

**COVID-19 PROTOCOL ON
CREW CHANGE AND REPATRIATION
OF SEAFARERS**

**SINGAPORE CREW CHANGE GUIDEBOOK
(Dated 7 May 2021)**

In collaboration with and supported by:

Part of:



***Acknowledgement: This document is prepared by Wilhelmsen Ships Service AS, drawing upon feedback from the main SGCCWG

PREFACE

This revised Guidebook focuses on the various stages of crew change administration, and the recommended steps following the ICS issued Framework of Crew Change Protocol and based on the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) issued Port Marine Circular (PMC) 14 of 2021 **This Guidebook supersedes the version dated 1 April 2021.**

The Singapore Crew Change Workgroup (SGCCWG) coordinates efforts in Singapore for Crew Change. The SGCCWG is also connected to the larger global Crew Change Taskforce led by the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), providing an exchange of updated information regarding changing developments around respective international government restrictions, on air-travel, health advisories on the pandemic, which impact crew change.

The main SGCCWG consists of the following representations, led by the Singapore Shipping Association (SSA):

- **Industry**
International Maritime Employers' Council (IMEC)
Singapore Shipping Association (SSA)
- **Union**
Singapore Maritime Officers' Union (SMOU)
Singapore Organisation of Seamen (SOS)
- **Government**
Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA)

The SGCCWG strives to provide periodic updates on developments in Singapore to the larger community of Ship Owners, Managers, Agents and Crewing/Manning companies, receiving relevant inputs that are considered and implemented in this document.

A further development team within the SGCCWG was formed pulling resources from experienced ship managers. The members in this team are:

- Singapore Shipping Association
- Synergy Marine Group
- Western Shipping and IMEC board member representative
- Wilhelmsen Ships Service AS

ENHANCEMENTS TO CREW CHANGE FOR CARGO SHIPS IN THE PORT OF SINGAPORE

MPA will continue consider the following circumstances for crew change applications:

- Crew whose employment contract has expired;
- Additional crew on board whose sign-off would not affect the safe manning of the ship;
- Change of crew due to the sale or purchase of ship;
- Personnel who are not part of the ship's crew such as superintendents and service engineers;
- Compassionate grounds e.g. death of family member; or
- The crew is no longer medically fit to work onboard the ship

Updated Requirements in line with latest PMC issued.

Important reminder: Applications for crew change **must** be made at least **21 days**¹ in advance in line with the requirements of PMC 14 of 2021, by completing the online form at: www.mpa.gov.sg/web/portal/home/port-of-singapore/operations/crew-change or scan the QR code below.



<https://go.gov.sg/ship-crewchange>

Sign-on crew

- Meet-and-greet services are mandatory for sign-on crew arriving at Changi Airport, to escort the crew from the moment they disembark the plane to the point where they are handed over to the agent for the direct transfer to the ship or designated holding facility. Please read the mitigating factors and processes for sign-on crew.
- In general, all sign-on crew are required to serve 21-day Stay-Home-Notice (SHN) in the crew's originating country/region before departure to Singapore. Crew from specific low risk countries/regions will either no longer be required to serve the SHN or serve a shorter SHN of 7 days in the originating country/region prior to departure for Singapore. Please refer to ICA's website (<https://saftravel.ica.gov.sg/files/SHN-and-swab-summary.pdf>) (for the latest list of low risk countries/regions)
- While serving his/her SHN at his place of residence or holding facility, the crew should be completely isolated in a room with dedicated toilet with no interaction with others.
- The crew must have a negative result from a COVID-19 test (polymerase chain reaction (PCR) type) taken at a government-approached or ISO 15189-accredited testing facility not more than 72 hours prior to departure for Singapore.
- The crew must provide a fit-to-travel certificate not more than 24 hours prior to his/her departure to Singapore.
- The crew should only join his/her ship not more than two (2) days before the date of the ship's final departure from Singapore. For ships departing for sea trial and returning to Singapore, the date of departure for sea trial will not be considered the date of the ship's final departure.
- In addition, if a crew was previously diagnosed with COVID-19, he/she must submit documentary proof of his/her past diagnosis of COVID-19 based on the **earliest** positive PCR test result. The guidelines are as follows:

¹ Submission of crew change application must be made at least 7 days in advance, for crew who undergo the protocol under the [STAR CrewSafe accredited facilities](#)

- i. If the date of the positive PCR test result is **21 days or fewer before the date of arrival in Singapore**, he/she will **not** be approved for crew change.
 - ii. If the date of positive PCR test result is more than 21 days before the date of arrival in Singapore, he/she shall comply with the above sign-on requirements
- During the entire crew change process, especially during the journey to join the ship in Singapore, crew may be in groups of not more than five (5) persons and must remain in the same group. There must be no interactions between the groups.
 - For crew going directly onboard ships, he/she shall only arrive Singapore to join his/her ship not more than two (2) days before the ship's departure from Singapore. For crew staying at designated holding facilities, they may stay at these designated facilities for up to 72 hours.
 - Pre-departure PCR test should be carried out at government-approved or ISO 15189-accredited testing facilities

