in Panama.

**13 March 2020 Update**

Correspondents Fernie advise as follows: “all embarkation/disembarkation of foreign persons at Panama is suspended until further advised. This has caused an enormous amount of issues for the crew movements in process, in flight and the cruise ships arriving over the weekend.”

See below an extract of a free translation of Resolution 305 from the Panama Ministry of Health

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**F R E E        R O U G H      T R A N S L A T I O N**

**RESOLUTION No. 305**

March 12, 2020

That establishes sanitary measures in the embarkation and disembarkation of cruise ships, mini cruises, deep draft ships, international passenger transport such as yachts, mega yachts and yachts for commercial use or any other maritime vessel, in ports, berths, anchorage areas and marinas of the National Territory

THE MINISTER OF HEALTH in use of its legal powers

That, by virtue of the foregoing, the Ministry of Health as a measure to prevent and control Coronavirus disease (CoViD-19), and given the declarations of this disease Pandemic by the World Health Organization WHO / PAHO, considers it necessary establish measures in national ports, berths and marinas, in order to mitigate the disease in the National Territory, therefore

**RESOLVES:**

**Article One:** TEMPORARILY SUSPENDING the embarkation and disembarkation of cruise ships, mini cruises, deep draft ships, international passenger transportation such as yachts, mega yachts and yachts for commercial use or any other maritime vessel, in ports, berths, anchorage areas and marinas of the National Territory.

People on vessels that require docking will have to be kept under observation and surveillance for a period of not less than fourteen (14) calendar days, in which case it will be evaluated upon completing this period, and it will be verified if there is no risk at the discretion of the Health.

**Second Article:** In the Port Operations at the national level that are related to commercial ships of international service that arrive at the ports and / or anchorage areas, only personnel whose function is indispensable for the operation will be allowed to go on board, in which cases They must address in compliance with sanitary measures. If boarding or disembarking is required for these same needs, your entry will be subject to the guidelines of the Ministry of Health.

**Third Article:** Violation of the provisions of this measure will be sanctioned in accordance with the provisions of Law 40 of November 16, 2006, which modifies articles of Law 66 of November 10, 1947 and Law 38 of July 31. of 2000, without prejudice to other corresponding penal and civil sanctions.

Article Four: This Resolution will enter into force upon its promulgation.

**COMMUNICATE AND COMPLY,**

ROSARIO E. TURNER M.

Minister of Health

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**Luis Arcia** , P&I Department

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