

Expedition Vessels visiting the Falkland Islands 2021-22
COVID-19 additional precautions:
Guidance for Operators proving you have essential policies and procedures in place

Introduction

This guidance document has been produced to assist Operators of Expedition Vessels when planning voyages to the Falkland Islands for the 2021-22 austral summer season.

Any failure to meet these requirements may lead to the Falkland Islands Government denying entry into the Islands of passengers or vessels. If a passenger or crew member contracts COVID-19 or tests positive for COVID-19 while not in Falkland Islands waters, then Operators should be aware that the vessel may be advised to transit elsewhere so the best medical care can be provided. The Government also reserves the right to withdraw its exemption permitting maritime visitors to enter the Falkland Islands at any time including in circumstances where such a step would be required to protect the health of the Falkland Islanders or to protect the Falkland Islands limited healthcare resources.

The Falkland Islands Government has introduced a series of laws and policies designed to protect its population from COVID-19 ([Infectious Diseases Control \(Coronavirus, International Travel, Operator, Liability and Quarantine\) Regulations 2021](#), [COVID-19 Shipping Guidance](#)). These restrictions include a general prohibition on non-essential visitors from visiting or landing on the Islands.

On 31 May 2021 the Islands Executive Council approved a limited exemption from this prohibition for maritime visitors – in other words visitors arriving by sea – providing certain requirements and conditions are met.

The Falkland Islands has a population of around 3,500 people and limited healthcare resources. Since the start of the pandemic the Islands have managed to avoid any community spread of the coronavirus. This has been achieved through appropriate laws and the population's compliance and co-operation with the measures such as requirements to quarantine or self-isolate. The great majority of adult residents have been vaccinated.

If the Falkland Islands Government is to ensure that its population and its limited healthcare resources are protected from the risks of the pandemic it is essential that all visiting vessels and their visitors take appropriate and effective precautions so as to reduce to the lowest level possible the risk of them bringing COVID-19 to the Falkland Islands.

The Government has decided that it will only allow Expedition Vessels carrying no more than 530 passengers to visit the Islands. Additionally, the Government has placed a maximum limit of 530 visitors disembarked in any one location at any one time. For these purposes Stanley and Stanley Common¹ is considered to be a single location.

It is therefore essential that those planning voyages to the Falkland Islands co-operate with the Government in scheduling their arrival and planning their excursions.

¹ [Stanley Common Ordinance 1999](#)

Operator's obligation to produce effective policies and procedures

This guidance document has been produced for Operators to assist them in meeting these requirements and conditions. Operators should note that these requirements are in addition to their current legal obligations such as with regard to [Infectious Diseases Control \(Coronavirus, International Travel, Operator, Liability and Quarantine\) Regulations 2021](#), other laws, Immigration and Customs laws and formalities and with regard to complying with the [COVID-19 Shipping Guidance](#).

This guidance proceeds from the premise that it is for each Operator to:

- devise, record and implement its own suitable and sufficient policies and procedures to meet the requirements of this guidance; and
- to generate the necessary records and introduce appropriate audit and verification measures to show that the policies and procedures are being implemented effectively.

The guidance also proceeds from the premise that responsible Operators will, for their own purposes, want to demonstrate compliance.

Whatever form those policies, procedures and records take they must be:

- immediately available from the Operator;
- immediately available for consultation by all passengers and crew on board the vessel; and
- capable of being provided to the Government immediately upon a request either to the Operator or to the Master of the vessel.

Prior to the vessel setting sail to the Falkland Islands the Operator must:

1. No less than 30 days before setting sail provide advance notice about the vessel, its medical facilities, its complement etc. (see paragraph 1 Planning the Voyage below and the Expedition Vessels Advance Information Form on page 9 of this guidance for more details); and
2. Certify to the Falkland Islands Government that this guidance has been complied with, that the crew and all expedition vessel staff have been trained in the policies and procedures, that they are being implemented effectively, that appropriate periodic checks are being made to verify that this is the case and that all records generated are honest, complete and accurate. (see pages 6 and 7 for the form of the Certificate)

The Master of the vessel will be required to certify before any visitors are permitted to disembark in the Falkland Islands:

