

Senate Select Committee on COVID-19
Answers to questions on notice
Agriculture, Water and the Environment Portfolio

Committee: Senate Select Committee on COVID-19
Inquiry name: Inquiry into the Australian Government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic
Hearing date: 5 May 2020
Question Date: 29 April 2020
Question Type: Written

Senator Keneally asked:

1. When did the Department first make contact with the Ruby Princess during its voyage that terminated at Circular Quay on 19 March 2020?
2. When did the Department first receive a Human Health Report from the Ruby Princess?
Please be prepared to table these reports on 5 May, and please circulate electronic copies of the reports via the Committee Secretariat in advance of the hearing (at least 30 mins prior) to assist Senators who are participating in the hearing remotely.
3. Please provide a list of federal agencies that have access to the Maritime Arrivals Reporting System.
4. According to a COVID-19 fact sheet entitled 'Information for the cruise industry' released by the Australian government on 6 March, if an ill traveller is reported 'a biosecurity officer will liaise with the vessel to screen for COVID-19'. The Ruby Princess reported 158 ill passengers, including 17 with high fevers. How many federal biosecurity officers met the Ruby Princess's 2,700 passengers when it docked in Sydney on 17 March?
 - a. What actions did these officers take to screen for COVID-19?
5. The same COVID-19 fact sheet states that disembarking cruise ship passengers with no signs or symptoms of COVID-19 'must wear a surgical mask' when travelling domestically or on public transport or in taxis in Australia to reach their home. Did federal biosecurity officers direct the 2,700 disembarking passengers from the Ruby Princess to wear a surgical mask to travel home?

Answer:

1. The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment's first contact with the Ruby Princess prior to its docking on 19 March 2020 was at 14:09 on 16 March 2020, via the Maritime Arrivals Reporting System (MARS). This contact was in response to the Ruby Princess completing its initial pre-arrival reporting at 13:46 on 16 March 2020 which indicated people on board had symptoms that may be consistent with a listed human disease.

MARS issued the Ruby Princess with a document outlining berthing arrangements for its arrival in Sydney which stated that human health issues notified by the vessel would be assessed and the vessel must display the quarantine signal. The vessel was also required to update the Department of any changes.

2. The Ruby Princess submitted its initial pre-arrival report, including human health reporting on 16 March 2020 at 13:46 (Attachment A) to the Department in MARS. Three additional human health updates were provided to the Department on:
 - a. 16 March 2020 at 15:01 (Attachment B)
 - b. 18 March 2020 at 08:54 (Attachment C)
 - c. 18 March 2020 at 19:21 (Attachment D)

Ruby Princess docked in Sydney at 02:29 on 19 March 2020.

3. The Maritime Arrivals Reporting System is a platform for commercial vessels to report information relevant to assessing biosecurity risk.

The Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment administers MARS and is the only federal agency which accesses it on a routine basis for the purpose of assessing biosecurity risk.

Relevant information is provided to state health agencies for the purpose of assessing human biosecurity risk. Processes exist specific to each jurisdiction to facilitate this.

- In the case of NSW, relevant health officials have direct access to information contained in MARS, including vessel pre-arrival and human health reports.

The Department of Defence has access to MARS in order to complete pre-arrival reporting for defence vessels.

4. The last human health update from the Ruby Princess provided to the Department in MARS for the voyage arriving on 19 March reported (Attachment D):
 - a. 128 passengers ill
 - b. 24 with temperatures over 38 degrees

The voyage prior, arriving 8 March 2020, reported 158 passengers ill and 13 with a fever.

Four biosecurity officers attended the Ruby Princess on 19 March 2020.

Prior to biosecurity officers boarding the vessel, NSW Health had undertaken an assessment of the information provided by the Ruby Princess, informed by direct communication with the vessel. NSW Health advised there were no issues preventing disembarkation.

On the morning of 19 March 2020, biosecurity officers reconfirmed with NSW Health the approach to managing passengers and the advice remained there were no concerns relating to passengers leaving the vessel. Biosecurity officers disembarked passengers, consistent with this advice.