Sign-off crew

- The crew:
 - Must have not gone ashore in the last 21 days before disembarking the ship
 - Must have remained well and not had contact with any known or suspect case of COVID-19 throughout that period
 - Shall refrain from interacting with shore-based personnel at previous ports of call in the last 21 days
- Fit-to-travel certificate must be issued by a doctor in Singapore not more than 24 hours before disembarking the ship
- Tele-medicine consultations by Singapore Medical Council-fully registered doctors meeting the requirements in PMC 10 of 2021, are approved for issuance of the off-signing crews fit-to-travel certificate.
- Sign-off crew who requires COVID-19 pre-departure test (PDT) before being allowed to transit through or enter their destination country shall require to produce a negative PCR test result taken at the vessel's last port of call, before calling at Singapore provided no crew change has been carried out in the last 21 days before the vessel's last port of call.
- Please read the mitigating factors and processes for sign-off crew.

Crew change process for sign-on and sign-off in Singapore

- A safe and coordinated planning process, ensuring minimal contact between crew and staff of Designated Holding Facilities, transportation providers and launch services
- All aspects of the value chain taken into account including self-reporting of symptoms, so that any suspected infectious case is attended to early on. All suppliers vetted and audited for proper quarantine and emergency protocols

(A) Process for sign on crew



Sign on Crew in Port of Singapore – RACI Matrix

Sign On Crew in Port of Singapore - RACI Matrix

S/N	Category	Activity/ Task	MPA/MOT	Ship Manager	Ship Agent	Master	Designated Holding Facility Operator	Manning Agency	RACI Matrix
1	Country of Origin	Serving SHN COVID -19 Test report and Fit - for- travel documents	I	A	I			R	Responsible Owns the activity/task. Person working to achieve the task. Accountable To whom R is accountable. Who must sign off/approve on work before it is effective. No more than one A, but can be zero. The one ultimately answerable for the completion of deliverable or task, and the one who delegates the work to those responsible. <i>NOTE: One role can be both R and A.</i>
2	Singapore Airport	Meet & Greet and Immigration clearance	I	I	A & R				
3	Transit from Airport to Vessel and/or Designated Holding Facility	Transit from Airport to Holding Facility and Vessel with approved suppliers	I	I	A & R	I			
4	Holding Facility	Stay at Designated Holding Facility for Crew Member	I	I	I		A & R		
5	Arrival at vessel (joining)	Joining vessel (Sign on)	I	I	C	R			

Consulted Has information and/or capability necessary to complete the work

Informed Must be notified of results, but need not be consulted

Note: Sign On is confirmed when the following approval is obtained:
 (i) Approval from MPA for crew Sign On
 (ii) Valid visa issuance by Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA)
 (iii) Approval from National Environment Agency (NEA)

Figure 1.1

Process for Sign On Crew - Port of Singapore (Not using designated holding facility)

