**PANAMA SAFEGUARDS SEAFARERS’ RIGHTS DURING THIS WORLD HEALTH CRISIS**

The Panama Maritime Authority (AMP) wants to emphasize that the measures adopted through MMN-003-2020 Coronavirus and Seafarers Employment Agreement and Certificates, on the extension of employment agreements for seafarers were implemented to safeguard their rights and working conditions during this health crisis (COVID-19).

Panama has, responsibly, taken various actions with the purpose of establishing mechanisms, procedures, instructions, administrative measures and communications, which serve as a basis to minimize the risks and impact of the health crisis on seafarers, particularly with regards to the impossibility of replacing crews onboard ships, as well as in the maritime industry, within the protocols established by international organizations, including the declarations and guidelines issued by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the World Health Organization (WHO) regarding the worldwide health emergency created by the COVID-19 pandemic.

The seafarers’ welfare is and will continue to be a priority for the Panama Maritime Authority. The AMP has widely demonstrated its compliance with the modalities for repatriation, disembarkation and embarkation of crew members, which includes seven (7) different modalities through which, since the end of March 2020 to date, it has been possible for approximately 4,341 people (between passengers and crews) of various nationalities, including Panamanians onboard passenger, cargo, fishing and yacht ships, to return to their homes safely. In addition, some 20 humanitarian flights have been coordinated with other Government institutions (more details see note at the end of the press release).

The Panama Maritime Administration, like most ship registries worldwide, has expressed its concerns related to the special cases where crew members may have to continue their service more than 12 months due to international traveling restrictions imposed by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. The Panama Maritime Authority may grant extensions of the SEA under exemptional circumstances (force majeure) and under revision on a case by case basis.

It is important to underline that the work carried out by the Panama Maritime Authority (AMP) has been recognized and praised by international organizations such as the IMO and various diplomatic missions established in Panama who have publicly praised Panama’s efforts to facilitate crew changes while urging all countries to fully comply with their obligations regarding crew changes, repatriation and access to medical care, encouraging the Republic of Panama to share its best practices with other nations since Panama was one of the first countries to provide humanitarian aid in March 2020 in its territory since each State is sovereign in its decision-making with regards to the sanitary measures adopted during this crisis caused by COVID-19.

Given the above and with the intention of the measures established in MMN-003-2020 to prevail, the Panama Maritime Authority’s Administration has proceeded to modify the Marine Merchant Notice to strengthen and reinforce its initial purpose, which has always been and will continue to be the protection of seafarers, through the formal extension of employment agreements for seafarers, complying with the requirements established by the Panama Administration, such as the express consent of both parties (seafarers and ship owners) and with the purpose to ensure that the crew is protected under a legal figure in which the conditions of employment are maintained and the labor benefits of seafarers are guaranteed, like payment of their wages, annual paid vacations, overtime pay, medical attention on board and on land, their repatriation, among others, as established by the MLC 2006, which are the vital elements at the moment.

Panama works hard and tirelessly for its 318,000 seafarers onboard more than 8,000 ships that are registered under Panama’s Flag, through the execution of actions that have been fully verified nationally and internationally, and which have also been reinforced during this time of crisis as the Declaration of the Republic of Panama in support of the Recommended Framework of Protocols issued by the IMO on safe crew changes due to COVID-19 through Circular No. 4204 / add14 (May 7, 2020), the Declaration in support of the decision of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to designate seafarers as “Key Workers” (May 17, 2020) and the adoption of Merchant Marine Notice No. 003-2020, through which seafarers' measures are adopted to be applied during the COVID-19 pandemic.

It should be noted that Panama shares the same adversities than other Ship Registries face, such as worldwide airport restrictions and sanitary fences that hinder crew changes.

Likewise, the Panama Maritime Administration invites all companies including those not having vessels in its fleet to consider Panama as a crew change hub. Panama has all the protocols in place providing helps to the seafarers need.

For more details please see <https://amp.gob.pa/crew-change-during-covid-19/>

Finally, Panama invites other countries to consider the actions implemented and join efforts for the benefit of all seafarers.

The Panamanian Maritime Administration will remain vigilant that the seafarers’ rights are fulfilled.