Officers completed required vessel inspections and passenger baggage clearances. Officers also provided the relevant Department of Health COVID-19 factsheet (Attachment E) to passengers, and advised them of their requirement to self-isolate for 14 days from arrival.

5. No.

The arrangements that applied to passengers on the Ruby Princess is set out in the attached fact sheet (Attachment E).

Consistent with the Commonwealth Health fact sheet, there was no requirement for passengers disembarking the Ruby Princess to wear masks.

This is because the vessel did not report travellers who had been in or transited through a high-risk country, nor had there been alternate health advice that passengers should wear masks. Consistent with NSW Health advice, ill passengers were wearing masks when they disembarked.



Australian Government
**Department of Agriculture,
Water and the Environment**

Pre-Arrival Report

This is a COPY of the Pre-Arrival Report submitted to the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment. If the Master or Agent of this vessel becomes aware that the information contained in this report is inaccurate, incomplete or out of date, they must complete a new report correcting the information as soon as practicable. Failure to provide this information is in breach of the *Biosecurity Act 2015*.

Vessel Particulars

Vessel Name

Ruby Princess

IMO

9378462

Call Sign

ZCDY2

Registration/Official #

737959

Country of Registry

Bermuda

Vessel Type

Cruise Vessel

Master's Name

Giorgio Pomata

Year Built

2008

Gross Tonnage

113561

Net Tonnage

83977

Length (m)

289

Crew Capacity

1200

Passenger Capacity

3599

Cargo Holds

Cargo Decks

Cargo Tanks

Vessel Email

Ruhapur4@princesscruises.com

Arrival Details

Voyage #

RU2007

Last International Port of Call

Napier (New Zealand)

Australian Ports of Call

Will the vessel berth at the first port of call?

Yes

First Port of Call

Sydney

Arrival/Anchorage Date/Time

19/03/2020 06:00

Departure Date/Time

19/03/2020 18:45

Berth Name

Overseas Passenger
Terminal

Berth Date/Time

19/03/2020 06:00

Vessel Itinerary in Australia

Port	Date	Port Agency	Billing Agency	Crew Agency
Sydney	19/03/2020	Carnival Australia Sydney	Carnival Australia Sydney	Carnival Australia Sydney

Sanitation

Certificate Type

Control Exemption
Certificate

Port of Issue

Sydney (Australia)

Date of Issue

05/12/2019

Will the vessel require a new Sanitation Certificate?

No

Human Health

1.) Have any persons died on board during the current voyage?

NO

1.1) How many persons died?

1.2) Cause or suspected cause of death:

**Resp
onse** **Number**

2.) Have any persons become ill or shown signs of illness in the past 14 days?

Yes 53

2.1) Is any person on board the vessel displaying any of the following symptoms?

2.1.1) Temperature over 38°C (if no thermometer is available, any person suspected of having a temperature should be reported)	Yes	10
2.1.2) Acute unexplained non-itchy skin rashes or lesions, and non-itchy rashes or lesions caused by illness or exposure to hazardous agents (but not heat rashes, dermatitis, eczema, or similar common skin conditions)	No	
2.1.3) Muscle aches, diarrhoea, severe headaches or vomiting (but not vomiting caused by inebriation or motion sickness)	Yes	4
2.1.4) Severe bruising or bleeding from the nose, ears, eyes, mouth, anus or skin (but not in a person pre-disposed to nosebleeds or haemorrhoids, or has cuts and abrasions)	No	
2.1.5) Glandular swelling in armpits or neck	No	
2.1.6) Prolonged loss of consciousness where a person cannot be roused (but not loss of consciousness caused by consumption of alcohol, drugs or medications, fainting or sleeping)	No	
2.1.7) Persistent coughing and difficulty breathing with no apparent cause and no history of similar symptoms (but not persistent coughing and difficulty breathing caused by asthma, heart disease, obesity, chronic bronchitis or emphysema)	No	
2.1.8) Except in the case of a person with restricted mobility or an otherwise healthy young child - an inability to disembark from a vessel without assistance	No	
2.1.9) Yellowing of the skin/whites of the eyes	No	