1. That this this guidance has been complied with, that the crew and all expedition vessel staff have been trained in the policies and procedures, that they are being implemented effectively, that appropriate periodic checks are being made to verify that this is the case and that all records generated are honest, complete and accurate; and
2. That the information provided by the Operator in its Expedition Vessels Advance Information Form and its certificate was and remain accurate. (see page 8 for the form of the Certificate)

All advance notifications and certificate submissions by Operators and Masters should be emailed to the Falkland Islands Government at the following address: shipsclearance@customs.gov.fk

1. Planning the Voyage

If the Falkland Islands Government is to have confidence that Operators are complying with this guidance the Government needs certain information in advance. Operators should therefore ensure that they have procedures in place so that they will notify the Falkland Islands Government no less than 30 days in advance of the vessel arriving at the Falkland Islands of the following information:

- Name of vessel
- Type of vessel
- Flag State
- Call sign
- Maximum passenger capacity
- Number of passengers booked to board
- Total number of staff and crew
- The type and capacity of the medical facilities including the capacity to isolate anyone suspected of being infected with COVID-19
- IMO number
- Gross Registered Tonnage
- Full name of Master/Captain
- Full legal name of Operator
- Planned itinerary including:
 - from point of departure to arrival at the Falkland Islands;
 - movement within the Falkland Islands and its Territorial Waters;
 - planned movement after leaving the Falkland Islands (including any planned return to the Falkland Islands and/or its Territorial Waters)

The notice Operators should use to provide this information is set out on page 9 of this guidance and entitled Expedition Vessels Advance Information Form. Operators should ensure that the Master of the vessel has a copy of the completed form as he or she will be required to certify that the information provided by the Operator remains correct prior to any passengers being permitted to disembark.

2. Medical facilities for passengers and crew

Operators must ensure that:

- Their vessels have suitable and sufficient healthcare and medical facilities (including appropriate medical and healthcare staff to care for the passengers and crew in all expected eventualities, including an outbreak of COVID-19, without recourse to any shore-based facilities in the Falkland Islands other than in an emergency;
- These facilities must include being able to treat and transport any passenger or member of the crew that has an accident or for some other reason needs or requires medical treatment whilst on-shore without recourse to local medical or healthcare facilities, other than in an emergency.
- These facilities must include the capacity to isolate and care for anyone infected with diseases such as with COVID-19.
- These facilities must include the capacity and capability for testing the entire vessel's complement for COVID-19 antibodies using lateral flow tests in accordance with the Falkland Islands "test to release" option and a sufficient spare capacity to meet eventualities. Refer to the [COVID-19 Shipping Guidance](#) for full details of the qualifying conditions and options available under the "test to release" option.
- All passengers and crew have the benefit of:
 - a negative PCR (Polymerase Chain Reaction) test for the presence of COVID-19 performed within 72 hours prior to embarkation;
 - medical insurance including medical evacuation ('medivac') insurance that will meet all costs associated with being treated and/or evacuated to a hospital either in their country of origin, or to another country for treatment (including all costs incurred in the Falkland Islands (even temporarily)); and/or

- a bond or guarantee that all costs associated with their medical treatment (including any medical evacuation) will be met in full.
- All such insurances, bonds or guarantees must cover all costs associated with COVID-19 and not be the subject of any exception or exclusion that would serve to prevent the Falkland Islands Government being recompensed in full for any costs it incurs in providing medical or healthcare support.
- If the Operator intends to avail of the five-day “test to release” option, that before embarkation all passengers and crew have provided:
 - suitable evidence of having been fully vaccinated at least two weeks before embarkation with one or more of the approved vaccinations (Pfizer BioNTech, Moderna/Spikevax, Oxford AstraZeneca, Johnson & Johnson Janssen); and

OPERATORS MUST HAVE SUITABLE, SUFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE ARRANGEMENTS IN PLACE SO AS TO ENSURE THAT NO-ONE WHO HAS TESTED POSITIVE FOR THE PRESENCE OF COVID-19 IN THE PREVIOUS 72 HOURS IS ALLOWED TO BOARD THE VESSEL.