Final Note: Our Administration has accomplished,

* Crew Exchange in passenger, cargo, fishing vessels, and yacht, following all protocols on each the cases,
* Seven (7) modalities established for crew exchanged,
* 4,341 crew members & passengers, disembarked,
* 271 embarked crew members from more than 50 nationalities successfully repatriated

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Vessel** | **Amount of Crew Members / Passenger Disembarkation** | **Date** | **Disembarkations’ Nationalities** | **Embarkation** |
| MONARCH | 88 Crew Members | 10/05/2020 | Honduras, El Salvador, Guatemala |  |
| 51 Crew Members | 19/03/2020 |  |
| MONARCH | 2600 Passengers | 19/03/2020 | Panama, Colombia, Venezuela |  |
| SOLOMON SAPPHIRE | 10 Crew Members | 12/05/2020 | Solomon Islands |  |
| SOLOMON TOPAZ | 11 Crew Members | 12/05/2020 | Solomon Islands |  |
| MARCO POLO | 1 Crew Members | 12/05/2020 | Belgium |  |
| SILVER EXPLORER | 4 Crew Members | 20/05/2020 | Mexico, UK, United States, Argentina, Germany, Ukraine |  |
| 1 Crew Members | 19/05/2020 |  |
| 4 Crew Members | 26/05/2020 |  |
| 1 Crew Members | 28/05/2020 |  |
| CARNIVAL MIRACLE | 1 Crew Members | 20/05/2020 | United States, Albania, Macedonia, Zimbabwe, South Africa, Chile, Estonia, Mexico, Italy, Romania, Ukraine, Croatia, Bosnia. |  |
| 4 Crew Members | 25/05/2020 |  |
| 8 Crew Members | 27/05/2020 |  |
| 6 Crew Members | 30/05/2020 |  |
| 1 Crew Members | 31/05/2020 |  |
| YATCH AVE MARÍA | 11 Passengers | 19/03/2020 | Australia, Irlanda, Germany |  |
| YATCH MARIGOT-OHANA (New Zeland) | 4 Passengers | 01/04/2020 | New Zeland, UK, Germany |  |
| YATE PATEA (New Zeland) | 3 Passengers | 01/04/2020 | New Zeland |  |
| Request for Various Yachts (Embassy of Canada) | 5 Passengers | 24/03/2020 | Canada |  |
| Request for Various Yachts (Embassy of Germany) | 4 Passengers | 23/03/2020 | Germany |  |
| Carnival Imagination to Carnival Miracle | 31 Crew Members | 18/05/2020 | India, South Africa, Trinidad and Tobago, Portugal, Italy, the Philippines, Romania, Peru, Ukraine, Indonesia |  |
| Carnival Inspiration to Carnival Miracle | 36 Crew Members | 18/05/2020 | Croatia, Bosnia, India, UK, Mexico, Philippines, Italy, Estonia, Myanmar, Peru, Thailand, Indonesia |  |
| Silver Muse to Silver Explorer | 16 Crew Members | 19/05/2020 | Serbia, Italy, Egypt, Argentina, Macedonia, Poland, Tunisia, Morocco, Ukraine, Brazil |  |
| Zaandam to Rotterdam | 798 Passengers | 27/03/2020 | Argentina, Austria, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Lithuania, Malaysia, Mexico, Holland, New Zeland, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, UK, United States |  |
| MS MARINA | 2 Passengers | 18/03/2020 | Panama |  |
| 6 Crew Members | 06/06/2020 |
| N DISCOVERY | 1 Crew Members | 11/04/2020 | Panama |  |
| Rhapsody of the Seas | 36 Crew Members | 26/05/2020 | Panama |  |
| 7 Crew Members | 9/06/2020 | Panama | 3 CM |
| Caribbean Princess | 25 Crew Members | 28/05/2020 | Panama |  |
| Transshipment Carnival Miracle y Carnival Glory | 91 Crew Members | 11/06/2020 | Philippines, India, Indonesia, Myanmar |  |
| USS Laramie | 19 Crew Members | 10/06/2020 | United States | 20 CM |
| Windsurf y Windstar | 36 Crew Members | 21/06/2020 |  |  |
| PTI Sextans | 10 Crew Members | 22/06/2020 | Philippines, Croacia Bulgaria | 10 CM |
| 5 Crew Members | 23/06/2020 | 10 CM |
| Grand Princess | 3 Crew Members | 23/06/2020 | European Union |  |
| 24 Crew Members | 25/06/2020 |
| Seaborn Sojourn | 5 Crew Members | 23/06/2020 | European Union |  |
| 12 Crew Members | 25/06/2020 |
| Oosterdam | 12 Crew Members | 23/06/2020 | European Union |  |
| 9 Crew Members | 25/06/2020 |
| Carnival Corporation PLC (Charter Flight) | 296 Crew Members | 24/06/2020 |  |  |
|  | 238 CM (25/06/2020) |
| Koningsdam | 21 Crew Members | 25/06/2020 |  |  |
| Star Princess | 22 Crew Members | 25/06/2020 |  |  |
| **Total** | **4,341** |  |  | **271** |