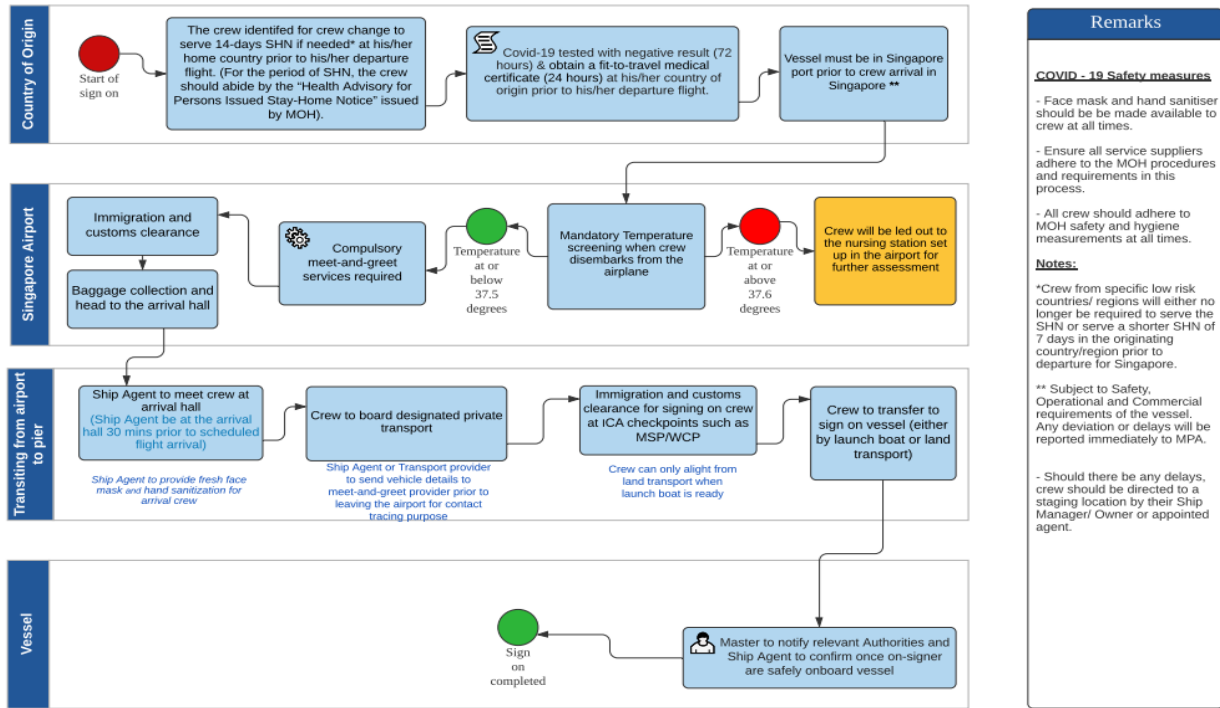


Figure 1.2

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Process for Sign On Crew - Port of Singapore, using MPA Dedicated Holding Facilities

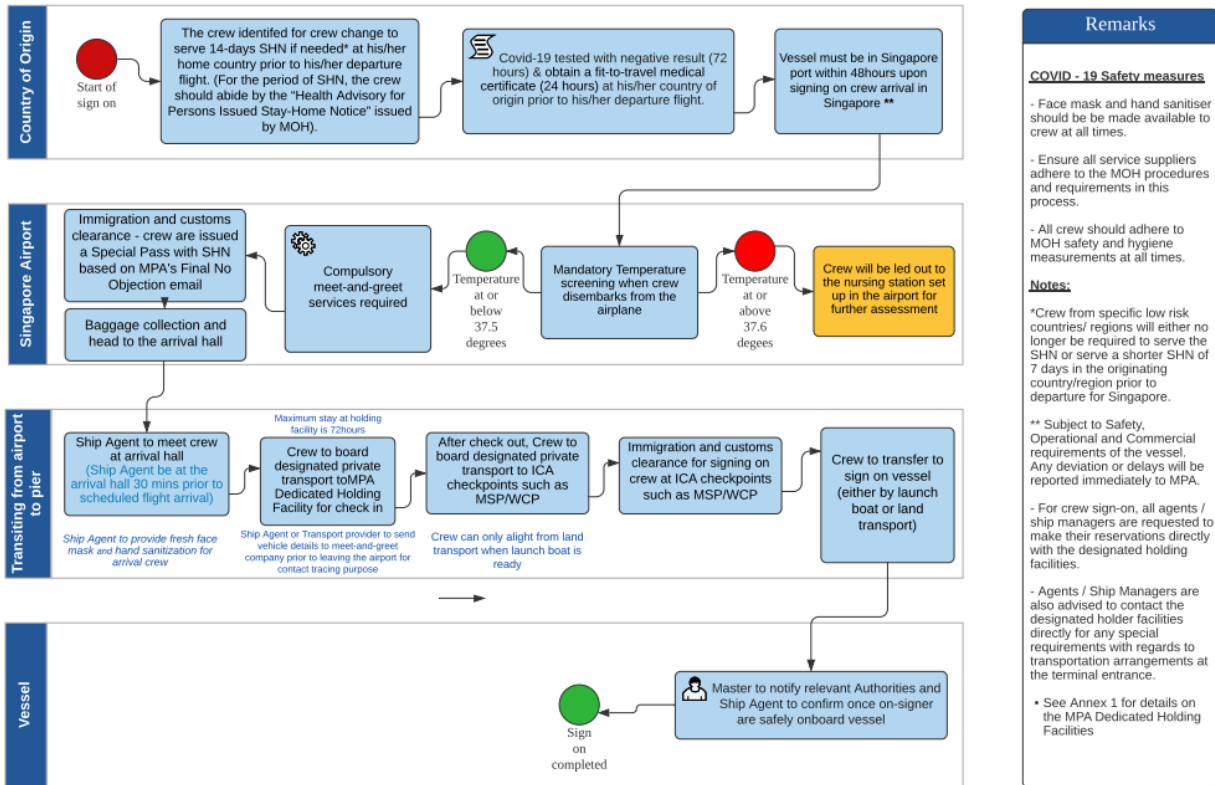


Figure 1.3

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To minimise the risk of importation and spread COVID-19 in Singapore, it is recommended that the crew is transferred directly between the vessel and the point of arrival/departure. Company may wish to take note of the following requirements:

