



ARGENTINA

28 JUL 2020

Coronavirus, COVID-19

The following information was received from our correspondent on 24 July:

QUOTE

Please be informed that two new developments have now taken place which could affect the normal trading of the vessels which are the following:

1) Uruguay: the Uruguayan authorities have now imposed that all Argentine nationals entering to their country either by land or ferry need to provide a negative Covid-19 test. As you know, any vessel calling at any Argentine port/terminal located either in the River Plate basin (Buenos Aires, La Plata, Dock Sud) or the Parana River (Campana, Zarate, San Nicolas, Villa Constitucion, Rosario, San Lorenzo, etc.) needs to have a River Plate pilot for the leg between Recalada Pilot station and Zona Comun (off La Plata).

Mentioned River Plate pilots board incoming vessels via service boats from the port of Montevideo, Uruguay and since the closure of flights and ferries between Argentina and Uruguay, the pilots were reaching Montevideo by car through the bridge connecting the cities of Guleguaychú, Argentina and Fray Bentos, Uruguay, where the Covid test is performed taking around four hours at a costs of the of usd 90, which pilots have to perform every 14 days.

Consequently, the time needed for the crossing of the border, plus the time taken for the Covid test adding to an additional 8-hour drive, which is the travelling time by road from Fray Bentos to Montevideo makes a 12 hours trip to place a River Plate Pilot ready for service, adding an additional cost for pilots of usd 90.

Due to above, the Chamber Grouping the Pilots and Pilotage activity has decided to cancel the travelling by land up to the City of Montevideo in Uruguay up to the time a solution could be obtained through diplomatic channels, which they believe is the way to solve this problem as for the pilots to be excluded of the above requirement imposed by the Uruguayan Authorities.

Without doubt this could cause delays with the pilotage (copy of the Chamber letter attached although in Spanish language).

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A circular published by local agent is stating that pilots would be using outbound vessels to position pilots at Recalada where the Coast Guard has permanent officers onboard as for those pilots then pilotage inbound ships although this could cause some delays depending on the number of outgoing and incoming vessels.

2) The second problem which could affect either the pilotage of vessels and even the positioning of surveyors onboard in case of major casualties is in relation to a new disposition issued last night by the Governor of the Province of Santa Fe where most of the main grain and vegoil terminals are located i.e. Villa Gobernador Galvez, Rosario, San Lorenzo. Timbues, Villa Constitucion, etc.

In accordance with section 3 of the Decree 0647 dated 22/07/2020 of the aforementioned province as from 00.00 hours of 27th July, 2020 any person entering into the territory of the Province of Santa Fe and which is not a permanent resident arriving from areas (within the country) where the lockdown is still in force will not be authorized to transit the province unless holding a valid certificate issued by the competent authority stating that the person was negative to a test or swabbed in relation to Covid-19 among other necessary permits imposed by the National Authorities to circulate.

At present time, it is not clear all the impact that both measures could have in the flowing of marine traffic but as soon as the situation is clearer will revert. Meantime, your members could bear in mind that their vessels could be delayed due to those circumstances.

UNQUOTE

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