



18/03/2020

# MSC’s Response to the COVID-19 Situation

The spread of the new coronavirus disease COVID-19 has created significant challenges for world trade and for the container shipping sector in general. MSC is working tirelessly to maintain a strong position across its cargo business and to minimize the disruption to our customers’ supply chains, while still supporting vital public health efforts to help curb the spread of COVID-19.

We have taken a number of steps to protect our people and our business operations, while ensuring that we continue to provide essential container shipping and logistics services to the global economy.

The following statement relates to MSC Mediterranean Shipping Company’s container-carrying businesses from a global standpoint. Some individual companies within MSC’s Cargo Division have their own additional specific local approaches to business continuity which are aligned with the global approach.

### Response management

In MSC’s headquarters both the Group Chairman and the Group President & CEO have overseen the company’s response to the COVID-19 pandemic, supported in particular by other members of senior management at MSC’s headquarters in Geneva and business leaders in the worst-affected countries.

MSC had pre-existing audited business continuity plans and disaster recovery plans across its businesses, including the deployment of remote working and Shared Service Centres. Our response to COVID-19 has benefited from a combination of these pre-existing plans and our reactivity to this unexpected pandemic.

Our actions began in January following the initial reports of the outbreak in China. These actions have subsequently been extended and have intensified as the disease spread to other countries where business continuity plans are increasingly being implemented.

As a truly global business we can compensate for areas under particular pressure from measures to tackle COVID-19 – the disease is not impacting every location in the world to the same extent at the same time.

### Government guidelines

MSC regularly monitors guidance from the World Health Organization (WHO) and national governments to inform our actions and the guidance issued to our people. This applies to our ships at sea, our offices, depots and other infrastructure onshore.

We have also noted statements and advice from the UN International Maritime Organization and industry bodies such as the International Chamber of Shipping.

### Offices & remote working

Immediately following the first reports of the new virus in China, MSC closed its offices in China, in line with government orders, and advised people to work remotely where possible. MSC activated the local business continuity plan, which entailed the reallocation of functions to our other offices in China, complemented by the support of our Shared Service Centers in other regions.

With the exception of Wuhan, which is due to re-open on 21 March, all offices in China are now open again, in line with Chinese government guidance to all industries.

Around the world we are monitoring the evolving situation and in the event of further temporary office closures, we would take steps such as split teams, remote working using the same video-conferencing technologies worldwide and operating a skeleton staff, as necessary.

This helps us to maintain our fleet network, infrastructure and services, and continue a constant dialogue with our customers globally, whether individuals are in offices or working remotely.

To date, we have introduced at various times remote working systems for various MSC offices including our headquarters in Geneva. A large number of MSC offices will rely on temporary remote-working solutions. The emphasis in all locations has been to maintain essential services and high levels of customer service, despite the difficult operating conditions.

### Continuing our services, wherever possible

In the immediate aftermath of the reports coming out of China about the new virus, MSC implemented certain “blank sailings” from Chinese ports to help manage the lower demand for shipping cargo during the extended Lunar New Year holidays and while much of China’s industry was on lockdown.

During that time, we communicated to our customers about each canceled voyage, as well as certain equipment imbalances and the impact on reefer cargo of congestion at Chinese ports.

MSC believes there is no room for complacency in the current environment as COVID-19 extends across the world.

The reaction of governments and societies to the pandemic will have an impact on port and container terminal labour and productivity. Wherever possible we are introducing contingency plans to manage increased port controls and restrictions on travel, meanwhile, we monitor closely any disruptions which might delay or block our vessels.

We are maintaining our strong customer focus everywhere and we continue to ensure that across all markets we can offer a range of services and continuously engage with our customers to minimise the disruptions to their businesses.

As one of the key actors in the global supply chain, we note that our services are also in great demand during a pandemic to support the delivery of food, medicines and essential items.

### Health, travel and information sharing

Following the initial outbreak in China, MSC shared health and hygiene information throughout its global workforce at sea and on shore, with a combination of global instructions and guidelines, and advice to adapt guidance for local considerations.

This included steps to maintain personal hygiene and reduce the risk of transmission of illness, based on WHO guidelines. These were explained via internal communications channels such as email and intranet, as well as through the global distribution of posters to raise awareness of simple, but important, actions such as hand-washing and avoiding close personal contact. In many offices MSC provided hand sanitiser and temperature checks.

MSC also put in place travel restrictions early on as instructed by national governments and in terms of our own company policies.

MSC is using its extensive global network of 493 offices to gather and pool information to feed into a central information system which is curated and acted on within headquarters, as well as obtaining information and maritime instructions from ship captains and ports.

### Vessel & crew management

Our ship management companies implemented a number of essential steps, beginning in January, such as restricting the embarkation and disembarkation of personnel and provisions, introducing health screenings and protective equipment and sharing advice. The directives given to our ships continue to evolve and vary by geography.

\*\*\*\*\*

We are more than ever grateful to our seafarers for the important role they play in maintaining our fleet and to all our people for preserving the vital shipping and logistics services which enable the global economy.

## COUNTRY-LOCATION / LOCAL OFFICE

US X v

MSC NEW YORK v

+1 2127644800 usa-info@msc.com

Office details

## DOING BUSINESS TOGETHER

Solutions / Local information / E-Business / Sustainability / myMSC

## GET TO KNOW US

MSC Group / Newsroom / Events / Blog / Careers / Contact us / Preference Center