2.2) Has the ill person(s) on board:

2.2.1) Been in contact with birds/bird products/someone suspected/confirmed of having Avian influenza in the last 14 days	No	
2.2.2) Eaten raw poultry/poultry products in the last 14 days	No	
2.2.3) Handled samples suspected of containing Avian Influenza virus in the last 14 days	No	
2.2.4) Travelled Africa, South/Central America or the Caribbean in the last 6 days and do not have a valid yellow fever vaccination certificate?	No	
2.2.5) Been in Africa in the last 21 days	No	
2.2.6) Been in contact with camels or bodily fluids from a camel, including having been coughed or sneezed on by a camel, or drunk raw camel milk or consumed camel meat in a country in the Middle East?	No	

C 2.3) Gastro-intestinal illness

2.3.1) Cases of diarrhoea and/or gastro intestinal illness have been recorded in the vessel's medical log during the current voyage and/or the last 21 days

**Pass
enge
rs**

2.3.2) How many passengers and crew were on board during the current voyage and/or last 21 days

2647	1148
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2.3.3) Was there any situation on board, which may lead to infection or the spread of disease

Details:

2.a) Has the vessel left mainland China and/or Iran and/or Republic of Korea and/or Italy in the last 14 days?

2.b) Has any person on the vessel felt mainland China and/or Iran and/or Republic of Korea and/or Italy in the last 14 days?

How many persons?

2.c) Has any person on the vessel been in contact with a proven case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days?

How many persons?

Biosecurity

3) Are there any animals (including birds and/or fish) as ship's pets on board the vessel?

Type of Animal	No.	Description (including health condition)

3.1) Did any animals die during the current voyage?

3.1.1) How many animals died?

3.1.2) Describe how the dead animals were disposed

4) Were there any other animals (including birds and/or fish) detected on board the vessel?

No

Type of Animal

No.

Description (including health condition)

Type of Animal	No.	Description (including health condition)

4.1) Did any animals die during the current voyage?

4.1.1) How many animals died?

4.1.2) Describe how the dead animals were disposed

5) Were there any insects, including bees, discovered onboard during the current voyage?

No

Describe the insects and their location when discovered on the vessel:

6) In the past 24 months was the vessel in a Russian Far East Port/s between 40 N, 60 N, *and west of 147 E during any period between 1 July and 30 September?

No

6.1) Please provide the names and dates of the ports visited

Port

Arrival Date

Departure Date

Time

Port	Arrival Date	Departure Date	Time

6.2) Since the last visit to any Russian Port was the vessel inspected and cleared by an agricultural authority in Australia, Russia, Canada, New Zealand or the USA as free of Asian Gypsy Moth?

AGM Certificate No.

Country of Issue

Issue Date

AGM Certificate No.	Country of Issue	Issue Date

7) Since the vessel's last inspection in Australia, has the vessel carried any livestock, bulk seeds (including grain) or bulk meal (being meal that contains plant or animal, including fish or bird material) in the last 10 cargoes?

No

Cargo - Commodity

Loading Port

Discharging Port

Discharge Date

Cleaning

Cargo - Commodity	Loading Port	Discharging Port	Discharge Date	Cleaning

8) Has the waste on board the vessel been securely contained in a container or sealed room so that no waste is accessible to animals and there is no leakage?

Yes

9) Do you intend to discharge waste in port?

Yes

Port-Arrival Date	Discharge Date	Estimated Volume (m3)
Sydney	19/03/2020	99

10) Will the crew sign off while the vessel is at berth or anchorage in Australian waters?

Yes

Port-Arrival Date	Disembark Date	Disembark Time	No. of Crew	Biosecurity items to declare	Item Details
Sydney	19/03/2020	0700	73	No	

11) Do you intend to discharge any ballast water sourced in Australia during this voyage?

