

CONSIDERATIONS FOR CRUISE VESSELS

Passenger (cruise) vessels do not carry cargo, so they don't directly impact the supply chain. However, it is still important to consider the movement of cruise vessels when COVID-19 is present on board, so they don't impact the next cruise vessel's arrival into the port's berths, or subsequent arrivals of cargo vessels (causing indirect impacts to the supply chain).

This is particularly important where ports may not have specific cruise vessel berths and share their infrastructure and berths with cargo vessels. A cruise vessel which remains at a berth for any extended period of time past its booking, would have a significant impact on the operator, the port, and any subsequent cruise or cargo vessel arrivals into that berth.

Where a cruise vessel has COVID-19 on board, regardless of the numbers, the vessel will be granted pratique unless there is some other quarantinable disease on board.

Positive passengers (and their household contacts) must isolate in their cabin in accordance with domestic settings and the COVID-19 Protection Framework. (according to legislation at the time of writing).

While Medical Officers of Health (MOoH) and Health Protection Officers (HPO) continue to hold powers under the Health Act 1956 for the purpose of protecting public health, domestic settings will be used in the first instance. In the event that powers under the Health Act are to be used, further guidance will be provided to those responding to the outbreak by the appropriate agencies.

Application to cruise of the roles and responsibilities overview

In the event that a vessel reports cases of COVID-19 on board that need to be managed (in any capacity), the roles and responsibilities overview in the Vessel Management Framework (VMF) directly apply to cruise. The responsibilities, applicable legislation, and decision-making authority of each border agency will remain the same.

Application of the process map

In the instance a cruise vessel has any reported cases on board that need to be managed in any capacity, the process map in the VMF is still largely applicable. While there may be some variations to the process due to the nature of the cargo (passengers), largely, the process, information flow and decision-making authority will remain the same. The process map may be useful in the following situations:

- Critically unwell passengers or crew need to be removed from the vessel
- Crew essential to manning of the vessel test positive (for example, bridge crew)
- The vessel needs to be moved from the berth to an anchorage or to depart NZT.

Application of the cargo operations template

While cruise vessels do not carry cargo for import or export, there are still many elements of their operation which is universal with a cargo vessel and can still apply in a cruise vessel context. These are:

- Safety meeting, checklist, cargo papers
- Pilotage
- Handling of mooring lines and garbage
- Vessel arrival to berth, sanitation of high touch surfaces
- Emergencies
- Provisioning of vessel supplies
- Bunkering
- Communication of crew and worker movements (if NZ workers need to board and perform necessary tasks)
- Disposal of PPE

The benefit of the cargo operations template is that it relies largely on the same risk management principles throughout. At a high level, these are:

- Enhanced physical distancing
- Wearing PPE and following strict IPC protocols
- Coordinated movements of workers and crew

In a normal context (cargo vessels) these principles apply to the interactions between crew and stevedores. It is possible they could be applied during passenger processing to some degree, or with some variation. For example, instead of enhanced physical distancing they use perspex barriers. They could also be incorporated into the planning aspects of passenger flow and movement in the port environment, however due to the variation in port layouts, this would need to be planned at a regional level and would be best determined by the port company, transport providers, National Public Health Service (formally PHU) and cruise lines.

Application of the pilotage template

If the positive cases are manning crew, or bridge crew, the pilotage template is again, still useful, however some extra considerations may apply related to minimum manning numbers. These are covered in the VMF pilotage template.

Considerations for unique locations or operations:

1. *Where pilots may need to spend extended time on board (such as in Fiordland).*
 - a. In this instance the pilotage template would not be as applicable as it would not be reasonably practicable to expect the pilot to be on a bridge wing for three days. However, there are practices a PCBU could use to mitigate risks to their worker, such as requesting manning/bridge crew to return negative RAT prior to the pilot boarding, requesting separate eating quarters to crew, etc. However this level of risk mitigation is best determined by the PCBU.

2. *Where the vessels anchor but do not berth (such as Opua)*

- a. In this situation passengers are taken to shore by tender, and it may not be as easy to apply the VMF. However, Opua is not a first port of call for many cruises so it's likely that any issues on board will have been detected or managed before they arrive at this location.

Limitations of the VMF for cruise

- a. It does not cover *how to* conduct passenger disembarkation en-masse if they are needed (just provides a process for collaborative decision making and communication). However, there are likely learnings from overseas, or processes that have been used in the last three years that can be applied (for example, processes for disembarking sick cargo crew, taking people to/from self-isolation, or during crew changes).
- b. It does not provide thresholds to determine what constitutes an outbreak. This may not be necessary. However, it will also depend on regional capacity and what is going on in the community at the time.
- c. The current version, in its entirety, does not reflect the recent Director General exemption that has been granted for all vessels arriving in New Zealand. The effect of the exemption is that COVID-19 will no longer be grounds for pratique to be withheld, meaning pratique will only be withheld if another quarantinable infectious disease is onboard a vessel. A copy of that exemption can be found here: <https://gazette.govt.nz/notice/id/2022-go3129>