3. Clean vessel and sufficient quarantine time

Current law requires all non-exempt visitors to the Falkland Islands to quarantine on arrival for a minimum of 10 days unless they:

1. avail themselves of the test to release scheme and provide two consecutive negative lateral flow test results on days two and five, or days two and eight, depending on which protocol is applicable; or
2. are maritime visitors, on a clean vessel and have been at sea for more than 10 days without anyone on board having or presenting with the symptoms of COVID-19 (See [COVID-19 Shipping Guidance](#)).

Time onboard a vessel at sea may count towards these 10 days in certain circumstances. This includes time spent within territorial waters as laid out in the [COVID-19 Shipping Guidance](#).

The Government expects all Operators will look to demonstrate that their vessel is ‘clean’ and that they will ensure that they are in a position to demonstrate compliance with the [COVID-19 Shipping Guidance](#) in this regard.

4. Scheduling and notifications

All Operators and Masters should ensure that the Falkland Islands Government is kept fully informed of the planned and actual movements of the vessel including its expected times and dates of arrival and departure to and from the Falkland Islands.

All Operators and Masters should note the restrictions on numbers allowed to enter or be in any one location within the Falkland Islands at any one time and be prepared to vary their schedule so as to ensure compliance.

All Operators and Masters must notify the Falkland Islands Government of any detected or suspected case of COVID-19 on board their vessel immediately such detection or suspicion arises – including where such detection or suspicion arises within 72 hours of departure from the Falkland Islands.

5. High standards of hygiene and ventilation

All Operators and Masters shall ensure that they have suitable and sufficient policies and procedures in place to demonstrate:

- Regular announcements to the ship's complement concerning:
 - the importance of reporting any suspected symptoms of COVID-19 or any other illness promptly to the ship's chief medical officer or otherwise nominated crew member; and
 - maintaining high standards of personal hygiene and social distancing.
- High standards of food hygiene and handling including handling drink, ice, utensils, cutlery waste etc.;
- Frequent and rigorous cleaning and cleansing throughout the vessel and in particular where food or drink is stored or handled and in places frequented by the passengers and/or crew;
- Suitable and sufficient PPE both in terms of quality and quantity for all crew involved in cleaning, cleansing or in the preparation or handling of food or drink;
- Frequent and regular washing of hands and or use of hand sanitisers by the entire ship's complement; and
- Effective ventilation on all decks and in all enclosed spaces (whether cabins, rooms, galleys, companionways etc.) frequented by any of the vessel's complement.
- That procedures and facilities are in place to ensure that any symptomatic individuals are immediately placed in isolation and tested for COVID-19

6. Excursions

All Operators and Masters must take full responsibility for the shore-based recovery of any passengers, staff or crew that sustain an injury or experience ill-health and require medical services while taking advantage of shore excursions in the Falkland Islands.

All Operators and Masters must ensure that all vessels:

- have trained and competent expedition staff available to accompany passengers and crew on shore excursions;
- are fully equipped to undertake shore-based recoveries and to provide suitable and sufficient on-board medical care.

7. The provision of information and declarations

When notifying the Falkland Islands Government of a planned voyage that is intended to include entry into Falkland Islands Territorial Waters the Operator must provide the Government with certificate of compliance signed by someone with authority to bind the Operator in the form reproduced on page 6 and 7.

The Master of the Expedition Vessel will be required to produce a similar Certificate when the vessel arrives at its first port of call in the Falkland Islands. That certificate confirms that all of the commitments made by the Operator have been adhered to during the voyage, that the appropriate records have been generated and maintained to demonstrate this and that they will be made available to the Falkland Islands Government immediately upon request.

Certificate of Compliance
Expedition Vessel
Operator

I.....[insert full name and job title]
with.....
..... [insert full legal name of Operator
.....and Operator's registered office]
(‘the Operator’) hereby certify that I have full authority to provide this certificate to the Falkland Islands Government on behalf of the Operator.

The Operator certifies that when planning the voyage of the Expedition Vessel.....
.....[insert name of vessel, call-sign
and IMO number] betweenand.....[insert beginning and end dates of
the entire voyage] sailing from..... [insert
port of departure]
via.....
..... [insert all intermediate planned ports of call]
and intending to visit the following locations within the Falkland Islands and its Territorial Waters on
the dates shown:

.....
.....
.....
.....

