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Circular Letter No.4204/Add.13
5 May 2020

To: All IMO Member States
United Nations and specialized agencies
Intergovernmental organizations
Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with IMO

Subject: **Coronavirus (COVID-19) – Recommendations for Governments and relevant national authorities on facilitating the movement of offshore energy sector personnel during the COVID-19 pandemic**

Following Circular Letter No.4204/Add.6, which addresses the need to facilitate the movement of seafarers during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Secretary-General has received a set of *Recommendations for Governments and relevant national authorities on facilitating the movement of offshore energy sector personnel during the COVID-19 pandemic*, prepared by the following global industry associations in consultative status with the Organization representing the offshore energy sector: IADC, IOGP and IMCA; and also the International Association of Geophysical Contractors (IAGC) and the International Support Vessel Owners Association (ISOA).

The recommendations, set out in the annex, address the needs of the workers in the offshore energy sector who face challenges similar to those of seafarers. Member States and international organizations are invited to make use of the annexed recommendations and to circulate them to all interested parties, as deemed appropriate.

ANNEX

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GOVERNMENTS AND RELEVANT NATIONAL AUTHORITIES ON FACILITATING THE MOVEMENT OF OFFSHORE ENERGY SECTOR PERSONNEL DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC

The offshore energy sector plays a critical role in meeting the world's energy demands. Services provided include the production and distribution of oil and gas, electricity and renewable energy worldwide; and workers include, inter alia, seafarers, technicians, engineers and other specialist marine, support and industrial personnel. The continued delivery of an unabated supply of these energy resources rests with the ability of the global offshore energy workforce to continue to carry out its function despite the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic.

This annex provides recommendations particularly suited for application to the offshore energy sector workforce.

Member States are encouraged to exercise a practical and pragmatic approach, in these unusual times, to the offshore energy sector workforce with regard to issues like personnel changeovers, resupply, repairs, survey and certification.

Given the critical role of the offshore energy sector for society, Governments are strongly encouraged to recognise offshore energy sector personnel as "key workers" and to facilitate their movement while recognising the need to manage the risks posed by COVID-19.

Expanding upon the measures set out in Circular Letter No.4204/Add.6, which are intended to facilitate maritime transport, Governments and relevant national authorities are recommended to:

- .1 Designate offshore energy sector personnel, regardless of nationality when within respective countries' jurisdiction, as "key workers" providing essential services in support of the offshore energy industry.
- .2 Grant offshore energy sector personnel any necessary and appropriate exemptions from national travel or movement restrictions in order to facilitate their transit to and from their place of work.
- .3 Accept, inter alia, official identity documents, discharge books, employment agreements and letters of appointment from the employer as evidence that offshore energy sector personnel are designated as "key workers", where necessary, to facilitate crew/key personnel changes.
- .4 Permit offshore energy sector personnel to transit through territories (i.e. to/from airports, heliports, seaports) for the purposes of crew/key personnel changes and repatriation.
- .5 Implement appropriate approval and screening protocols for offshore energy sector personnel seeking to transit to and from their place of work.
- .6 Provide information to offshore energy sector personnel on basic protective measures against COVID-19, based on WHO advice.*

* <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/advice-for-public>

Reference is also invited to the following previously issued IMO circular letters:

- .1 Circular Letter No.4204/Add.1 (Covid-19 – Implementation and enforcement of relevant IMO Instruments); and
- .2 Circular Letter No.4204/Add.6 (Coronavirus (Covid-19) – Preliminary list of recommendations for Governments and relevant national authorities on the facilitation of maritime trade during the COVID-19 pandemic).