Phase Descriptor	Check List	Mitigating Factor
<p>Sign-On Crew</p> <p>A</p>	<p>Crew must serve Stay-Home Notice (SHN)* at his/her home country prior to his/her departure flight to Singapore.</p> <p>*(For the period of SHN, the crew should abide by the “Health Advisory for Persons Issued Stay-Home Notice” issued by MOH).</p> <p>All visa requirements for Singapore must be followed. Countries that require visa to enter Singapore must take into consideration the application period of 10 days processing time that ICA needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crew shall take his/her temperature twice daily and keep a record. • Crew shall remain healthy throughout the 21-days SHN period. • Crew shall provide a declaration that he/she has complied with the above and provide the temperature records for verification. • Company shall, at the point of application, provide a declaration that the company shall ensure the crew’s compliance, including periodical checks on the crew during the SHN period. • Company shall provide details of the SHN such as the location and period of SHN, and how they will ensure compliance. 	<p>1) Confirmation that the crew has been in quarantine* for at least 21 days prior to entering Singapore and has been well throughout that period.</p> <p>2) Mandatory Temperature screening when crew disembarks from the plane</p> <p>3) If temperature is above 37.6 degree Celsius, he/she will be led out to the nursing station set up in the airport for further assessment</p> <p>4) Agent must be there in advance to meet the crew and transport direct to airport. The crew will produce the MPA approval letter to ICA and the crew will be escorted and be handed over to the agent. The agent will transport the crew to the ship in a private transport.”</p>
<p>B</p>	<p>Crew must be COVID-19 tested via PCR method with negative result at government-approved or ISO 15189-accredited testing facilities at his/her country of origin not more than 72 hours prior to his/her departure flight.</p> <p>The crew must also obtain a fit-to-travel medical certificate from doctors registered with the medical authorities at his/her country of origin not more than 24 hours prior to his/her departure flight.</p>	<p>5) Compulsory meet-and-greet services - to ensure proper hand-over of each arriving crew to transport company driver</p> <p>6) Meet-and-greet services to provide fresh face mask and hand sanitization for arrival crew upon arrival.</p>
<p>C</p>	<p>The vessel shall be in port prior the crew arrival Singapore.</p>	<p>7) Transport services to standby 30mins prior</p>
<p>D</p>	<p>Master to notify relevant Authority and agent to confirm once on-signer are safely onboard.</p>	

Phase Descriptor	Check List	Mitigating Factor
		<p>flight landing time to receive arriving crew</p> <p>8) Transportation safety measure:</p> <p>9) Hand sanitization process before boarding the vehicle.</p> <p>10) Reminder will be given that face mask should always worn in Singapore.</p>

(B) Process for sign off crew



Sign Off Crew in Port of Singapore – RACI Matrix

Sign Off Crew in Port of Singapore - RACI Matrix

S/N	Category	Activity/ Task	MPA/MOT	Ship Manager	Ship Agent	Master	Designated Holding Facility	Manning Agency	RACI Matrix
1	Vessel Arrival in Singapore	Flight booking	I	A & R	I	I		I	Responsible Owns the activity/task. Person working to achieve the task. Accountable To whom R is accountable. Who must sign off/approve on work before it is effective. No more than one A, but can be zero. The one ultimately answerable for the completion of deliverable or task, and the one who delegates the work to those responsible. <i>NOTE: One role can be both R and A.</i>
		Master statement and SEA	I	A	I	R		C	
		Singapore doctors issuance of Fit - for - travel	I	I	A & R	I			
2	Transit from Vessel to Airport and/or Designated Holding Facility	Transit from Vessel to Airport with approved suppliers	I	I	A & R	I			
3	Holding Facility	Stay at Designated Holding Facility for Crew Member	I	I	I		A & R		
4	Singapore Airport	Crew check- in and immigration clearance – with Chaperon	I	I	A & R	I		C	Consulted Has information and/or capability necessary to complete the work
5	Country of Destination	Crew arrives at destination		A				R	Informed Must be notified of results, but need not be consulted

Note: Sign Off is confirmed when the following approval is obtained:
 (i) Approval from MPA for crew Sign Off
 (ii) Valid visa issuance by Immigration & Checkpoints Authority (ICA)
 (iii) Approval from National Environment Agency (NEA)