[insert relevant Falkland Island locations, and dates when the visits are to take place] that we have read, taken account of and will implement all of the steps and measures outlined in the guidance entitled: *“Expedition Vessels visiting the Falkland Islands 2021-22 COVID-19 additional precautions: Guidance for Operators proving you have essential policies and procedures in place”* in addition to all other obligations we have as a matter of the law of the Falkland Islands and the guidance issued by its Government.

We recognise and acknowledge:

- our responsibilities in ensuring that all effective measures are taken to prevent the spread of COVID-19 within:
 - our vessel, its entire complement of passengers, staff and crew; and
 - as a consequence of our presence and that of our passengers and crew within the Falkland Islands;
- the limited healthcare provision available on the Falkland Islands and the importance of ensuring, save in the case of an immediate medical emergency, that none of our vessel's complement use it or have recourse to it;
- our responsibilities in ensuring:
 - that everyone making up the entire vessel's complement has tested negative for the presence of COVID-19 using a PCR test within 72 hours before being permitted to board the vessel, and;
 - has provided us with credible evidence of the negative PCR test results which we have retained and can make available immediately upon request;

- that if the vessel intends to avail of the 5-day test to release option, that the entire vessel complement is fully vaccinated against COVID-19 with one of the four MHRA approved vaccines, and;
 - has provided us with credible evidence of those vaccinations which we have retained and can make available immediately upon request;
 - that our vessel satisfies (or will satisfy) all the requirements of Falkland Islands law and guidance (including [Infectious Diseases Control \(Coronavirus, International Travel, Operator, Liability and Quarantine\) Regulations 2021](#) and other law, [COVID-19 Shipping Guidance](#) etc.; and
 - that all efforts will be made to ensure the vessel satisfies all the requirements of being a 'clean vessel' as provided for in the [COVID-19 Shipping Guidance](#);
 - that the entire vessel's complement has the benefit of suitable, effective and comprehensive medical insurance (including medevac insurance) or suitable equivalent that ensures they can be repatriated or receive medical treatment without cost to the Falkland Islands Government;
 - that our vessel is fully equipped with appropriate medical and healthcare staff and facilities to care for the entire vessel's complement, including isolating and caring for many individuals infected with or suspected to be infected with COVID-19, norovirus or similar diseases or conditions without recourse to medical facilities on the Falkland Islands;
 - that all members of the crew (including any staff) are fully trained in the procedures we have devised and implemented, that effective measures are in place to audit and verify that they are complying with these procedures and applying their training; and
 - that full, complete, honest and accurate records will be generated and maintained before, during and after the voyage (for a minimum of six months) demonstrating compliance with the all measures being taken (including the audits and verifications that the procedures are being followed) and that these records will be made available immediately upon request.
- the importance of implementing and maintaining high standards of hygiene throughout the vessel at all times and being able to demonstrate this immediately upon request; and
 - the importance of ensuring and maintaining effective ventilation in all parts of the vessel and being able to demonstrate this immediately upon request.

We acknowledge that the Falkland Islands Government reserves the right to withdraw its exemption permitting maritime visitors to enter the Falkland Islands at any time including in circumstances where such a step would be required to protect the health of the Falkland Islanders or to protect the Falkland Islands limited healthcare resources.

Signed Date.....

Job title

.....

For and on behalf of

.....

[insert full legal name of Operator]

**Certificate of Compliance
Expedition Vessel
Master's Certificate**

I.....[insert full name]
of[insert home address]
Master of the Expedition Vessel:
.....insert name of vessel, call-sign and IMO number]
Certify and confirm that when the Expedition Vessel first entered Falkland Islands Territorial waters
on[insert date] as part of its voyage from
.....[insert port of departure]
via.....
.....[insert all intermediate ports of call]:
it satisfied and continues to satisfy all the requirements of Falkland Islands law and guidance (including
[Infectious Diseases Control \(Coronavirus, International Travel, Operator, Liability and Quarantine\) Regulations 2021](#); and other relevant law, the Falkland Islands Government's COVID-19 Shipping
Guidance and the guidance entitled "*Expedition Vessels visiting the Falkland Islands 2021-22 COVID-19 additional precautions: Guidance for Operators proving you have essential policies and procedures in place.*"

I certify and confirm that I have copies of and have read:

- (1) Expedition Vessels Advance Information Form; and**
- (2) The Certificate**

provided by[insert full name of Operator]
regarding this vessel and voyage and that throughout the voyage all of the information provided and
the commitments made by the Operator to the Falkland Islands Government have been fully met and
satisfied and continue to be fully met and satisfied.

