

In an effort to slow or halt the spread of the COVID-19 virus, French Polynesia's High Commissioner and president announced this morning that all persons arriving in Polynesia are subject to a 14-day 'self-quarantine', in their domicile or in a hotel. We're told that a number of new cases have been confirmed, but so far all are in Papeete.

It was further announced that inter-island travel will only be allowed for work or family emergencies, or for family members returning home. Additionally, all schools will close Wednesday, restaurants must diminish capacity by 50%, and there will be a moratorium on public gatherings including church services.

No specific policy changes regarding foreign yachts were announced in this morning's televised address, so our associates Kevin Ellis of Nuku Hiva Yacht Services and marine consultant Stephanie Betz of Archipelagoes contacted the Agency for Maritime Affairs for clarification. **At this time the new policy for all arriving yachts is that their crews will be required to 'self-quarantine' aboard their boats for 14 days.** Due to the territory-wide restrictions on inter-island travel, it is our understanding is that arriving boats will be required to stay put at their clearance port -- Nuku Hiva and Hiva Oa are the two options -- until their 14-day isolation is finished. We assume that initial VHF check-in should be made upon arrival with the local JRCC.

Although we often recommend making initial landfall at Hiva Oa due to its upwind location, Nuku Hiva is a much larger and more comfortable anchorage, and the surrounding town is the largest and best supplied in the Marquesas. At either location, however, our partners will work with local suppliers to insure that all sailors have essential supplies while under quarantine.

For vessels already at sea and those soon to depart, if you arrive with any crew who are showing signs of possible COVID-19 infection, such as coughing, shortness of breath, fever, and sore throat, call the JRCC for health assistance by dialing 16JRCC from any locally operating phone (or via VHF 16).

The above info is accurate as of this writing. We hope to send you additional info tomorrow.

-- Andy

Andy Turpin
Director, Pacific Puddle Jump