



NUMBER 26A SUPPLEMENTARY REQUIREMENTS EN ROUTE AND ALONGSIDE PROCESSING OF CRUISE VESSELS

This Fact Sheet is to provide information relating to en route processing and alongside processing for arriving cruise vessels, to ensure that pursers/clearance staff onboard are fully aware of New Zealand Customs requirements for either option. For additional information, also refer to Fact Sheet 26.

Background

The New Zealand Customs Service has, for a number of years, provided the following processing options to cruise vessels arriving in New Zealand:

- **En route processing** – New Zealand Customs officers travel to the last overseas port prior to New Zealand and join the vessel. They travel back to New Zealand processing all landing (defined as finally disembarking the vessel somewhere in New Zealand) passengers and crew.
- **Alongside processing** – The vessel is processed on arrival at the first Customs port of entry. Generally, this option is only used where vessels are in transit through New Zealand and only have minimal numbers landing (less than 100) or have a small capacity. Alongside processing will delay any disembarkation of passengers or crew until the vessel is cleared by Customs/Immigration and Quarantine cleared. Cruise companies also need to be mindful that, at smaller Customs ports, there may be a reduced level of resource available, which can impact on processing times.

Decisions regarding whether or not a vessel requires alongside or en route processing are finalised during the planning phase prior to the commencement of the cruise season. This is conducted by agreement between cruise companies, local representatives and Customs and Quarantine.

In New Zealand, the Customs Service undertakes the border functions on behalf of Immigration New Zealand. This means that Customs officers ensure that the Immigration Service's entry and exit requirements are met at the border including the issuing of permits to those persons holding valid entry visas for New Zealand or those being from a visa waiver country.

En route processing

What are the accommodation requirements for en route processing?

The number of Customs officers deployed relates directly to the number of landing passengers and crew required to be processed prior to arrival in New Zealand and the number of days available to process them.

Officers must be provided with suitable accommodation onboard:

- Generally, this is a passenger cabin, but if the vessel is at capacity, ship's officers' cabins are an acceptable alternative.
- Customs officers do not share cabins. Customs staff travel with a reasonable amount of processing equipment along with their personal luggage. In the average passenger cabin, this would result in there only being limited space.
- Officers are deployed on a national basis and often will not know their fellow officers; therefore, they should not be expected to share a cabin with them. Compounding this is that deployments are often mixed, with males and females being deployed.
- Officers should reasonably expect their own personal space once they have completed their processing duties each day.

Vessels requiring both Customs and Quarantine en route officers should reserve sufficient cabins well in advance of any deployments. Confirmation of this should be made to New Zealand agents prior to any deployments being undertaken.

What ship preparation is required for en route processing?

In preparation for en route processing pursers/clearance staff should;

- finalise lists of passengers and crew who will be finally landing in New Zealand
- provide advance notice to those landing passengers that they will be required to report to New Zealand Customs/Immigration and Quarantine officials at a designated time, day and venue
- provide landing passengers (and crew) with a New Zealand Arrival Card and Quarantine Declaration Form (one per landing passenger), which must be completed prior to arriving at the processing venue
- arrange a suitable venue that will cope with the numbers required to be processed – ideally, this should only have one entry point and one exit point to ensure all persons are correctly processed for Customs and Quarantine purposes, and the venue should be booked for sufficient time to allow processing to occur or, in the case of larger numbers, processing can be scheduled over two days (if possible) – this should be discussed with en route officers at the initial meeting onboard.

Sufficient time must be allowed to process the landing passengers and crew. Large numbers landing (1,500+) will take most of a day, and even greater numbers (2,500+) will most likely take a day and a half to process.

There also needs to be sufficient pursers/other staff to assist with managing the process to ensure all passengers requiring processing report to the venue and that processing flows correctly and passengers are not able to circumvent either process.

What does en route processing involve?