No

Port – Arrive/Anchorage Date

12) Are there any live plants on board?

Yes

12.1) What is the location, health and condition of the live plants?

Report Attached

End of Pre-Arrival Report

Submitted by

Ruby Princess Vessel Master

Submitted on

16/03/2020 13:46



Australian Government

**Department of Agriculture,
Water and the Environment**

Human Health Update

This is a COPY of the Pre-Arrival Report submitted to the Department of Agriculture, Water and the Environment. If the Master or Agent of this vessel becomes aware that the information contained in this report is inaccurate, incomplete or out of date, they must complete a new report correcting the information as soon as practicable. Failure to provide this information is in breach of the *Biosecurity Act 2015*.

Vessel Particulars

Vessel Name

Ruby Princess

IMO

9378462

Call Sign

ZCDY2

Registration/Official #

737959

Country of Registry

Bermuda

Vessel Type

Cruise Vessel

Vessel Email

Ruhapur4@princesscruises.com

Arrival Details

Voyage #

RU2007

Agency to which any updated conditions will be sent

Carnival Australia Sydney

Human Health

1.) Have any persons died on board during the current voyage?

NO

1.1) How many persons died?

1.2) Cause or suspected cause of death:

2.) Have any persons become ill or shown signs of illness in the past 14 days?

**Resp
onse**

Yes 53

2.1) Is any person on board the vessel displaying any of the following symptoms?

2.1.1) Temperature over 38°C (if no thermometer is available, any person suspected of having a temperature should be reported)

Yes 10

2.1.2) Acute unexplained non-itchy skin rashes or lesions, and non-itchy rashes or lesions caused by illness or exposure to hazardous agents (but not heat rashes, dermatitis, eczema, or similar common skin

No

conditions		
2.1.3) Muscle aches, diarrhoea, severe headaches or vomiting (but not vomiting caused by inebriation or motion sickness)	Yes	4
2.1.4) Severe bruising or bleeding from the nose, ears, eyes, mouth, anus or skin (but not in a person pre-disposed to nosebleeds or haemorrhoids, or has cuts and abrasions)	No	
2.1.5) Glandular swelling in armpits or neck	No	
2.1.6) Prolonged loss of consciousness where a person cannot be roused (but not loss of consciousness caused by consumption of alcohol, drugs or medications, fainting or sleeping)	No	
2.1.7) Persistent coughing and difficulty breathing with no apparent cause and no history of similar symptoms (but not persistent coughing and difficulty breathing caused by asthma, heart disease, obesity, chronic bronchitis or emphysema)	No	
2.1.8) Except in the case of a person with restricted mobility or an otherwise healthy young child - an inability to disembark from a vessel without assistance	No	
2.1.9) Yellowing of the skin/whites of the eyes	No	

2.2) Has the ill person(s) on board:

2.2.1) Been in contact with birds/bird products/someone suspected/confirmed of having Avian influenza in the last 14 days	No	
2.2.2) Eaten raw poultry/poultry products in the last 14 days	No	
2.2.3) Handled samples suspected of containing Avian Influenza virus in the last 14 days	No	
2.2.4) Travelled Africa, South/Central America or the Caribbean in the last 6 days and do not have a valid yellow fever vaccination certificate?	No	
2.2.5) Been in Africa in the last 21 days	No	
2.2.6) Been in contact with camels or bodily fluids from a camel, including having been coughed or sneezed on by a camel, or drunk raw camel milk or consumed camel meat in a country in the Middle East?	No	

C 2.3) Gastro-intestinal illness

2.3.1) Cases of diarrhoea and/or gastro intestinal illness have been recorded in the vessel's medical log during the current voyage and/or the last 21 days

4

**Pass
enge
rs**

2.3.2) How many passengers and crew were on board during the current voyage and/or last 21 days

2647	1148
------	------

2.3.3) Was there any situation on board, which may lead to infection or the spread of disease

No

Details:

2.a) Has the vessel left mainland China and/or Iran and/or Republic of Korea and/or Italy in the last 14 days?

