



# Infection prevention and control management of international maritime crew transfers and transits

This document provides information on the infection prevention and control (IP&C) management of well international maritime crew that require transfer from any port within Western Australia (WA) to Perth, for non-medical reasons, under the quarantine direction for Maritime Crew Directions. Maritime crew transferred to Perth are to leave Australia on an onward flight within 8 hours of arrival to Perth or be placed into a state quarantine facility. Port staff, flight staff, transportation staff, WA Health, police, defence, emergency services, Australian Border Force (ABF), Department of Agriculture, Water and Environment (DAWE) and other agency staff will be referred to as WA agency staff.

Information relating to the transfer of maritime crew that are requiring medical evacuation/transfer can be found [here](#)

A frequently asked questions information fact sheet for maritime workers can be found [here](#).

## Process

### Metropolitan port

International maritime crew that disembark their vessel at a metropolitan port (Fremantle or Kwinana) will be met by WAPOL and transferred to either Perth airport to leave Australia (onward flight within 8 hours) or transferred to a state quarantine facility until their onward flight is scheduled to depart or until their 14 days quarantine is complete.

### Regional port

International maritime crew that disembark their ship at a regional port will require transfer from the port of disembarkation, via a transit service, to a charter flight. Upon landing in Perth, they will be met by WAPOL and transferred to Perth airport to leave Australia (onward flight within 8 hours) or transferred to a state quarantine facility until their onward flight is scheduled to depart or until their 14 days quarantine is complete.

## Reducing the risk of transmission

Throughout each stage of the transfer, careful planning and consideration should be given to the IP&C measures to reduce the risk for transmission of COVID-19 between maritime crew, from maritime crew to WA agency staff and from maritime crew to the public.

All maritime crew disembarking international vessels to enter WA must be considered as potentially infected with COVID-19. Any maritime worker with recent testing that has shown a negative result must also be treated as potentially infectious. A negative result may reflect that the person was negative at the time of the testing (usually 24 - 48 hours prior to the test result being reported) but does not reflect the current infectious status of the individual.

**At no time should any members of the public board any transfer vehicles (helicopters, smaller vessels, buses, vans, charter flights) with the maritime crew, unless they are employed to do so (drivers, pilots, flight crew).**

## **General infection prevention and control principles for maritime crew and WA agency staff**

Strict adherence to IP&C practices by all WA agency staff and maritime crew involved in the transfer is essential.

These practices include reporting signs and symptoms of illness, practising effective hand hygiene and respiratory etiquette, physical distancing, using personal protective equipment (PPE) correctly and ensuring environmental cleaning and disinfection as outlined below.

- All WA agency staff and maritime crew must have access to hand hygiene facilities and perform hand hygiene frequently.
- Hand hygiene facilities include hand washing stations that have running water, hand soap, paper towels and a rubbish bin or an alcohol-based hand sanitiser that contains 60-80% alcohol.
- All WA agency staff assisting with the transfer must maintain physical distancing from maritime crew where possible.
- All WA agency staff must have access to PPE. The minimum PPE required for WA agency staff that are involved in maritime crew transfer and/or may be required to board a vessel is a single use, disposable, surgical mask.
- Additional to a single use, disposable, surgical mask, eye protection (safety goggles or a face shield) is required in the rare incidence when WA agency staff are required to enter enclosed, indoor areas of the vessel and cannot maintain physical distancing from the maritime crew.
- PPE for occupational safety and health requirements must always be used as a priority in all circumstances.
- WA Agency staff must always wear PPE during the transfer process.
- Areas for donning (putting on) PPE and doffing (removing PPE) must be segregated to prevent contamination from dirty PPE to clean PPE. As space may be restricted, this area does not need to be a large area, simply, clean PPE must be kept separate to where dirty PPE is removed. For example, a clear bench top or a dedicated cupboard.
- PPE should be donned and doffed correctly. Information on correct donning and doffing of PPE can be found [here](#).
- Used PPE must be disposed of at the point of removal into a secure, general waste bin. When full or if removed sooner, this can be tied off and disposed of with general waste.
- If a mask becomes damp or soiled, it must be removed and replaced in the following order: perform hand hygiene, remove old mask and discard into a secure bin

immediately, perform hand hygiene again, replace mask with a clean mask, perform hand hygiene again.

