



香港商船資訊

HONG KONG MERCHANT SHIPPING INFORMATION NOTE

Fatal illnesses of Malaria happened on board Hong Kong Registered Ships in Central Africa

To : Shipowners, Ship Managers, Ship Operators, Masters. Officers and Crew

Summary

Two fatal illnesses of malaria happened on two Hong Kong registered cargo ships last year in areas of Central Africa. This information note draws the attention of Shipowners, Ship Managers, Ship Operators, Masters, Officers and Crew to the lessons learnt from these incidents.

The Incident

1. In the first incident, a cargo ship sailed from Owenda, Gabon to Durban, South Africa with manganese ore cargo onboard. Two days after departure, the chief cook reported to master that he had caught fever for four days with high body temperature. On the next day, the master reported to the company and asked for radio medical advice. Paracetamol tablets were served to the patient. The condition of the chief cook deteriorated a week later and the ship was diverted to port "Elizabeth" of South Africa for emergency treatment. Upon arrival, local paramedics declared that the chief cook had passed away.

2. In the second incident, a cargo ship sailed from Equatorial Guinea to Zhangjiagang, China with timber/log cargo onboard. Four days after departure, one crewmember reported to the master that he had caught fever. Medicine for fever treatment was given to the crewmember and his body temperature was monitored. When the ship arrived at Durban, South Africa one week later, the patient was sent to local hospital for medical treatment. Immediate blood test confirmed malaria affection and the patient passed away after eleven days' treatment in the hospital.

Lessons Learnt

3. The management companies should ensure that procedures for safe operation in high risk of malaria area are complied with. Particular attention should be drawn to the following:

- a) Before proceeding to the area of high risk of malaria such as Africa, Southeast Asia and Central America, the master and crew should be made aware of the precaution measures. Prevention of mosquito bites is the first line of defence against malaria by using protective clothing and insect repellent.
- b) The Schedule 3 “Precautions Against Malaria” of the Hong Kong Marine Ordinance CAP 478X “Merchant Shipping (Seafarers) (Medical Stores) Regulation” should be referred to;
- c) Always refer to the information and guideline of World Health Organization for any updated information: <http://www.who.int/malaria/travellers/en/>

4. The attention of shipowners, ship managers, ship operators, masters, officers and crew is drawn to the lessons learnt from these incidents.

Marine Department
Shipping Division

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