No

2.b) Has any person on the vessel felt mainland China and/or Iran and/or Republic of Korea and/or Italy in the last 14 days?

No

How many persons?

2.c) Has any person on the vessel been in contact with a proven case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days?

No

How many persons?

End of Pre-Arrival Report

Submitted by

Ruby Princess Vessel Master

Submitted on

16/03/2020 15:01



Australian Government

**Department of Agriculture,
Water and the Environment**

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IMO

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Call Sign

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Registration/Official #

737959

Country of Registry

Bermuda

Vessel Type

Cruise Vessel

Vessel Email

Ruhapur4@princesscruises.com

Arrival Details

Voyage #

RU2007

Agency to which any updated conditions will be sent

Carnival Australia Sydney

Human Health

1.) Have any persons died on board during the current voyage?

NO

1.1) How many persons died?

1.2) Cause or suspected cause of death:

2.) Have any persons become ill or shown signs of illness in the past 14 days?

**Resp
onse**

Number

Yes

110

2.1) Is any person on board the vessel displaying any of the following symptoms?

2.1.1) Temperature over 38°C (if no thermometer is available, any person suspected of having a temperature should be reported)

Yes

17

2.1.2) Acute unexplained non-itchy skin rashes or lesions, and non-itchy rashes or lesions caused by illness or exposure to hazardous agents (but not heat rashes, dermatitis, eczema, or similar common skin

No

conditions		
2.1.3) Muscle aches, diarrhoea, severe headaches or vomiting (but not vomiting caused by inebriation or motion sickness)	Yes	6
2.1.4) Severe bruising or bleeding from the nose, ears, eyes, mouth, anus or skin (but not in a person pre-disposed to nosebleeds or haemorrhoids, or has cuts and abrasions)	No	
2.1.5) Glandular swelling in armpits or neck	No	
2.1.6) Prolonged loss of consciousness where a person cannot be roused (but not loss of consciousness caused by consumption of alcohol, drugs or medications, fainting or sleeping)	No	
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2.2.6) Been in contact with camels or bodily fluids from a camel, including having been coughed or sneezed on by a camel, or drunk raw camel milk or consumed camel meat in a country in the Middle East?	No	

C 2.3) Gastro-intestinal illness

2.3.1) Cases of diarrhoea and/or gastro intestinal illness have been recorded in the vessel's medical log during the current voyage and/or the last 21 days

6

**Pass
enge
rs**

Crew

2.3.2) How many passengers and crew were on board during the current voyage and/or last 21 days

2647

1148

2.3.3) Was there any situation on board, which may lead to infection or the spread of disease

No

Details:

2.a) Has the vessel left mainland China and/or Iran and/or Republic of Korea and/or Italy in the last 14 days?

No

2.b) Has any person on the vessel felt mainland China and/or Iran and/or Republic of Korea and/or Italy in the last 14 days?

No

How many persons?

2.c) Has any person on the vessel been in contact with a proven case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days?

No

How many persons?

End of Pre-Arrival Report

Submitted by

Ruby Princess Vessel Master

Submitted on

18/03/2020 08:54



Australian Government

**Department of Agriculture,
Water and the Environment**

Human Health Update

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IMO

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Call Sign

ZCDY2

Registration/Official #

737959

Country of Registry

Bermuda

Vessel Type

Cruise Vessel

Vessel Email

Ruhapur4@princesscruises.com

Arrival Details

Voyage #

RU2007

Agency to which any updated conditions will be sent

Carnival Australia Sydney

Human Health

1.) Have any persons died on board during the current voyage?

NO

1.1) How many persons died?

1.2) Cause or suspected cause of death:

2.) Have any persons become ill or shown signs of illness in the past 14 days?

**Resp
onse**

Number

Yes

128

2.1) Is any person on board the vessel displaying any of the following symptoms?

