



Ships with Ukrainian crew at Russian ports risk disruption

The Russian Federation's recent implementation of temporary entry restrictions for Ukrainian citizens may cause delays and other difficulties for vessels with Ukrainian crew at Russian ports.

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On 6 October 2023, the Russian Federation issued a government order outlining temporary special procedures for Ukrainian citizens seeking to enter Russia from a third country. From **16 October 2023**, Ukrainians above the age of 14 will be permitted to enter Russia only through a few identified border control checkpoints, with the Sheremetyevo airport in Moscow appearing to be the only entry checkpoint open to Ukrainians at the time of writing. The duration of the restrictions and their potential impact on port calls for commercial vessels carrying Ukrainian seafarers remain unknown. However, one of our local correspondents in Russia warns that a vessel with Ukrainians onboard may be the target of thorough inspections by the Russian authorities, possibly including questioning of the entire crew. The correspondent adds that it is unclear what the exact consequences could be for a vessel and her crew in the event that the order is breached, but that lengthy delays, and even fines, could be anticipated.

Plan ahead for voyages to Russian ports

Ship operators with vessels destined for Russian ports are advised to take note of the above and plan their crew changes and voyages to Russian ports accordingly. The local agent of a vessel should be contacted well in advance of her arrival at a Russian port to confirm the exact security and immigration policies in effect at the time. We further advise ship operators to take every precaution to prevent sending vessels with Ukrainian crew to Russian ports if doing so could result in a difficult and unpleasant experience for the vessel and crew concerned.

We are grateful to our correspondents [Pandi Services East Ltd.](#) for assisting with the above information.