

MEMBER ALERT



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JAPAN EARTHQUAKE & TSUNAMI: RADIATION CONCERNS

The situation in Japan continues to develop with respect to radiation leakage from the Fukushima Daiichi Nuclear Power Facility (“the Fukushima facility”) and has raised additional concerns regarding the safety of vessels, crew, and cargoes transiting the affected area. Recent developments include the following.

US Coast Guard and Customs Border Patrol take steps to screen vessels and crews bound for the US

Further to the Member Alerts dated March 17 and March 21 respectively, your Managers can report that the Department of Homeland Security, the US Coast Guard (USCG) and the US Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) have issued a joint notice to the maritime community regarding the safety of cargo and vessels arriving in the United States from Japan and screening for radiation contamination.

The message, which is attached hereto, notes that the CBP has employed radiation detection technology at ports of entry in the US that can determine the presence of radioactive materials or contamination. Additionally, CBP and USCG frontline personnel will be equipped with personal radiation detectors to provide effective screening of any potential health risks.

The USCG has also implemented measures for vessels that have transited within 50 miles of the Fukushima facility. For those vessels, the USCG will perform additional screening before entry into a US port and in accordance with longstanding USCG protocols in effect since September 11, 2011.

Navigational area warnings

The Japanese Coast Guard has limited the designated dangerous area to 30 kilometers around the Fukushima facility (37-25.5N, 141-0.2E). However, the USCG and the US Maritime Administration (MARAD) have recommended, as a precaution, that vessels avoid transiting within 50 miles (43 nautical miles or 80 kilometers) of the Fukushima facility (37°19'N, 141°01'E).

The USCG and MARAD have also recommended that when a vessel transits within the 50-mile precautionary area, the master of that vessel should submit transit information, including date and total time within the precautionary area, to the relevant USCG Captain of the Port by using the comment block on the 96-hour advance notice of arrival form. See the following USCG and MARAD links:

http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/?pageName=NAVAREA_XII_Warning_Fukushima

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http://www.marad.dot.gov/news_room_landing_page/maritime_advisories/advisory/advisory2011-02.htm

Health considerations for crew / persons traveling to Japan: preventive measures, precautions, and radiation emergency considerations

In addition to this development, your Managers have received several inquiries from Members regarding steps or precautions that can be taken to protect the health and safety of officers and crew, as well as the vessel itself when calling at ports in Japan during the pendency of the critical situation at the Fukushima facility.

As mentioned above, the USCG has cautioned that vessel should avoid transiting within a 50-mile radius of the power plant. (The Japanese Coast Guard has promulgated a navigational warning designating the dangerous area around the plant at 30 kilometers).

Both the World Health Organization (WHO) and the US Centers for Disease Control (CDC) have posted a series of useful tips, information and precautions, including the use of potassium iodide pills, for persons anticipating travel to or from Japan. Advice and recommendations on preparedness and response to a radiation emergency situation are also provided. This information can be found at the following links:

<http://www.who.int/hac/crises/jpn/en/index.html>

<http://www.who.int/hac/crises/jpn/faqs/en/index.html>

http://www.who.int/hac/crises/jpn/faqs_archive/jpn_faq_nuclearconcerns_archive_20110323.pdf

<http://wwwnc.cdc.gov/travel/content/id/2511.aspx>

<http://emergency.cdc.gov/radiation/emergencyfaq.asp>

For any further inquiries, please do not hesitate to contact the Managers.