2.1.1) Temperature over 38°C (if no thermometer is available, any person suspected of having a temperature should be reported)

Yes

24

2.1.2) Acute unexplained non-itchy skin rashes or lesions, and non-itchy rashes or lesions caused by illness or exposure to hazardous agents (but not heat rashes, dermatitis, eczema, or similar common skin

No

conditions		
2.1.3) Muscle aches, diarrhoea, severe headaches or vomiting (but not vomiting caused by inebriation or motion sickness)	Yes	6
2.1.4) Severe bruising or bleeding from the nose, ears, eyes, mouth, anus or skin (but not in a person pre-disposed to nosebleeds or haemorrhoids, or has cuts and abrasions)	No	
2.1.5) Glandular swelling in armpits or neck	No	
2.1.6) Prolonged loss of consciousness where a person cannot be roused (but not loss of consciousness caused by consumption of alcohol, drugs or medications, fainting or sleeping)	No	
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2.2.4) Travelled Africa, South/Central America or the Caribbean in the last 6 days and do not have a valid yellow fever vaccination certificate?	No	
2.2.5) Been in Africa in the last 21 days	No	
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C 2.3) Gastro-intestinal illness

2.3.1) Cases of diarrhoea and/or gastro intestinal illness have been recorded in the vessel's medical log during the current voyage and/or the last 21 days

6

**Pass
enge
rs** **Crew**

2.3.2) How many passengers and crew were on board during the current voyage and/or last 21 days

2647 1148

2.3.3) Was there any situation on board, which may lead to infection or the spread of disease

No

Details:

2.a) Has the vessel left mainland China and/or Iran and/or Republic of Korea and/or Italy in the last 14 days?

No

2.b) Has any person on the vessel felt mainland China and/or Iran and/or Republic of Korea and/or Italy in the last 14 days?

No

How many persons?

2.c) Has any person on the vessel been in contact with a proven case of COVID-19 in the last 14 days?

No

How many persons?

End of Pre-Arrival Report

Submitted by

Ruby Princess Vessel Master

Submitted on

18/03/2020 19:21



Information for international travellers

There is currently a global outbreak of novel coronavirus (COVID-19).

Symptoms of COVID-19 are similar to other respiratory illnesses and can include fever, sore throat, cough, tiredness and shortness of breath. This information sheet should be read in conjunction with the 'What you need to know' and 'Isolation guidance' information sheets. Go to www.health.gov.au/covid19-travellers.

Who is required to stay at home?

All travellers must isolate for a period of 14 days after they have entered Australia. If you need to transit domestically, you may complete this transit and then begin your precautionary 14 day self-isolation period. If you have a layover, you must remain in the airport or self-isolate in your accommodation for the transit period. Refer to the 'Isolation guidance' information sheet for further information.

You may also be required to undergo enhanced health screening on arrival in Australia.

What do I do if I am sick right now?

If you are experiencing symptoms of COVID-19, let a member of the airline or ship crew know now. If you are in the airport or seaport contact a biosecurity officer now.

What do I do if I get sick while in Australia?

If you become unwell, you must:

- Stay in your home or hotel.
- Isolate yourself from others and use a separate bathroom if available.
- Put on a surgical mask if you are near other people. If you don't have one, cover your cough and sneeze.
- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water and use alcohol-based hand rub.
- Call a doctor and tell them your recent travel history.

If you have serious symptoms such as difficulty breathing, call 000, ask for an ambulance and notify the ambulance officers of your recent travel history.

How can I prevent the spread of coronavirus?

Practising good hand and sneeze/cough hygiene is the best defence against most viruses:

- Wash your hands frequently with soap and water, including before and after eating, and after going to the toilet.
- Cover your cough and sneeze, dispose of tissues, and wash your hands.
- If unwell, avoid contact with others (stay more than 1.5 metres from people).

More information

For the latest advice, information and resources, go to www.health.gov.au

Call the National Coronavirus Help Line on 1800 020 080. It operates 24 hours a day, seven days a week. If you require translating or interpreting services, call 131 450.

The phone number of each state or territory public health agency is available at www.health.gov.au/state-territory-contacts

If you have concerns about your health, speak to a doctor.