I further certify and confirm that I have on board the Expedition Vessel all the necessary records,
policies and procedures demonstrating this compliance and that I will make them available
immediately to the Falkland Islands Government upon request.

**I acknowledge that the Falkland Islands Government reserves the right to withdraw its exemption
permitting maritime visitors to enter the Falkland Islands at any time including in circumstances
where such a step would be required to protect the health of the Falkland Islanders or to protect the
Falkland Islands limited healthcare resources.**

Signed..... Date.....
Master

Expedition Vessels Advance Information Form
To be submitted by Operators to the Falkland Islands Government
no less than 30 days in advance of a vessel arriving at the Falkland Islands

| | |
|---|--|
| Name of vessel: | |
| Type of vessel: | |
| Flag State: | |
| Call sign: | |
| IMO number: | |
| Gross Registered Tonnage: | |
| Full name of Master/Captain: | |
| Full legal name of Operator: | |
| Maximum passenger capacity: | |
| Number of passengers booked to board: | |
| Total number of staff and crew: | |
| Details of the planned vessel itinerary including: <ul style="list-style-type: none">– from point of departure to arrival at the Falkland Islands;– movement within the Falkland Islands and its Territorial Waters;– planned movement after leaving the Falkland Islands (including any planned return to the Falkland Islands and/or its Territorial Waters) | |
| | |
| Describe the type and capacity of the medical facilities on board the vessel, including the capacity to isolate anyone suspected of being infected with COVID-19. <i>Additional sheets and supporting documents should be attached to this form.</i> | |
| | |

Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What is the maximum number of passengers that can be on an expedition vessel visiting the Islands?

A. 530.

Q. Will there be restrictions on the number of vessels and/or passengers in that can be at any location at one time?

A. Yes. No more than 530 passengers can be in any one location at any time. This total number can be comprised of passengers from more than one vessel.

Q. What do you mean by location?

A. In terms of the outlying Islands a 'location' is considered to be the entire Island. In other words there can be no more than 530 passengers disembarked on say Saunders Island. Operators and Masters should ensure that they have the landowner's permission before permitting passengers to disembark anywhere in Camp – this includes outlying Islands.

On East or West Falkland a 'location' is considered to be a settlement or an isolated location. In other words, Darwin, Goose Green and Volunteer Point are considered to be separate locations.

Q. What about Stanley?

A. For the purposes of these restrictions please note that 'Stanley' includes both the town of Stanley and all the land surrounding the built area of the town known as Stanley Common.² This means that the bays, beaches and features surrounding Stanley such as Gypsy Cove, Yorke Bay, Cape Pembroke etc. are all considered to be part of 'Stanley.'

Q. What if a passenger has an accident or needs medical assistance whilst they are on-shore?

A. Falkland Islands Government (FIG) requires vessel Operators to take full responsibility for shore-based recovery of any passengers or crew taking advantage of such shore excursions both in Camp (including outlying islands) and in Stanley. Should a passenger sustain an injury and/or require medical services (including medevac services) vessel Operators, the master and crew will be expected to undertake shore-based recoveries (e.g. stretcher capabilities and trained expedition staff) and to provide on-board medical care. Access to medevac services - be they COVID or non COVID related - remains extremely limited or non-existent at the current time because of COVID related border controls in South America.

Q. Does the "time at sea" period commence once external contacts such as pilots have left the vessel in the previous port of call or from the time the ship weighs anchor?

A. The "time at sea" period starts from the time external contacts, such as pilots, have left the vessel, even if they are fully vaccinated.

² [Stanley Common Ordinance 1999](#)

Q. What testing needs to take place prior to passengers, crew and staff boarding the vessel?

A. All passengers, crew and staff must be PCR tested within 72 hours **prior** to boarding the vessel and must not be allowed to join the voyage in the case of a positive test.

