

October 15, 2009

**OP'S ADVISORY TO SHIPPING No. A-21-2009**

**TO : All Steamship Agents, Owners, and Operators**

**SUBJECT: H1N1 PANDEMIC FLU VIRUS**

The Panama Canal Authority (ACP) has been carefully monitoring the worldwide outbreak of the H1N1 Pandemic Flu virus in order to take appropriate measures. In this respect, and in order to improve the level of service to our clients, effective immediately, the requested radio pratique may be granted to vessels that declare no sickness or flu-like symptoms on board, even if the vessel has visited infected ports prior to arrival.

Vessels are still required to declare animal information and any diseases on board, as well as their last ten port calls. Vessels shall also declare in the "*Visit Remarks*" section of the EDCS *Ship Due* form whether any of the declared port calls are located in countries identified by the World Health Organization as having outbreaks of the H1N1 Pandemic Flu virus. Vessels must also declare whether passengers or crewmembers on board are experiencing flu-like symptoms, such as high fever, cough, fatigue, severe headache, vomiting, or lack of appetite, and the evolution of these symptoms.

Declaring the above information prior to arriving at Panama Canal waters is imperative in order to apply appropriate preventive measures to counter any possible spreading of this virus. Vessels reporting any of the above conditions may be subject to health measures that include, but are not limited to, sanitary and health authorities boarding the vessel to verify what has been declared.

As a reminder, the Maritime Regulations for the Operation of the Panama Canal state that embarking/disembarking in Canal waters is prohibited until a vessel has been declared safe in accordance with public health regulations.

We would like to assure the maritime community that the ACP is implementing appropriate measures to ensure that its personnel required to board vessels will not represent a risk to their crew for the propagation of the Pandemic Flu virus.

**ORIGINAL SIGNED**

Manuel E. Benitez  
Executive Vice President of Operations