- Masks can be worn for up to 4 hours but must be changed sooner if they become damp or soiled.
- Avoid touching or readjusting masks once they are donned. If the mask is touched or adjusted during the transfer, hand hygiene must be performed immediately after doing so.
- Gloves are not routinely required by maritime crew or WA agency staff for COVID-19 prevention as they prevent hand hygiene being performed effectively. Hand hygiene must be performed after every contact with a person, their belongings, or frequently touched surfaces.
- All items and surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected by wiping them over with a disinfectant based cleaning product with viricidal properties.
- Any shared items must be cleaned between each user.
- Spray cleaning products are not recommended as they disturb surface particles and can cause eye and lung irritations. If a spray cleaning product is the only option, spray the product into a disposable wipe/paper towel and then wipe the surfaces.
- Cleaning product instructions must always be followed.
- Hand hygiene must always be performed after cleaning.
- All waste generated (including PPE) must be placed into a general waste bag, tied off and disposed of. Hand hygiene must be performed following any handling of waste.
- All WA agency staff must report if they are unwell with COVID-19 signs and symptoms (fever, night sweats, chills and/or respiratory symptoms such as coughing, shortness of breath, sore throat, runny nose, sudden loss of taste or smell) at the commencement of their shift or if they become unwell during their shift to their supervisor immediately.

## **International maritime crew**

In addition to the general IP&C principles outlined [above](#), international maritime crew must also consider the following:

- maritime crew are to wear a single use, disposable surgical mask from the moment they leave their vessel, for the duration of their transfer and until they reach their room of quarantine.
- any maritime worker not wearing a surgical mask must be provided with a mask by WA agency staff and instructed to wear it. Refusal to wear a mask must be reported to WA Police
- if maritime crew are to leave their room of quarantine for any purpose (e.g. for an appointment), they must be wearing a single use, disposable surgical mask until they return to their room of quarantine
- if maritime crew are to leave Australia on an international flight, they must wear a single use, disposable surgical mask until they board this flight and then follow the instructions of the international flight crew
- all maritime crew must be provided with enough single use disposable surgical masks to cover the entire time of their journey. i.e. from disembarking the vessel until leaving WA or entering their room of quarantine

- maritime crew must always adhere to physical distancing from other maritime crew, from WA agency staff, and from all members of the public
- all maritime crew are to perform hand hygiene on disembarking the vessel and prior to boarding and exiting their transfer vehicle
- all maritime crew are to handle their own belongings and luggage at all stages of the transfer.

## **Ground crew, port staff, airport staff**

This includes but is not limited to shipping agents, administration staff, port staff, airport staff, flight ground crew, WAPOL, ABF, DAWE, health staff and other agencies assisting with the transfer, based at the port or airport, but do not travel on the bus or charter flight with the maritime workers. In addition to the general IP&C principles outlined [above](#) ground crew, port staff and airport staff must also consider the following:

- if handling the maritime crew belongings cannot be avoided (e.g. for identification purposes) then staff must perform hand hygiene immediately after each item and between each maritime crew member
- once the maritime crew have left the area, all surfaces, equipment and high touch points must be cleaned and disinfected.

## **Vessel and helicopter pilots and crew**

These staff may be involved with retrieving maritime crew from ships that cannot berth at port and transferring them to the port by either a smaller vessel or a helicopter. This includes but is not limited to vessel pilots and crew, helicopter pilots and crew, shipping agents, administration staff, port staff, ABF, DAWE, health staff and other agencies assisting with the transfer, based at the port, but do not travel on the bus or charter flight with the maritime workers. In addition to the general IP&C principles outlined [above](#) vessel and helicopter pilots and crew must also consider the following:

