



19th March 2021

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Dear State contact persons

Nautilus Federation Australia (NFA) is a strategic partnership between the Australian Maritime Officers Union (AMOU) and the Australian Institute of Marine & Power Engineers (AIMPE)

On 21st January AIMPE and AMOU wrote to the Prime Minister and all leaders on the National Cabinet seeking the inclusion of maritime personnel as priority for the COVID-19 vaccination roll-out. Like aviation personnel, maritime personnel are at the international interface with arrivals from overseas. Unlike aviation most of the shipping arrivals (over 29,000 vessel arrivals into Australia per annum) are cargo ships and the interface is with crew rather than passengers. Nevertheless, Australian maritime personnel are working at an international interface.

NFA understands that some of the maritime personnel with the most direct interface have already been included in the first phase of the vaccination roll-out - priority 1a. These include Marine Pilots, AMSA Surveyors and ABF Marine Crews. There are other occupational groups which have direct interaction with crews on overseas ships after they arrive into Australian ports. These include Classification Society Surveyors, Ships Agents, Ship Repair contractors, Stevedoring personnel and others. It is not clear yet whether these will be included in 1a or 1b.

We have members serving on domestic and internationally trading ships, both Australian and foreign flagged, that must also be accorded a high priority. Trading to various countries, ports and with other nationality seafarers make these a particularly at-risk cohort.

It is also extremely unclear whether the remainder of the broadly defined group of Australian maritime personnel will be offered access to vaccination in any position other than in accordance with their individual age cohort as the process enters subsequent phases of the roll-out. There is one jurisdiction which has extended the offer of access more broadly – WA has offered access in the 1a phase to a broader range of maritime personnel. This has been co-ordinated via the local port authorities liaising with maritime employers within their port area. Groups offered access have include tugboat crews, pilot boats crew and others.

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Maritime personnel have indirect contact with international shipping crews on a routine basis. Tug crews exchange ropes with foreign ship crews. Surveyors and repair staff may work on a foreign ship one day and then visit an Australian vessel the same day or the next day.

To better protect Australia's international interface and our officers serving aboard ships of whatever nationality and trade, there needs to be a conscious decision to extend the offer of access to vaccination to the broadest range of Australian maritime personnel.

It would be greatly appreciated if you would update us as a matter of priority on where your State is positioned regarding the vaccination roll-out prioritisation for maritime personnel.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Mark Byrne".

Martin Byrne
Federal Secretary
AIMPE

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read "Mark Davis".

Mark Davis
Executive Officer
AMOU

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