Q. What must a vessel Operator do in order to qualify for the “5-day test to release” option?

A. All persons on board (both crew and passengers) must provide proof to the vessel’s Master that they have completed the full course of a vaccination with a MHRA approved vaccine. The vaccination course must be fully completed at least 2 weeks before the period of quarantine begins for persons on board the vessel. The vaccine must be approved by the United Kingdom Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency (MHRA).

Q. Which vaccines are currently approved by the MHRA?

A. These are currently³: Oxford-AstraZeneca (two doses), Pfizer (two doses), Moderna/Spikevax (two doses) or Janssen (single dose) vaccines. The vessel’s Master will be responsible for checking the vaccination documentation, and providing evidence when requested by the Chief Medical Officer (via Customs and Immigration).

Q. Will a crew member or passenger be considered fully vaccinated if they have initially been vaccinated with an unapproved vaccine followed by an approved booster on the UK MHRA list?

A. No. Mixing non UK approved vaccines with approved UK booster shots will not serve as the basis for exercising a five day test-to-release option. However, the 8 day test-to-release option will remain an option in such cases.

Q. Is there a test to release option if not all passengers, crew and staff have been fully vaccinated with approved MHRA vaccines?

A. If any person on board does not meet the vaccination criteria, the vessel may opt for “8-day test to release”.

Q. How many times does testing need to occur once the vessel has left its last port of call?

A. 48 hours into the journey followed by a day 5 test OR 48 hours into the journey followed by a day 8 test, contingent upon the vaccination status of the vessel’s passengers, crew and staff. If no testing is carried out then the 10 day standard quarantine period would apply. Once the vessel is considered clean there is no longer a requirement on the part of FIG for additional testing.

Q. Will an embarkation day lateral flow test be taken into account at all?

A. No.

³ September 1, 2020

Q. Which Lateral Flow tests are acceptable for use in relation to the test to release system?

- A.** Others may be added but currently the following LFD test kits are acceptable:
- Abbott Panbio
 - Fortress
 - Innova
 - Surescreen
-

Q. What happens if anyone on board tests positive in either the 5-day testing or 8 day testing protocol?

- A.** If anyone tests positive in either test then all persons on board will be required to complete 10-day self-isolation from the date of the positive test result.
-

Q. Can a positive LFD test be negated by 2 negative follow up LFD tests?

- A.** No. A positive LFD test must be followed up by a negative PCR test. However, if the vessel is in Stanley Harbour, KEMH will be able to provide a PCR testing kit and subsequent analysis of the sample.
-

Q. For those vessels who do not have PCR machines and/or are not in proximity to another IAATO vessel which can provide them with PCR capability, will Stanley/KEMH be able to provide a PCR testing service (for a charge)?

- A.** A positive LFD test must be followed up by a PCR test. If the vessel is in Stanley Harbour when the positive test is taken, KEMH will be able to provide a PCR testing kit and subsequent analysis of the sample.

If, however, a passenger or crew member contracts COVID-19 or tests positive for COVID-19 while not in Falkland Islands waters then Operators should be aware that the vessel may be advised to transit elsewhere so the best medical care can be provided. This will be dependent on the size of the passenger complement and crew, the number of infected persons, the passenger and crew vaccination record, the reason for wanting to enter the territorial waters and other medical support available to the vessel. All vessels with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases aboard who are travelling to the Falkland Islands should, where possible, seek medical advice and assistance elsewhere.

Q. How will the FIG monitor compliance with on board hygiene protocols?

- A.** FIG will not be inspecting all vessels to ensure compliance. FIG will however reserve the right to visit a vessel on a random basis.
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Q. Is a dedicated isolation cabin with negative air pressure required for those passengers required to isolate?

- A.** No. isolating in their cabin will be sufficient.
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Q. Our company is in receipt of third party certification in relation to our COVID procedures. Will FIG still want to review our procedures?

A. If third party verification is in place this will suffice in terms of compliance with on board hygiene measures but all other sections of the application form will still need to be completed and all requirements described in the COVID-19 Shipping General Guidance will still need to be complied with.