- use a vessel that is large enough to provide enough space so physical distancing between all maritime crew and vessel crew can be achieved as much as possible
- only essential staff and minimal maritime crew should be permitted to travel together at any one time, to maintain physical distancing, on a helicopter. Maritime crew must sit as far away from the helicopter crew as possible (such as in the rear of the helicopter)
- time spent on the vessel and helicopter should be kept to minimum
- if handling the maritime crew belongings cannot be avoided (eg: for identification purposes) staff must perform hand hygiene immediately after each item and between each maritime worker
- once the maritime crew have left the vessel/helicopter, all surfaces, equipment and high touch points must be cleaned and disinfected

## Bus and vehicle transfer staff (regional and metropolitan)

This includes but is not limited to bus drivers and transportation staff that may transfer maritime crew at any time for any purpose, including for appointments.). This information is applicable to commercial transport companies and volunteer transport services. In addition to the general IP&C principles outlined [above](#) bus and vehicle transfer staff must also consider the following:

- use the largest possible size bus/vehicle
- where possible, use buses that have 2 doors for access: front door for the driver and back door for the maritime crew
- buses where the driver has their own separated area are preferred
- do not fill the bus/vehicle to full capacity. This is to ensure adequate room for physical distancing
- all maritime crew are to perform hand hygiene prior to boarding the bus/vehicle
- maritime crew are to board the bus one at a time, preferably through the back door. They should not start boarding until the previous passenger is seated. Maritime crew should sit towards the back first and distance themselves as much as possible. Maritime crew should not sit in the front half of the bus.
- depending on the style of the bus, luggage should go underneath in the luggage compartments, on the floor just inside the back doors or on the floor of the bus near the maritime crew if appropriate
- the maritime crew must not have any contact with the driver
- the bus doors must be left open until the moment the bus is to leave and opened at the destination as soon as possible
- air-conditioning is to be set to fresh air and not return air. Driver window to be open if possible
- all maritime crew must remain seated for the entire journey (unless there is an emergency and they are required to disembark/evacuate immediately)
- on arrival at the destination, maritime crew must leave the bus via the back door (if applicable), one at a time in an orderly manner
- the bus driver is always required to wear a disposable surgical mask during the transfer. The mask should be donned before the maritime crew board the bus and remain on until all maritime crew have left the bus
- gloves are not recommended for bus drivers as they can be a hazard when driving, creating an OSH issue and inhibit hand hygiene
- the bus driver must always have access to 60-80% alcohol-based hand sanitiser. Please be aware that leaving this in a vehicle is not recommended as the high temperatures in a closed vehicle will damage the efficacy of the product. The hand sanitiser should be taken onto the bus and off the bus with each journey.
- if possible, the bus driver is to stay off the bus and away from the rear doors, during the boarding process. This is not always possible and if the bus driver must remain on the bus, they will need to do so at the driver's seat only.
- the bus driver should be the last person to board the bus and the first person to leave the bus

- once all the maritime crew have disembarked the bus, the bus driver can remove their PPE (mask), dispose of it immediately into a suitable bin (a secure general rubbish bin or rubbish bag where it cannot fall out) and perform hand hygiene
- the bus/vehicle can then be taken back to depot/base for cleaning and disinfection.
- all areas of the bus will need to be cleaned and disinfected with a disinfectant based cleaning product. Starting with the driver's area and then moving towards the rear of the bus to clean the passenger areas
- all rubbish may be disposed of into general waste
- hand hygiene should be performed after handling rubbish.

## Charter flight staff

This includes but is not limited to pilots, flight crew, ground crew and any other agency that may be of assistance during the transfer of maritime crew via charter flight. In addition to the general IP&C principles outlined [above](#) charter flight staff must also consider the following:

