



**BIOSECURITY**

## **Specification for Vessels arriving at Ascension Island**

Issued under section 24 (1) of the Biosecurity Ordinance, 2020

Issue date: 02 November 2020

### **GUIDE FOR USERS**

The information contained in this Specification is presented in three parts:

**PART A: General Information:** contains general information, including the legal basis for the Ascension Island Government Specification for Vessels arriving on Ascension Island and the general responsibilities of the vessel master.

**PART B: Vessel Specification:** this section is the Specification for Vessels Arriving on Ascension issued under section 24 of the Biosecurity Ordinance, 2020. It sets out the conditions that a vessel needs to meet to be granted clearance to land passengers and goods (biosecurity landing clearance)

**PART C: Clearance Procedure:** describes the process by which a vessel will be granted biosecurity landing clearance.

## **Part A: General Information**

### **1. Vessel specification and vessel master's responsibility**

- 1.1 This Specification for Vessels Arriving in Ascension ("the Vessel Specification") forms part of the system of managing the biosecurity risk posed to Ascension by the arrival of vessels
- 1.2 The master of an incoming vessel who intends to land cargo or baggage, or to permit the disembarkation of passengers or crew members, requires biosecurity landing clearance in order to do so.
- 1.3 Obtaining biosecurity landing clearance is dependent on the biosecurity risk posed by the vessel on arrival in Ascension. A vessel that meets the requirements of the Vessel Specification is likely to pose an acceptable biosecurity risk and therefore to be granted clearance
- 1.4 It is the master's responsibility to ensure the vessel is compliant with the current version of the Specification at the time of the vessel's arrival on Ascension.
- 1.5 The master must complete and submit a Biosecurity Arrival Declaration in advance of the vessel's arrival. Any vessel for which a Biosecurity Arrival Declaration is not received will be subject to a mandatory biosecurity arrival inspection before a decision is made about biosecurity landing clearance. All other vessels are liable to be inspected.
- 1.6. The biosecurity arrival inspection will be informed by the content of the vessel's Biosecurity Arrival Declaration. Failure without reasonable excuse to cooperate with an arrival inspection will result in refusal of biosecurity landing clearance,
- 1.7 In the event that a biosecurity issue is detected during an arrival inspection, our biosecurity officers will work with the vessel's crew to eliminate it or reduce it to an acceptable level. Refusal of biosecurity landing clearance is recognised to be a highly disruptive outcome and will be used as a last resort.

### **2. Review of the Vessel Specification**

The Vessel Specification may be reviewed, amended or revoked if there are changes to the risk posed to Ascension by incoming vessels. This may happen without notice, but notice will be given to owners, operators, charterers and masters of affected vessels where possible.

### **3. Definition of Terms**

#### **3.1 Biosecurity Officer**

A Biosecurity Officer appointed under section 3 of the Biosecurity Ordinance, 2020.

#### **3.2 Biosecurity landing clearance**

Clearance given under section 25 of the Biosecurity Ordinance, 2020 which, once given, means that the vessel is permitted to land cargo and baggage and to allow passengers and crew to disembark. Passengers and crew will require separate biosecurity entry clearance, and cargo may be subject to biosecurity import control.

### **4. Official Point of Contact**

The official point of contact for this Specification is:

Biosecurity Officer  
Ascension Island Conservation and Fisheries  
Georgetown  
Ascension Island  
ASCN 1ZZ  
Tel/Fax: 00 247 66359  
Email: [biosecurity@ascension.gov.ac](mailto:biosecurity@ascension.gov.ac)

## 5. Fees and Costs

All fees and costs involved with a vessel obtaining biosecurity landing clearance, including complying with the Vessel Specification, shall be borne by the vessel's owner, operator, charterer or master.

## Part B: Vessel Specification

This section is the Vessel Specification issued under section 24 of the Biosecurity Ordinance, 2020 that a vessel must meet as a requirement of being granted biosecurity landing clearance.

