

## **03/2023—Access to shore leave for seafarers**

**This marine notice draws attention to the importance of providing shore leave to seafarers, for ships visiting Australian ports.**

Companies, owners and masters of ships are reminded of the requirement under the Maritime Labour Convention 2006 (MLC, 2006) for approval of shore leave, which states that;

*“Seafarers shall be granted shore leave to benefit their health and well-being and consistent with the operational requirements of their positions”.* (MLC, 2006, Regulation 2.4, Paragraph2).

Companies are responsible for seafarer health, safety, and wellbeing. Shore leave and access to shore-based welfare facilities is key to seafarer physical and mental health recovery and reduces risks of fatigue.

AMSA expects that companies strongly consider the benefits to seafarer wellbeing and recovery when assessing the risks of allowing shore leave. AMSA reminds companies that the decision to grant shore leave should not be based on financial implications.

AMSA Port State control officers may take action when there are clear grounds to believe the master or officers in charge of ships have not complied with the requirements as set out in the MLC 2006, for seafarers to access shore leave.

Should a company be advised that shore leave is not possible by a shoreside authority, this information should be provided to AMSA to investigate as the Competent Authority.

Whilst it is recognised that the risks associated with COVID are still highly relevant and cannot be eliminated entirely, there are suitable and acceptable means of allowing seafarers to access shore leave safely.

A list of Port Welfare Committees and Australian Welfare providers can be found on the [Australian Seafarers Welfare Council website](#).