Figure 2.1

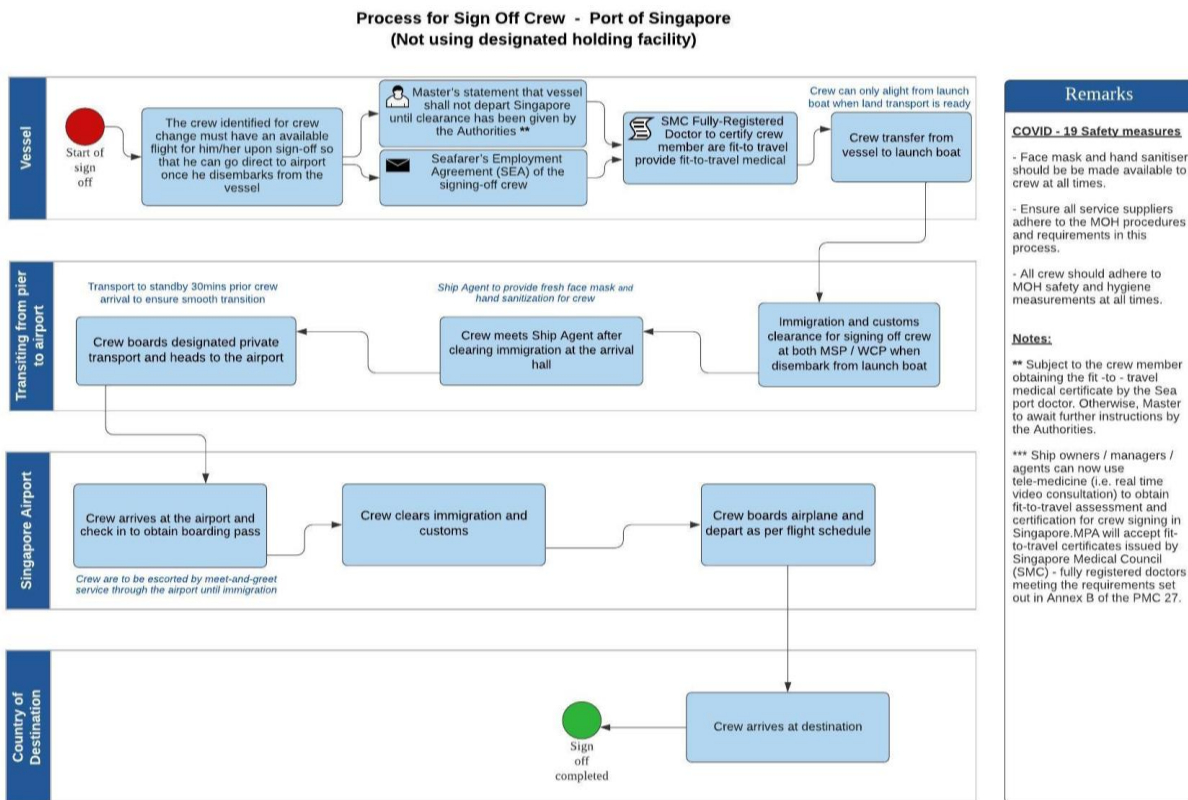


Figure 2.2

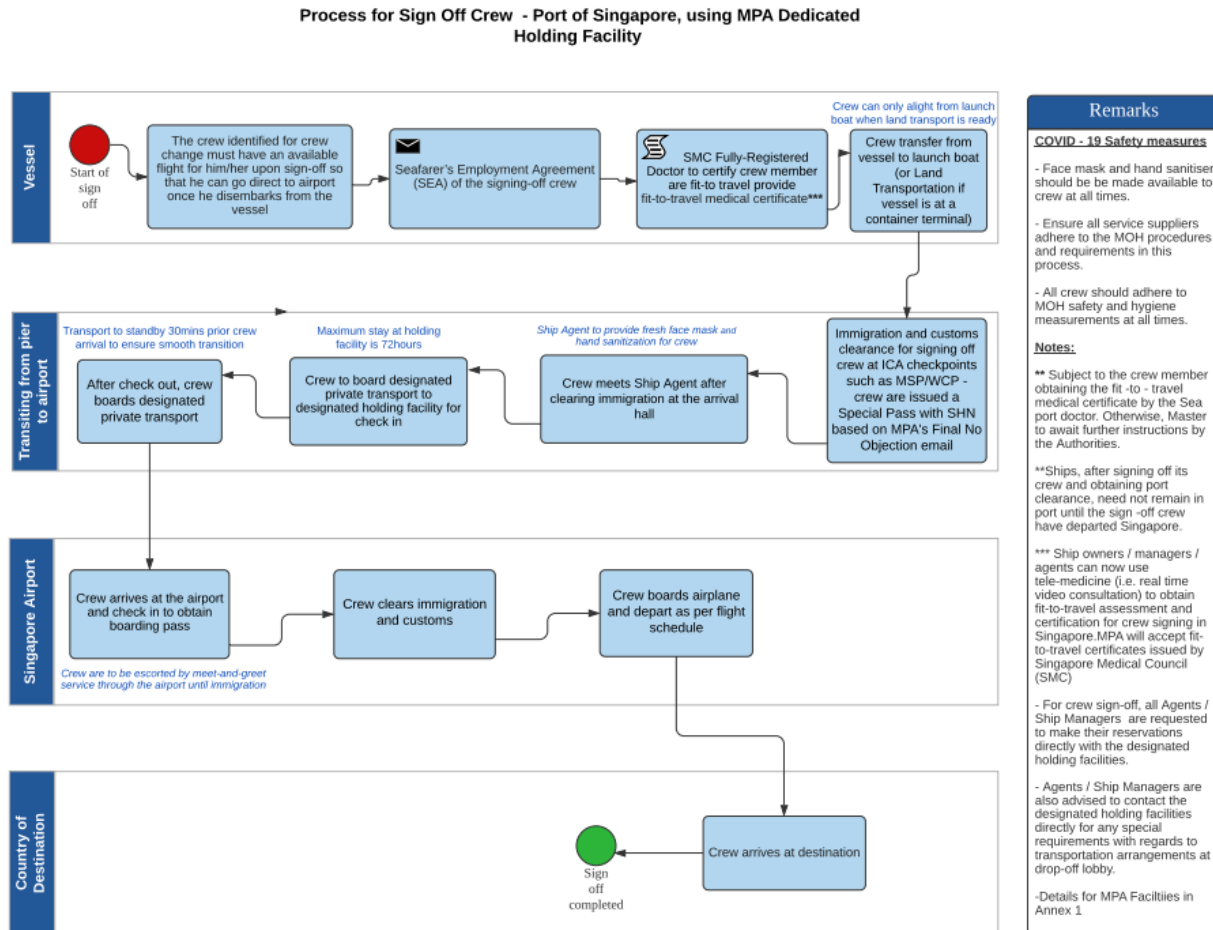


Figure 2.3

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To minimise the risk of importation and spread COVID-19 in Singapore, it is preferred that the crew is transferred directly between the vessel and the point of arrival/departure. Companies shall take note of the following requirements:

Phase Descriptor	Check List	Mitigating Factor
Sign-Off Crew	A The crew must have an available flight for him/her upon sign-off.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sea port doctor to certify crew member are fit-to travel prior sign-off. This can be performed via Tele-medicine in line with the requirements of PMC 27 of 2020 • No sharing of Passenger launch boats for crew and service engineers/technicians • Agent will arrange for crew for using private transport and Meet-and-greet Services, at the airport, escorting the crew to clear ICA through to boarding the plane. • Transport to standby 30 mins prior crew arrival
	B Crew is not allowed to remain ashore in Singapore while waiting for his flight unless they have a confirmed booking at a Designated Holding Facility.	
	C Seafarer's Employment Agreement (SEA) of the signing-off crew.	
	D Sign-off crew must have a fit-to-travel medical certificate issued by a doctor in Singapore not more than 24 hours prior disembarking the ship.	
	E Master's statement that vessel shall not depart Singapore until Port Clearance is issued from the MPA.	
Land / Sea Transport Provider	<p>Wear a mask at all times.</p> <p>Sanitize and disinfect seats/interior prior receiving the next onboard crew</p> <p>Ensure all crew sanitize their hands once in vehicle/launch</p> <p>Sanitize and disinfect seats/interior after dropping off crew.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Eliminating cross contamination: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ All transport vendors are to practice MTI COVID-19 guidelines and safety measures. ○ All vendors' segregation plans are to be submitted to the relevant authorities. ○ Drivers and boatman are to remind crew on the COVID-19 safety measures. ○ All vendors are to abide to the NEA cleaning guidelines.

