

Mr. Stuart Hetherington

Questionnaire – Pandemic Response – the Effects on Seafarers and Passengers at Sea

Answer to the Questionnaire from Ireland:

1. Yes.
2. Ireland has. Statutory Instrument (SI) 4 of 2008.
3. Ireland ratified the IMLO-MLC 2006 convention on the 21.7.2014.
4. Ireland implemented the convention on a formal footing through SI 376 of 2014.
5. Ireland has ratified the IMO FAL convention of 1965.
6. Ireland implemented the IMO FAL convention on a formal footing through SI 549 of 2003.
7. Ireland did not/has not denied free pratique to any vessel.
8. Ireland has not. Ireland did not experience any infected persons and focused on being prepared to deal with any eventuality. Ireland took many practical steps which have been integrated into the general strategy for any and all Health alerts.
9. (a) during the recent Ebola outbreak Ireland established a steering group which was led by the Health Service Executive but had participants from the Department of Transport and Customs and Immigration. That group took several steps. identified any and all travel routes and vessels coming from affected areas. There was one such route coming from Liberia to the Port of Aghinah in the Shannon Estuary.

Firstly, they ensured that any vessel coming from an infected area filled out the IHR medical forms for all crew members even if they were not sick.

Secondly, at Port level, it was agreed with all parties that the Sailors would stay on the vessel whilst a vessel was being loaded and unloaded. This was overseen by Medical Health Officers.

Thirdly, the Steering group set up protocols for those people such as navigation Pilots, Marine Inspectors and Custom and Immigration officers on what to look for and what steps to take if they came in contact with an infected party.

(b)The aforementioned Steering Group under the Department of Health.

(c) Yes, Maritime administrations were consulted during the outbreak. They were consulted through the steering group and from Port level through to Departmental officials.

(d)

(i) IHR 2005 Regulations were considered in conjunction with the EU decisions on cross boarder health decisions from the EU Health Security committee.

(ii)The FAL convention of 1965 were considered and the people involved were aware of the requirements. Ireland sought to take a co-operative approach between Health Officials, Department of Transport officials, Customs and Immigration and Private shipping companies. It stayed very local and was 'very much on the ground'.

(iii) In relation to the 2006 ILO MLC convention it was identical to the FAL convention. People were aware of it but opted to operate in a different manner.

(e) The relevant authorities were aware of the conflict between the Regulations and Conventions. As previously indicated they took a very practical approach. There were no cases or incidents in Ireland and so the emphasis at all time was on co-operation amongst all stakeholders and to ensure that the correct protocols were in place. Preparation was the main theme for the steering group.

In talking to the relevant authorities in Ireland they found the co-operative approach to have been extremely refreshing. All parties took the threat and concerns of each other on board.

In fact, this approach is planned to be put on a formal basis at the annual review. It is currently still in place because of the ongoing Ebola threat and they new and emerging Zika threat.