

Circular From GARD**Date: 27 February 2018**

Enhanced yellow fever inspections in China

In a response to ongoing outbreaks of yellow fever in South America and Africa, China has strengthened its quarantine inspection requirements to prevent the virus being carried to China by seagoing vessels.

Yellow fever is a mosquito-borne disease with the potential to cause severe health implications. It is found mainly in tropical areas of Africa and Central and South America. Although significant progress has been made in combatting this disease and there is a very effective vaccine that can be used to prevent it, recent reports from the [World Health Organization \(WHO\)](#) describes serious outbreaks of the disease in Nigeria and Brazil. In response to the reported outbreaks, the Chinese quarantine authorities have implemented an enhanced inspection regime in the country's ports in an attempt to prevent the spread of the virus by seagoing vessels.

To summarise, China's enhanced inspection regime for yellow fever:

- commenced on 19 January 2018 and is expected to last for three months;
- applies to vessels and containers arriving at Chinese ports from Nigeria, Peru and Brazil, except from the Brazilian ports of Cear á Rio Grande do Norte, Para íba, Pernambuco, Alagoas and Sergipe; and
- requires vessels and containers to be effectively disinfected and crew members onboard must be in possession of valid yellow fever vaccination certificates.

Specific recommendations for vessels trading to Chinese ports

According to Gard's correspondent in China, Huatai Insurance Agency & Consultant Services Ltd., Chinese port inspectors will require proof of disinfection of vessels and/or cargo arriving from affected ports in Nigeria, Peru or Brazil. The correspondent's best advice is therefore to obtain a mosquito eradication certificate prior to leaving the affected area. The correspondent also states that the enhanced quarantine requirements may be enforced differently from one Chinese port to another and emphasises the importance of contacting the vessel's agent in the relevant Chinese port to ascertain the local quarantine requirements in force at any given time and the documentation required. Please refer to our correspondents' [circular No.:PNI 1801](#) of 30 January 2018 for details.

As regards the yellow fever vaccination certificates, it is worth noting that amendments to the International Health Regulations ([IHR](#)) covering yellow fever vaccination certificates entered into force on 11 July 2016, and from this date, the certificate of vaccination against yellow fever is valid for the life of the person vaccinated. A [WHO Q&A](#) provides useful information about the IHR amendments.

General recommendations for vessels trading to areas where there is a risk of exposure to mosquito-borne diseases

Shipowners and operators with vessels trading to areas where there is a risk of exposure to mosquito-borne diseases should ensure that these vessels are able to deal with the various challenges that a mosquito-borne disease can bring. In addition to the duty of care for those onboard, shipowners and Masters also have a responsibility for taking measures to prevent such diseases from spreading. Members and clients are therefore advised to, as far as practicable, tailor make their own strategies for dealing with the risks associated with mosquito-borne diseases. For further advice regarding precautionary measure to be implemented prior to, during and after a vessel's visit to an area where there is a risk of exposure to a mosquito-borne disease, please refer to our Insight "[Mosquitoes - one of the deadliest animals in the world](#)" of 8 March 2017.

Source of Information: Gard P&I Club