- aircraft, where the flight crew can be separated from the maritime crew, are recommended
- use the largest plane possible to allow for physical distancing
- use the quickest plane possible to reduce time spent on the aircraft
- all maritime crew are to perform hand hygiene prior to entering the aircraft
- allow for physical distancing as much as possible. Always fill the aircraft from the rear first and keep as much distance between maritime crew, between maritime crew and flight crew and between all flight crew
- flight crew must wear a single use disposable surgical mask. If prolonged close contact with the maritime crew is anticipated (eg a long flight) or there is a risk of contact with a maritime crew member not wearing a mask, eye protection may also be used
- hand hygiene must be performed after any contact with any maritime crew, their surroundings or belongings
- inflight services are not recommended (food & beverage). If water bottles are provided to maritime crew, the maritime crew must dispose of these at disembarkation. Removing these services will reduce interactions between flight crew and maritime crew and reduce the amount of waste generated on the flight
- in flight magazines, or any other reusable entertainment options, are not recommended.
- frequent fresh air exchanges during the flight to limit the amount of recirculating air in the cabins is recommended
- the doors should remain open until the last possible moment prior to take off and be opened at the earliest opportunity on arrival
- alighting and disembarking should take place in an orderly manner so there are no maritime crew crossing over each other or having contact with flight crew
- there must be enhanced cleaning after each flight. All surfaces should be cleaned and disinfected by wiping over them with a disinfectant based cleaning product with viricidal properties
- seating areas should be cleaned before toilet areas and cleaning wipes should be dedicated to each area and disposable

- spray products are not recommended as they disturb surface particles and can cause eye and lung irritations. If a spray cleaning product is the only option, spray the product into a wipe/paper towel and then wipe the surfaces
- hand hygiene must be performed after cleaning.

## Delays

If the maritime crew are required to wait between transfers, e.g. from bus to plane, the following recommendations apply:

- careful planning of transfers should be considered to reduce wait times of maritime crew as much as possible. For example, maritime crew should disembark their vessel when their charter flight is ready to be boarded to reduce wait times at the maritime port or the airport
- where there is a delay and maritime crew are required to wait in transit, a suitable area/room should be used to accommodate the maritime crew
- to reduce movement of maritime crew, this suitable area should be at the same location as the pick-up or drop-off point of the transfers. It should be either at the airport or the maritime port.
- a suitable location should be able to provide the following:
  - an adequately sized room to allow for physical distancing
  - non-fabric furnishings to allow for effective cleaning on departure
  - a non-carpeted floor covering such as linoleum, floor boards or other hard surface that can be easily cleaned on departure
  - a separate area for the use of maritime crew only; other staff/members of the public must not have access to the area. Signage or barriers may be required to communicate this
  - toilet facilities nearby that can be dedicated to maritime crew use only
  - hand hygiene facilities available for the maritime crew to use (alcohol-based hand rub or a sink with liquid soap, running water and paper hand towels)
  - provision for safe waste disposal in the area (i.e. rubbish bins)
  - food/drink provision, if required, as outlined in the following section 'Rest Stops'
  - full clean and disinfection of these facilities (the waiting room area and bathrooms) with a disinfectant-based cleaning product with viricidal properties once the maritime crew have left the premises, before being used by other staff/members of the public again
  - removal, and disposal, of all rubbish once the maritime crew have left the premises
  - if fabric furnishings or carpet were present in these rooms, these items are required to be steam cleaned prior to the area reopening.

## Rest stops

If the maritime crew require a rest stop, or a refuelling stop is required during the transfer, the following advice is recommended:

- to facilitate physical distancing and cleaning of rest areas, if possible, consider communicating to the receiving facility, the intention to stop at their premises
- all maritime crew and WA agency staff must perform hand hygiene on disembarking the transport and upon reembaring their transport
- maritime crew and WA Agency staff that are required to remove their mask for refreshments must do so in the following order: perform hand hygiene, remove mask and dispose of mask, perform hand hygiene again, have refreshment, perform hand hygiene and don a new clean mask
- during their refreshment break, maritime crew must adhere to strict physical distancing from each other and WA agency staff involved in the transfer
- all WA agency staff assisting with the transfer must always maintain physical distancing.
- rest areas for maritime crew must be segregated from general areas to ensure maritime crew do not have contact with members of the public at any time
- for toilet and rest breaks, where possible, dedicated facilities should be allocated to the maritime crew during their transfer and restricted to all other people
- once the maritime crew have left the premises, these facilities should undergo a full clean and disinfection with a disinfectant based cleaning product with viricidal properties before being used by other staff/members of the public again.

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**This document can be made available in alternative formats on request for a person with disability.**

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