## 6. Application

6.1 This Specification applies to all vessels arriving on Ascension Island that intend to land passengers or cargo onto the island. This includes:

6.1.1 Supply vessels bringing goods to the island.

6.1.2 Recreational vessels such as yachts and cruise ships that disembark passengers onto the island.

6.2 The specification **does not** apply to any lighter, barge or other vessel used exclusively within Ascension's territorial waters primarily to ferry cargo, passengers, crew or baggage ashore from a larger vessel or for recreational purposes including fishing or diving.

## 7. Vessel specification

To obtain biosecurity landing clearance, vessels must meet the following conditions:

8.1 On arrival, the vessel, including the hold, must be in a clean state with no visible build-up of debris or extraneous material such as soil or leaves that could harbour hitch-hiking organisms.

8.3 Domestic pets and any live animals being transported as cargo and not destined for Ascension must remain secured whilst the vessel is in port unless supervised by a member of the ship's crew. Any live animals to be landed on Ascension must have the appropriate licence. The vessel must be free of any other live animals.

8.4 Pest detection and control activities should be in evidence throughout the vessel including the hold. This must include specific control for rodents and ants.

8.5 All vessel waste and refuse must be securely stored. All vessels over 100GT must have a waste disposal plan in place, a copy of which must be shown to a Biosecurity Officer on request.

- 8.7 All vessels over 400GT must have a Ballast Water Management Plan in place and evidence of its implementation. A copy of the Ballast Water Management Plan must be shown to a Biosecurity Officer on request.
- 8.8 Evidence of the most recent hull anti-fouling treatment must be provided to a Biosecurity Officer on request.
- 8.9 The obligations in this section are in addition to, and do not limit, the obligations of the masters of vessels in respect of discharges from a vessel into the territorial waters of Ascension under—
- (a) the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships, 1973 as modified ('MARPOL');
  - (b) the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments, 2004;
  - (c) any other written law.

## **9. Documentation**

- 9.1 All required documentation must be in English.
- 9.2 It is the master's responsibility to ensure that any documentation presented in accordance with the requirements of this Vessel Specification is original (unless otherwise specified) and clearly legible. Failure to do so may result in delays in obtaining biosecurity landing clearance or clearance being refused.
- 9.3 A master must present the following documentation on request in order to obtain biosecurity landing clearance:
- 9.3.1 For vessels over 100GT, a waste management plan
  - 9.3.2 For vessels over 400GT, a Ballast Water Management Plan
  - 9.3.3 Where required by the Flag State of the vessel, a certificate demonstrating compliance with the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments, 2004.
  - 9.3.4 Proof of a recent antifouling treatment

## **Part C. Clearance Procedure**

### **10 Biosecurity Arrival Declaration**

A Biosecurity Arrival Declaration for Vessels must be made on the prescribed form available from the Ascension Island Government website and submitted to the official point of contact identified in section 4 at least **24 hours** before arrival on Ascension.

### **11 Biosecurity Arrival Inspection**

- 11.1 A Biosecurity Officer may direct that an incoming vessel is subject to a biosecurity arrival inspection to establish whether the vessel, cargo, crew or passengers are likely to pose a biosecurity risk to Ascension and whether the requirements of this Vessel Specification has been met.
- 11.2 The Biosecurity Officer can, during such an inspection apply reasonable biosecurity measure to reduce any biosecurity risk detected to an acceptable level.

- 11.3 If a master refuses to cooperate with an inspection without reasonable excuse, then biosecurity landing clearance will not be granted.
- 11.4 If the vessel is found to comply with this specification and is considered unlikely to pose an unacceptable biosecurity risk to Ascension, then biosecurity landing clearance will be given.
- 11.5 If the Vessel Specification is not met, then biosecurity landing clearance may be refused. If biosecurity landing clearance is refused the vessel will not be permitted to land cargo or baggage, or to permit passengers and crew members to disembark.

## Part D. Amendment Record – Specification for Vessels Arriving at Ascension Island

Amendments to this Specification will be given a consecutive number and will be dated in the body of the table. Brief details of the amended pages will be included.

No.	Details	Date
1	First version placed on-line	13/10/2020