

## 02-03 Rev.1; Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)

Pacific Maritime Association  
Accident Prevention Department  
550 California Street, P. O. Box 7861  
San Francisco, California 94120-7861

### SAFETY BULLETIN #2-03 Rev.1

April 16, 2003

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome (SARS)

Due to the emerging information, procedures and protocols, this Safety Bulletin has been revised, and may be subject to future revision. Please check the PMA website [www.pmanet.org](http://www.pmanet.org) for the latest update.

SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) is of concern worldwide. There have been a number of incidents reported in the United States. The source of the disease appears to be Asian countries including China, Hong Kong, Singapore and Vietnam. Reported incidents have been associated with persons who traveled to Asia, persons who contacted it from household members or persons who contracted it in health care settings.

SARS is not directly an airborne virus, but is transmitted by "droplet transmission" of bodily fluids. A person can communicate it by sneezing or coughing in close proximity to another person, expelling small droplets, which can be breathed in or deposited on other objects for indirect transmission.

SARS has a typical incubation period of 2-7 days however there have been isolated reports that have suggested incubation periods of up to 10 days.

The symptoms of SARS are:

- high fever (over 100.4F or 38 C). (The fever is sometimes accompanied by chills.)
- possible headache and overall body ache.
- dry cough.
- shortness of breath or trouble breathing.

Vessels arriving from the noted countries in Asia generally have a transit time in excess of the SARS incubation period of 7 to 10 days and any person who contracted the disease would be visibly sick and detectable on arrival.

The Center for Disease Control (CDC) is responsible Federal agency for SARS. They may be contacted through the Quarantine Station on that attached list. The CDC has a good website at [www.cdc.gov](http://www.cdc.gov) with detailed information regarding SARS.

The CDC has regulations at 42 CFR 71 that require ships captains to report any deaths or ill crew persons immediately to the quarantine station at or nearest the port at which the ship will arrive. There is no routine requirement for a report. A report ONLY has to be made if someone is sick.

CDC sends out letters periodically reminding companies of the requirement to notify them if there are sick crewmembers on board.

Federal agencies - Coast Guard, Customs and INS – are all on the look out for SARS and know to notify CDC if they detect anything. Several have published information notices on SARS.

*Federal OSHA recently developed information regarding SARS. ([www.osha.gov](http://www.osha.gov)). OSHA notes that while the information references enforceable standards, the information itself is not an new standard or regulation, and creates no new or independent legal obligations. The OSH Act requires employers to comply with hazard specific safety and health standards. In addition, pursuant to Section 5(a)(1) of the OSH Act (the "General Duty Clause"), employers must provide their employees with a workplace free from recognized hazards likely to cause death or serious physical harm. Employers can be cited for violating the General Duty Clause if they do not take reasonable steps to abate or address such a recognized hazard. The guidelines outline precautions and hygiene practices that should be taken. *The guidelines outline that all employees with potential occupational exposure to SARS should be trained on the hazards associated with exposure and on the protocols in place at their facilities to isolate and report cases and to reduce exposures.**

Employers should take note of the above. Information in this Safety Bulletin or on the referenced websites may be used as a basis for the required SARS Gangway Safety Talk training, A Safety Tip mailer will be completed and mailed to individual workers soon. Training should be given to all employees that might work aboard a vessel or come in contact with the vessel's crew. It is suggested that Terminal Operators ascertain, from an appropriate source, the health status of the vessel's crew prior to working the vessel.

#### West Coast CDC Quarantine Station Contact List

**San Francisco International Airport**

PO Box 280548 SFIA  
San Francisco, CA 94128-0548  
(650) 876-2872  
(650) 876-2796 (fax)

**24 Hour contact**

Ms. Susan Dwyer  
Officer in Charge  
Cell 650-333-9322  
Pgr 650-570-0212  
Email sad1@cdc.gov

**Tom Bradley International Airport**

380 World Way, Box N19  
Los Angeles, CA 90045  
(310) 215-2365  
(310) 215-2285 (fax)

**24 Hour contact**

310-215-2365 will forward to duty officers cell phone.

**Seattle-Tacoma International Airport**

Ms. Jenny Ansdell  
Officer in Charge  
Seattle, WA 98158-1250  
(206) 553-4519  
(206) 553-4455 (fax)

**24 hour contact**

call 206 553 4519 and press 0 the duty officer will be paged.