

Ukraine – March 16th update

By admin On March 16, 2022 In Cargo, Insurance Marine News, Keep, Marine Hull, Marine Liability, Political Risk, Credit & Finance

Various businesses have provided their clients/customers with updates on the current maritime situation in Ukraine. Dias Marine Consulting informed members of North of England Club that all Ukrainian ports remained closed for inward/outward passages. Armed hostilities were still under way in many regions of Ukraine. Heavy fighting was taking place near the cities of Mariupol, Kharkov, Kiev, Chernigov and Sumi, while the cities of Kherson and Berdyansk were occupied by Russian troops.

In Odessa, the situation was more stable.

In a lengthy update from Skuld covering developments from March 11th to March 14th, the Norway-based marine insurer said that the situation remained unpredictable, with the status of ports and sea areas subject to sudden change. For vessels trading to Ukraine, Skuld members/customers were strongly advised to contact local agents.

Skuld noted that the IMO had published a Security Update: Maritime Security and Safety in the Black Sea and Sea of Azov.

The Council agreed on 10th and 11th March to encourage, as a provisional and urgent measure, the establishment of a blue safe maritime corridor to allow the safe evacuation of seafarers and ships from the high-risk and affected areas in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov to a safe place.

The IMO recommends that ships stranded in Ukraine ports and waters should use the online form to submit information on ships stranded in the Black Sea and Sea of Azov. This information will be received by the IMO Secretariat Emergency Task Force.

<https://www.imo.org/en/MediaCentre/PressBriefings/pages/ECSStatement.aspx>

1. Travel implications

All commercial flights to the Ukraine have come to a halt, so Ukrainian crew will need to be flown to neighbouring countries such as Poland or Romania and travel to Ukraine by rail or road.

Russian planes cannot use the European airspace, EU airports UK, Canadian and US airspace/airports. Russia has in turn closed its airspace to 36 countries, including the EU states, UK, Canada, and the US. Although the airlines still flying to Russia excluded the EU, British, Canadian, or American air carriers, lines still connecting to Russia included Turkish Airlines, Middle Eastern and Asian airlines, which were still flying to Russia from European and American airports.

For crew of any nationality travelling to or through Russia, Skuld strongly recommended that they not comment either in person or on social media on the current conflict between Russia and the Ukraine. Skuld said that terms like “war”, “invasion”, etc. should not be used. Even if they feel provoked, when dealing with Russian authorities crew should not comment on politics or mention that they want to join the soldiers in Ukraine.

2. Local implications in the Ukraine

Odessa Port is closed. Cargo operations are suspended for commercial operations; there is also a potential for a significant escalation of the conflict. Pivdenny (Yuzhny in Russian) Port is closed. Cargo operations are suspended for commercial operations; there is also a potential for a significant escalation of the conflict operations.

Mykolaiv Port is closed. The cargo operations are suspended for commercial operations. This port has seen recent escalation and further escalations are possible.

Mariupol Port is closed. The cargo operations are suspended for commercial operations. The city of Mariupol is besieged by Russian military, but still under the control of the Ukrainian government.

Kherson Port is closed, and the city is occupied by Russian troops. The cargo operations are suspended for commercial operations.

In general, if same is at all commercially possible, Skuld recommended that members/customers not send vessels to the northern Black Sea.

3. Effects on shipowners operating vessels with Ukrainian crew

About 20% of Ukrainian crew currently serving on vessels around the world have said that wanted to be repatriated to the Ukraine to fight. However, Skuld recommended to Members to avoid repatriating Ukrainian crew via Russia or Belarus if possible.

If Ukrainian crew reach the end of their respective contracts, but do not want to return to the Ukraine they can stay in the EU.

4. Effects or restrictions in other countries

The UK is turning away any vessels owned or operated by anyone connected to Russia. The government of the UK is considering further sanctions. Canada prohibits Russian ships and fishing vessels from entering their ports and internal waters.

The US has issued an import ban of Russian oil, liquefied natural gas, and coal. Any transactions entered into prior to March 8th that are ordinarily incident to and necessary to the importation of crude oil, petroleum, petroleum fuels, oils, liquefied natural gas, coal and coal products, will be permitted to dock up until April 22nd (Midnight Eastern time).

On March 11th the US issued a further import ban of Russian fish, seafood, and preparations thereof; alcoholic beverages; non-industrial diamonds; and any other products of Russian Federation origin, as may be determined by the Secretary of the Treasury.

From April 25th Australia will prohibit the import of oil, refined petroleum products, natural gas, coal and other energy products from Russia.

5. Regional implications

Constanta Port (Romania) was open and operating; Skuld said that it appeared that additional cargo was being diverted to Constanta from Odessa. The Sea of Azov was currently closed to navigation.

The Kerch Strait was open for navigation within but closed for transit. Ports located within the Kerch Strait were reported to be operating.

Taman Port (Russia) was open with restrictions. The port appeared to be operating normally, although ISPS level 2 might lead to operational delays. There were constraints and demands reported relating to vessels with

Ukrainian crewmembers. The current security situation was assessed to be stable.

Novorossiysk Port (Russia) was open with restrictions. The port appeared to be operating normally, although ISPS level 2 might lead to operational delays. There were constraints and demands reported relating to vessels with Ukrainian crewmembers. The current security situation is assessed to be stable.

6. Effects on Russian shipowners

The classification societies Lloyd's Register (LR) and Det Norske Veritas (DNV) have released statements that they will end their contracts and operations with Russian entities and are winding down all related business.

7. Other effects

The International Association of Classification Societies (IACS) withdrew on 11 March 2022 with immediate effect the Russian Maritime Register of Shipping's (RR) membership of IACS.

<https://www.skuld.com/topics/port/port-news/europe/war-in-ukraine-latest-developments/>

<https://www.nepia.com/industry-news/russia-ukraine-military-action-impact-on-shipping/>