If the above requirements can be met in line with the latest Port Marine Circular kindly submit the following documents to MPA to process the request:

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- A. Application form as per <https://www.mpa.gov.sg/web/portal/home/port-of-singapore/operations/crew-change> (You will have to make multiple submissions if you have more than 20 off-signers and/or on-signers)
- B. Online declaration, undertaking and consent by owner/agent/operator.
- C. Intended flight itinerary from the airline for both sign-on and sign-off crew.
- D. Online declaration that the last port of call was more than 21 days ago and the crew remains well; or if the last port of call was less than 21 days ago, the crew has not gone ashore for the last 21 days and remains well.
- E. Online health declaration by all crew members that they are asymptomatic and have not had contact with a known or suspect case of COVID-19 in the 21 days preceding arrival in Singapore.
- F. A copy of the ship's Maritime Declaration of Health in accordance with Port Marine Circular No. 16 of 2020. (To be submitted 12 hours before the vessel arrives Singapore)
- G. Confirmed flight tickets must be submitted as early as possible.
- H. For sign-off crew, fit-to-travel medical certificate issued by a doctor in Singapore not more than 24hrs prior to disembarking the vessel.
- I. For sign-on crew, crew's declaration that he/she has served 21-days SHN in accordance with MOH's Guidelines, as well as provide his/her temperature record.
- J. For sign-on crew, the COVID-19 PCR test result not more than 48hrs before departing his/her home country.
- K. For sign-on crew, the fit-to-travel medical certificate not more than 24hrs before departing his/her home country

Please note that A, B, C, D & E as requested above, shall be submitted at least twenty-one (21) days prior to the scheduled signing on/off date of the crew, unless expressly stated otherwise. Documents F, G, H, I, J K & L must be submitted at the earliest possible instance before the vessel's arrival. Failure to do so may result in the rejection of the application.

