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The Institute for Marine-Earth Exploration and Engineering (MarE3) of JAMSTEC

HSQE Group

Policies for the JAMSTEC/MarE3's Responses to the COVID-19 during the Cruises (Rev. 4)

JAMSTEC/MarE3 sets the basic policies for the prevention of the spread of COVID-19 on-board JAMSTEC research vessels during cruises. These policies may be changed, based on both domestic and worldwide states of the pandemic, and also on the instructions from the relevant Japanese Government ministries.

1. Precautions during the Cruise

- Record your body temperature and health conditions every morning in principle, and report to the Ship's Captain through your supervisor (for scientists, the Principal Investigator/Chief Scientist). Immediate reporting is required, especially if any of the below symptoms are observed:
 - One of the following symptoms: breathing difficulties (dyspnea), strong fatigue (malaise), or high fever (37.5°C or higher).
 - Mild cold-like symptoms, such as fever (higher than his/her normal temperature even it is below 37.5 °C) or cough continued four or more days.
 - Subjective symptoms of abnormalities in senses of taste and smell.
- Always wear a mask, in principle, and follow basic preventive actions, such as hand washing.
- Disinfect public facilities which people use/touch, such as handrails and door knobs, restrooms, and other public spaces. Locations of the sanitiser stations shall be notified to all passengers.
- The Ship's Captain and the Principal Investigator/Chief Scientist will discuss how to avoid the "Three-Cs" (Closed-spaces, Crowded places, and Close-contact settings) for all on-board activities (*e.g.* set keep-out areas for scientists, social distancing in the mess room, etc.).
- Avoid, as much as possible, overtime work that causes an accumulation of fatigue.
- Tools, equipment, and PPE (*e.g.*, hardhat, protective goggles, ear plugs) as much as possible shall not be shared by multiple persons. If sharing is unavoidable, disinfect before/after use.
- The Ship Health Supervisor and other personnel who will respond to the infected person shall be trained beforehand in the correct use of medical PPEs (disposable apron, face shield, etc.),

and control them properly, including their disposal after use.

2. In the event of finding a suspected infected person during the cruise

- In case of finding a person with the reportable symptoms described in the previous section, he/she shall be quarantined in the designated cabin (1-person cabin shall be prepared) on the Ship's Captain's orders. The Captain will report this to the shore office.
- In addition to the consultation with the radio medical service, the Ship's Captain will let the suspected person take a medical doctor's remote diagnosis, and conduct an antigen test under the advice of the medical doctor via radio. Then the doctor makes the final diagnosis based on the test result. The Captain will determine the navigation plan as taking this information into consideration.
- In case of calling at a Japanese port: PCR testing shall be conducted immediately after berthing. Follow instructions from the Public Health Agency and JAMSTEC Headquarters.
- A ministry-certified oral medicine for COVID-19 has been installed onboard, which can be prescribed with a medical doctor's remote diagnosis. Patient needs to sign the consent form in advance to the medication.
- In case of calling at a foreign port: Consult with the Rescue Co-ordination Centres (RCC) about the responses. In case medical treatment is required, contact the quarantine station or RCC of the nearest country and follow their instructions.

3. Ship's response guideline in case of occurrence of an on-board quarantine

A) In case of calling at a Japanese COVID-19 prepared port

- Taking the test result and the doctor's diagnosis (*see* previous section) into consideration, consult with a Public Health Agency and follow its instructions, if any. When necessary, abort the cruise and head for port.
 - If the ship is cruising within four-days distance from port: Head for port or prepare to do so. If there is some time before heading for port, in principle, the planned research can be continued until then.
 - If the ship is cruising beyond four-days distance from port: Immediately head for port or prepare to do so.
- In either case, if the symptoms disappear before arriving at the port, the cruise can be resumed. The on-board quarantine will be removed unless the symptoms return again for five days, after consultation with MarE3 as taking the result of remote diagnosis into consideration.

B) In case of calling at a foreign COVID-19 prepared port

- Follow the instructions from the quarantine station or RCC of the coastal country where the nearest port prepared to handle COVID-19 is located. All relevant COVID-19 prepared ports should be listed before starting the cruise.
- To minimize the risk of infection, all passengers including seafarers, shall avoid going ashore at foreign ports as much as possible. When going ashore, thoroughly follow all preventive measures.