The following is an overview of the process and the essential elements required to ensure a streamlined operation:

- Officers will generally join vessels at the last overseas port prior to New Zealand.
- Officers will arrange to meet with pursers/clearance staff once the vessel has departed port. This meeting is to discuss processing requirements and, if required, view the proposed processing area.
- Processing will normally occur on the first sea day out of port. On longer deployments, this may occur on subsequent days.
- Officers will data capture all landing passengers and crew using laptops and passport readers.
- Every landing passenger is required to present themselves in person to the Customs and Quarantine staff. If individuals are unwell and unable to attend the process, alternative arrangements can be made with the processing officers to see these persons at a later time.

- Passengers must ensure they bring their arrival forms along with their passport to the processing venue.
- Generally, passengers will report to the Customs/Immigration process first then move on the Quarantine process before exiting.
- Landing crew are normally processed once all passengers have been processed. Arrangements can be discussed at the initial onboard meeting.
- Once all landing passengers and crew have been processed and the reconciliation between ships lists and actual number data captured (processed) has been completed, Customs officers email this information from the laptops back to Customs in New Zealand. To enable this to occur, they will require a computer with external internet access with the ability to send and receive attachments. Generally this is done from the purser's office due to the restricted access available to send and receive attachments from the ships normal internet cafes.

What other duties do en route processing officers have?

En route officers have several other functions to perform during their deployment:

- **Face to passport checks of transit passengers and crew** – Officers are required to conduct a percentage check of those passengers and crew in transit through New Zealand. From the transit passenger and crew lists, officers will randomly select a number of individuals who will be required to report to the officers at a prearranged time and venue along with their passports. These individuals will not be required to complete an arrival card. ***It is important that these passengers and crew do not present themselves during the processing of the landing passengers and crew, as this will cause confusion.***
- **Processing of any overland passengers** – Overland passengers are defined as those who will disembark at one New Zealand port and rejoin the vessel at a subsequent port within New Zealand. This commonly occurs in Milford Sound where small numbers of passengers will disembark and travel overland to Dunedin where they rejoin the vessel. All overland passengers are to be screened by Customs and Quarantine en route staff prior to the passengers disembarking.
- **Meet with ships security officer** – This is to enable officers to provide a general risk assessment of the vessel and its passengers and crew.
- **Complete ship's inward paperwork** – Generally this is completed on the last day before arriving in New Zealand.

What happens on arrival in New Zealand?

Upon the vessel's arrival at the first New Zealand Customs port of entry, local Customs and Quarantine shipping staff will board and meet with the en route officer(s) to receive an update, and they will also collect copies of inward paperwork.

The local Customs port manager will also board to meet and debrief the officer in charge of the Customs staff deployed. This is to ensure all standards of performance and behaviour have been met.

Officers will then settle any onboard accounts for personal purchases and check out of their rooms before departing the vessel.

Alongside processing

Alongside processing is utilised for vessels that transit through New Zealand with minimal numbers of passengers or crew finally landing in New Zealand or for smaller vessels that can easily be processed on arrival without any unnecessary delays.

What are the requirements for alongside processing?

To ensure minimal delays on arrival, pursers/clearance staff should ensure that all passengers and crew who will be landing in New Zealand (finally disembarking) have completed a New Zealand Arrival Card and Quarantine Declaration Form.

What does alongside processing involve?

All passengers and crew who will be landing in New Zealand (finally disembarking) must report immediately on arrival to a designated area on board, bringing with them their completed forms and passport to enable them to be processed by Customs and Quarantine staff.

On completion of this processing, officers will undertake the face to passport check of a selected number of transit passengers and crew. (These will have been preselected prior to arrival in consultation with local shipping agents and Customs cruise ship co-ordinators).

Once these functions are completed, the vessel is deemed to be Customs cleared and passengers and crew will be allowed to go ashore.

Formalities such as inward paperwork will be completed at this time.

For further information, contact your nearest office of the New Zealand Customs Service, visit the Customs website www.customs.govt.nz, or call Customs on 0800-428 786 (0800 4 CUSTOMS).