Should there be any changes to the information provided, company is to update MPA immediately.

In the event that the application for crew change in Singapore is not approved, the company should plan for the crew change to be conducted at other ports that allow crew change.

CrewSafe Facilities

The Singapore Shipping Tripartite Alliance Resilience Fund Taskforce (SFTF) has developed a CrewSafe audit programme that endeavours to assist crew source nations to bring a higher level of confidence and quality control checks into crew change processes such as quarantine/holding, medical and swabbing facilities. Please refer to this [link](#) for more information regarding the CrewSafe audit programme and a list of CrewSafe accredited facilities.

For sign-on crew who undergo the protocol under these CrewSafe accredited facilities located overseas, his/her crew change application may be given the following concessions:

- (a) Submission of crew change application must be made at least 7 days in advance, instead of 21 days.

- (b) If a sign-on crew undergoing the CrewSafe protocol is cancelled, direct replacement for this crew will be allowed if the replacement has been undergoing CrewSafe protocol for the same required duration, instead of having to re-submit a new application and re-start the process.
- (c) At Singapore, sign-on crew who had undergone the CrewSafe protocol may stay at the designated holding facilities for up to 5 days (instead of 3 days), if required.

Annex 1: Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Crew Change Dedicated Holding Facilities

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MPA has designated a total of 3 holding facilities for crew change – 1 for Sign-On Crew, 2 for Sign-Off Crew.

Sign-On Dedicated Facility

- Copthorne King's Hotel Singapore
For reservations, please contact:
+65 6318 3130
reservations.ckc@millenniumhotels.com

Sign-Off Crew Dedicated Facility

- Seacare Hotel
For reservations, please contact:
Phang Jing Huei
+65 6818 2680
reservations@theseacarehotel.com.sg
- Hotel Re!
For reservations, please contact:
+65 6827 8288
reservations@hotelre.com.sg

Who to Contact for Sign On bookings

Contacts are listed under PMC 10 of 2021, Annex B

Duration of Stay at holding facilities for Sign On crew

Sign-on crew will be allowed to stay at the designated holding facility for up to 3 days²

Sign On crew new process pertaining to SHN (Stay Home Notice) period

In general, all signing on crew, except for crew from specific low risk countries/regions³, are required to serve 21 days Stay-Home-Notice (SHN) in the originating country.

- Crew shall be isolated properly (individual room with dedicated toilet) with strictly **no** interaction with others (including their family members) at his/her place of residence
- Alternatively, crew shall be isolated at a dedicated facility/hotel

Isolation/Quarantine/SHN Duration of 21 days

There are no further interpretations. Companies must ensure that the crew maintains a FULL continued 21 days during quarantine period. This means the company must demonstrate that the crew stayed in ONE location for 21 days uninterrupted. Crews who maintained 7 days at home self-isolation and then shifted to a company run facilities for the next remaining 7 days are deemed to have broken quarantine.

RACI Chart – (Responsible, Accountable, Consulted, Informed) roles in the SG Crew Change Guidebook

Members are strongly encouraged to refer to the RACI chart in the Singapore Crew Change Guidebook which states clearly the roles and responsibilities of each party the crew change process.

Footnote : MPA will conduct an investigation in the event a crew is found to display symptoms and found to be COVID-19 positive upon arrival. Any breaches are taken seriously, and penalties will be imposed on the guilty parties accordingly should there be any breaches found. All parties, even for those under the “Consulted” and “Informed”, are expected to do their due diligence to ensure that all processes are followed strictly. All parties are expected to be held accountable should there be any breaches/non-compliance of the processes

Sign Off crew process

No change to current Sign Off crew process, and reference is to be made to the crew sign-off application process found in the Singapore Crew Change Guidebook

² For crew who undergo the protocol under the STAR [CrewSafe accredited facility](#), sign-on crew may stay at the designated holding facility for up to 5 days

³ <https://saftravel.ica.gov.sg/files/SHN-and-swab-summary.pdf>

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Sign-off crew shall depart Singapore upon signing off, or, stay at designated holding, for up to 72 hours.

