

NOTICE TO MARINERS

No4 – 2020

PORT OF HEYSHAM

PILOT EMBARKATION PRECAUTIONARY MEASURES

Following the outbreak of the coronavirus COVID-19, the UK Department for Transport, in consultation with Public Health England, has issued updates regarding the virus and guidelines for the steps to be taken necessary to limit the spread of the virus (click [HERE](#)). Further useful advice for vessel operators has been issued by The EU HEALTHY GATEWAYS Joint Action (click [HERE](#)).

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that in support of those guidelines, a set of Pilot Embarkation Precautionary Measures have been developed for the embarkation of pilots and subsequent vessel transits. These Pilot Embarkation Precautionary Measures should be implemented by all vessels that do not have on board any suspected cases of COVID-19.

Responsibility for carrying out the Pilot Embarkation Precautionary Measures rests with the vessel's master assisted by the shipowner and local ship agent as appropriate.

Pilot Embarkation Precautionary Measures

- Prior to pilot embarkation, the pilot assigned to the vessel will establish contact with the vessel by the most appropriate means (e.g. via VHF when on board the pilot launch) and request confirmation that there are no suspected COVID-19 cases on board. This confirmation is in addition to any Maritime Declaration of Health submission that may be required by the Port Health Authority or the notification and confirmation procedures detailed in other applicable Notices to Mariners.

- Immediately prior to pilot embarkation, all surfaces and equipment in the wheelhouse, including on the bridge wings, that the pilot may touch must be cleaned with a suitable cleaning solution.
- All crew at the embarkation point (either pilot ladder or accommodation ladder etc.) must wear suitable PPE.
- The crew member assigned to escort the pilot from the embarkation point to the wheelhouse must wear suitable PPE.
- Where possible, the route from the embarkation point to the wheelhouse should be via the open deck, as opposed to within enclosed spaces, and be clear of accommodation ventilation unit exhausts.
- As far as it would not prejudice the normal operation of the vessel, non-essential crew and passengers should be kept clear of the route from the embarkation point to the wheelhouse for at least one hour prior to and during pilot embarkation, especially where the route passes through enclosed spaces.
- The wheelhouse, where possible, should remain well ventilated via the opening of external doors or windows. If this is not practicable, owing to the design of the vessel, its systems or the prevailing conditions, ventilation units should be adjusted to supply outside air and air recirculation should not take place.
- The wheelhouse must be cleared of all crew not essential to the navigation of the vessel, and all crew members present must wear appropriate PPE.
- Unless necessary for the safety of the pilot (e.g. during the embarkation process), crew or vessel, the pilot and crew should remain at least 2m apart.
- The pilot will not sign documentation; a crew member recording the pilot's name on the relevant documentation, in lieu of the pilot's signature, must suffice. The pilot will apply a corresponding procedure for the master's signature on the pilot's passage plan.
- Similar precautions must be taken during disembarkation of the pilot either ashore or to the pilot launch.

If a vessel is unable to comply with any of the Pilot Embarkation Precautionary Measures, the master must advise Heysham Port Control (VHF Ch.14) without delay (and in advance of the pilot embarkation), and this information will be relayed to the pilot prior to their arrival at the vessel.

Failure to comply with the Pilot Embarkation Precautionary Measures may result in pilot embarkation being delayed or cancelled.

If a report of a suspected case of COVID-19 on board a vessel is received, the pilot embarkation will be cancelled pending the receipt of specific guidance on the matter from the Port Health Authority.

Furthermore, masters of vessels are advised that if the pilot assigned to the vessel reports at any time prior to embarkation they have any symptoms of COVID-19, reasonable endeavours will be made to assign a replacement pilot to the vessel for the planned embarkation time. However, depending upon the timing of the advice and the prevailing demand for pilots, a replacement pilot may not be available; in which case, the pilotage order will be cancelled, and the local agent will be required to resubmit the pilotage order for a later time.

This Notice may be amended at any time as revised guidance regarding the COVID-19 pandemic is issued by the relevant authorities.