Q. What insurance requirements will vessel Operators need to comply with?

A. FIG will request an affirmation from Operators that insurance policies are in place for guests, crew and staff that 1) cover, among other conditions, illness due to SARS-CoV-2 infection; and 2) support aeromedical evacuation (COVID or non-COVID related); and furthermore that arrangements are in place with hospitals that will accept patients (COVID or non-COVID related).

Q. What happens if anyone on board contracts COVID-19 while the vessel is not in Falkland Island waters?

A. If a passenger or crew member contracts COVID-19 or tests positive for COVID-19 while not in Falkland Islands waters then Operators should be aware that the vessel may be advised to transit elsewhere so the best medical care can be provided. This will be dependent on the size of the passenger complement and crew, the number of infected persons, the passenger and crew vaccination record, the reason for wanting to enter the territorial waters and other medical support available to the vessel. All vessels with suspected or confirmed COVID-19 cases aboard who are travelling to the Falkland Islands should, where possible, seek medical advice and assistance elsewhere.

Q. What happens when COVID 19 cases emerge during a vessel's time in Falkland Island waters?

A. Vessel Operators where cases emerge during their time in Falkland Islands territorial waters should immediately seek advice from the Chief Medical Officer and in such instances Operators should be aware that assistance from KEMH cannot be guaranteed.

Q. My vessel has someone on board who needs non-COVID related medevac services. Will they be allowed to disembark in the Falklands for the purposes of a medevac?

A. If a medevac is considered desirable for a passenger(s) or crew member(s) with a non-COVID related condition (on an otherwise "clean" vessel) and can be arranged and paid for by the vessel Operator or the passenger (through insurance for example), then FIG will allow disembarkation for the passenger(s) or crew member(s) involved.

If such a medevac is desirable but cannot be arranged by the Operator (due to closed borders in South America for example) then FIG will reserve the right to refuse entry to the Falkland Islands (if the vessel is outside FI waters when the incident occurs) and the Operator may be advised to transit elsewhere so the best medical care can be provided.

Q. If a case of COVID-19 is detected on a fishing vessel in the South Georgia region would the region then slip into the "unclean" category?

A. This is not necessarily the case. If the integrity of the "clean" status has not been compromised then it's highly improbable that FIG would cease to regard the South Georgia region as "clean".

Q. Will organizations like South Georgia Government, British Antarctic Survey or Antarctic Heritage Trust be allowed to let people already in South Georgia or in the Antarctic join a vessel to the Falklands?

A. These are deemed to be clean destinations, pursuant to the quarantine regulations, so yes this is allowed as long, of course, as there are no reported cases of COVID-19 in the areas mentioned.

Q. Are no contact shore excursions allowed prior to release from quarantine?

A. Non-contact visits are not permissible as the quarantine regulations do not allow a person to leave their place of quarantine.

Q. Is Zodiac cruising in Falkland Island territorial waters permitted prior to release from quarantine?

A. Zodiac cruising is not permitted prior to quarantine regulations being satisfied as the quarantine regulations do not allow a person to leave their place of quarantine.

Q. Are there any shore side requirements in terms of social distancing or the use of masks for example?

A. FIG imposed *COVID related* shore side requirements are not necessary once a vessel is considered clean and permission to disembark passengers granted. However, individual organizations in the Islands may wish to institute their own policies.

Q. Can the Falkland Islands be used as an embarkation and disembarkation hub using charter flights or the South Atlantic Airbridge to connect to the Falklands?

A. The use of charter flights or the South Atlantic Airbridge to connect to a Falkland Islands “hub” for the purposes of passenger embarkation and disembarkation is not supported at this time.

Q. What is FIG’s requirement for post voyage trace systems?

A. Cases should be reported up to 72 hours after departure from the Falkland Islands.

Q. If the vessel has other pre-voyage health related procedures in place, will this reduce the requirements set out in the Regulations or the additional requirements for expedition vessels?

A. Expedition vessel Operators may elect to institute additional pre-voyage quarantine measures, including testing measures, for passengers, staff and crew. However, such additional measures will not reduce the requirements laid out in the Regulations or as otherwise described in this Expedition Vessel Guidance document.