Sign Off crew PCR test requirements as part of crew's home nation requirements

MPA will continue to facilitate arrangements for crew required to take the COVID-19 pre-departure test (PDT). prior to departure as required by destination country's requirement.

For crew change applications where the sign-off crew requires PDT before departure from Singapore, in addition to the existing sign-off requirements, the sign-off crew shall produce a negative test result from a COVID-19 PCR test taken at vessel's last port of call, provided no crew change has been carried out in the last 21 days before vessel's last port of call. Test results should be submitted to MPA as soon as they are available and before the vessel arrives in Singapore.

If crew change has been carried out in the last 21 days before the vessel's last port of call, and if the vessel has crew signing-off in Singapore **who requires PDT**, all crew on board⁴ shall produce a negative test result from a COVID-19 PCR test taken at the vessel's last port of call before calling at Singapore.

⁴ Includes the sign-off crew as well as crew that will remain on board and sail off with the vessel.

Annex 2: Protocol for Crew in Country of Origin

Stage	Activity	Sub- Activity	Responsible	Accountable	Informed	Timing
1	Mobilisation	(1.1) Arrange flights for identified crew	Ship Manger	Ship Manger	Ship Agent	Minimum 3 days prior to arrival at hotel
		(1.2) Compile and share final crew list	Ship Manager	Ship Manager	Ship Agent	Minimum 3 days prior to arrival at hotel
		(1.3) Arrange for PCR testing	Ship Agent	Ship Agent	1. Ship Manager 2. Manning Agency 3. Clinic	Minimum 3 days prior to arrival at hotel
		(1.4) Arrange transportations	Ship Agent	Ship Agent	1. Ship Manager 2. Manning Agency 3. Transport provider	Minimum 3 days prior to arrival at hotel
		(1.5) Arrange hotel	Ship Agent	Ship Agent	1. Ship Manager 2. Manning Agency 3. Hotel	Minimum 3 days prior to arrival at hotel
		(1.6) Clarify any additional needs or special requirements	Ship Agent	Ship Agent	1. Ship Manager 2. Manning Agency	Minimum 3 days prior to arrival at hotel
2	Arrival at hotel	(2.1) Crew to check in and receive COVID - 19 PPE kit arranged by Ship Agent	1. Crew 2. Hotel	Ship Agent		Upon arrival at the hotel
		(2.2) Crew to isolate and stay in room until test arrangement	Crew	Manning Agency		After checking in to the hotel
		(2.3) Ship Agent to advise the meeting time at hotel lobby and transport crew to designated clinic	1. Ship Agent 2. Transport provider	Ship Agent		After confirmation from clinic on the testing time
3	Testing at the clinic	(3.1) Crew to take RAPID test (if PEME required)	1. Clinic	Crew	Ship Agent	Upon arrival at the clinic and received

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		If RAPID test shows negative for COVID -19, proceed with PEME followed by PCR test				RAPID testing results
		(3.2) Crew to take RAPID test (if PEME required) If RAPID test shows positive for COVID -19, coordinate with local authorities to transfer crew to quarantine facility or hospital	1. Clinic	Crew	1. Ship Agent 2. Manning Agency 3. Local Authorities	Upon arrival at the clinic and received RAPID testing results
		(3.3) Crew to take PCR test	1. Clinic	Crew	1. Ship Agent	Upon arrival at the clinic
		(3.4) Crew to be chaperon and transport back to hotel to continue isolation until test results are received	1. Transport provider	Ship Agent		Upon completion of PCR test
4	Isolation in hotel	(4.1) Crew to stay in room until test results is ready	Crew	Manning Agency		After checking in to the hotel PCR test results: Within 72 hours
		(4.2) PCR test shows positive for COVID -19 Coordinate with local authorities to transfer crew to quarantine facility or hospital	Manning Agency	Manning Agency	1. Local Authorities 2. Ship Agent* *If requested, Ships Agent can assist in coordinating transportation	Upon receiving PCR test results
		(4.3) PCR test shows negative for COVID -19 To arrange safe transport from hotel to airport	Manning Agency	Manning Agency	1. Ship Manager 2. Ship Agent	Upon receiving PCR test results
5	Airport	(5.1) Transport crew from hotel to the airport	Transport provider	Ship Agent		According to flight schedule

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		(5.2) Crew arrives at the airport and check in to obtain boarding pass	Crew	Crew		After check in and obtaining boarding pass
		(5.3) Crew clears immigration and custom	Crew	Crew		After clearing immigration and custom
		(5.4) Crew boards plane and depart as per flight schedule	Crew	Crew	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Ship Agent 2. Manning Agency 3. Ship Manager 	According to flight schedule

Sample Process for Philippines Origin Crew:

Process for Outbound Crew - Philippines

To provide a COVID - 19 Safe and Secure process for Seafarer to leave Philippines to join vessel

