

Association of Marine Pilots of Ireland

2 April 2020

Having looked at measures taken by ports in other countries, the measures taken by Irish ports are very similar.

In Ireland, pilotage is the responsibility of the individual ports, AMPI is the professional body of pilots in Ireland. Membership of our association is not compulsory.

All vessels entering the state must complete a declaration of health, the declaration of health has evolved during this crisis to resemble a declaration of security in that the vessel must list previous ports. They also require a list of all new crew or passengers that have joined since the commencement of the international voyage. Vessels that have been at anchor for a prolonged period are asked to resubmit the declaration of health prior to being assigned a pilot. I have attached M notice 06 of 2020 for the purposes of clarity.

Pilotage is operating in all ports but with control measures in place. All ports are operating a similar system which includes the following;

- The regularly touched surfaces on the bridge to be disinfected before each pilotage movement.
- The persons to be present on the bridge during pilotage to be kept just to the bridge team.
- In Ireland we maintain 2 metres for social distancing. This is to be maintained where practicable on the bridge.
- All regularly touched surfaces to be wiped down on the pilot boat before and after each pilot transfer.
- We have restricted pilot transfers to one pilot at a time in an effort to maintain social distancing.
- Where it is not possible to maintain 2 metre distancing on the pilot boat, the time spent on the boat is to be kept to a minimum.
- Do not take any drinks or food on-board ships.

Irish ports are in constant contact with the Health Service Executive, which is the government body responsible for the provision of health and personal social services for everyone living in Ireland. As this crisis is constantly evolving the HSE is advising the ports on what control measures and appropriate PPE should be worn.

The list of PPE worn and used by pilots is as following;

- Disposable gloves (not used in all Irish ports)
- Face masks (not used in all Irish ports)
- Hand sanitiser (used in all Irish ports)
- Disinfectant wipes (used in all Irish ports)

The HSE has given advice on the use of PPE and have outlined the pitfalls of gloves and masks in the following link. They recommend regular, thorough hand washing in

preference to wearing gloves. <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/protect-yourself.html> As we find out more about the virus this advice may change.

The discussion came up in the port where I work, of what to do in the event of a ship arriving with case/cases of, or with suspected case/cases of coronavirus on-board. We decided as there are too many variables, that should this scenario arise each ship would have to be risk assessed independently. The risk assessment process would involve;

- The pilots
- The port
- The HSE
- The ships master (if he was not the infected person)
- The ship owner/operator

To date our association is unaware of any pilot having contacted the virus. I hope that this is a sign that the measures taken by pilots and ports are effective. Our government have been very proactive and have afforded the ports every bit of assistance and advice they require. Presently Ireland is in "lockdown", not a term I like as it entails different removals of civil liberties in different countries. To date (the restrictions may evolve) we have the following restrictions <https://www2.hse.ie/conditions/coronavirus/self-isolation-and-limited-social-interaction.html>

Should you require any further information or any points that need clarification please get in contact.

Regards,
Patrick Galvin
Chairman
Association of Marine Pilots of Ireland