



# HONG KONG LINER SHIPPING ASSOCIATION

## 香港定期班輪協會

27 January 2022

The Hon Mr. John Lee Ka-Chiu, SBS, PDSM, JP  
Chief Secretary for Administration  
Hong Kong Government

### **RE: Arrangement for COVID-affected Sea Crew**

Dear Mr. Lee,

The Hong Kong Liner Shipping Association wish to express our support for the suggestion for the COVID-19 arrangements of aircrew put forward by the Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce in their letter to you dated 21 January 2022. The HKLSA believes that this recommendation from the HKGCC is sensible and practical, while protecting Hong Kong's fight against spread of COVID-19 cases, as well as Hong Kong's vital link to global trade.

The Hong Kong Liner Shipping Association would recommend a lateral step of applying exact same arrangement for sea crew on board a vessel arriving in Hong Kong with infected COVID-19 seafarers on board.

At present, when a vessel arrives Hong Kong Port with a sea crew who has tested positive for COVID-19, Hong Kong Government requires the entire vessel including all her crew to remain in quarantine for a period of no less than 21 days – even if the remaining crew test negative. In the case of maritime liner trade, this puts a tremendous burden on an already strained global supply chain. The vessel will have tonnes of cargo on board that are destined for subsequent port calls after Hong Kong. All those subsequent deliveries will be halted for at least 21 days, causing untold strain on importers. Exporters scheduled to load their cargo on this same vessel at subsequent port calls will also find their schedule dramatically affected. In this current time of significantly tight space, finding slots on other vessels calling those subsequent ports is not easy. The financial strain on the shipping companies who are trying to keep global supply chains running is enormous, as alternate arrangements need to be made, supplies and provisions for crew need to be amended, and the daily charter hire rates for the detained vessel (upwards of HK\$1 million per day) is incurred while the vessel sits anchored in Hong Kong waters.

While this current arrangement serves no additional safeguard against further infections in Hong Kong, it, conversely, puts increases safety concern of Hong Kong residents. By detaining the vessel and the crew in Hong Kong waters, that vessel and those crew will need to be attended to in the 21 day waiting period. This will require physical interaction with maritime authorities, anchorage, pilotage, and supplies/provisions staff where the risk of cross-infection is possible. All this could be avoided if the vessel and her crew were allowed to depart Hong Kong waters

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Secretaries: Commercial Management Ltd.

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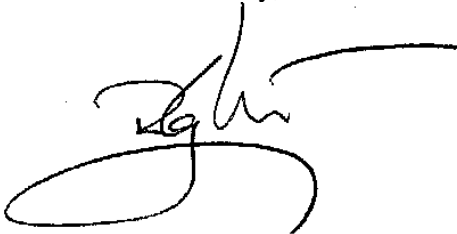
immediately (of course, provided that all remaining staff COVID test results are returned negative).

Please note that the members of our HKLSA have experienced numerous occasions in the past year where their vessels and crew have had to remain detained in Hong Kong for the required 21 days. The strain on the shipping lines, on Hong Kong residents, and on the global supply chain is tremendous. Same time, the objective of keeping Hong Kong residents safe from further COVID infection is not being aided from these measures.

On this basis, the Hong Kong Liner Shipping Association would seek your kind attention to amend Hong Kong quarantine requirements to allow for the immediate departure of any vessel and all her crew who return negative COVID tests, should a vessel arrive in Hong Kong port (or require transit through Hong Kong waters without calling Hong Kong Port) where a crew tests positive to COVID.

We look forward to your supportive response to this request. Should you require any further clarification or information on this topic, please know that we remain at your disposal.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Roberto Giannetta', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Roberto Giannetta  
Chairman  
Hong Kong Liner Shipping Association

cc: Hon. Prof. Sophia Chan Siu-chee, Secretary, Food and Health Bureau  
Hon. Frank Chan Fan, Secretary, Transport and Housing Bureau  
Hon. Frankie Yick Chi-ming, Transport Constituency representative, LegCo  
Mr. Peter Wong, Chairman, Hong Kong General Chamber of Commerce