



THE M/S ARTANIA STORY

HOW CAPT. MORTEN HANSEN AND HIS
CREW MASTERED ONE OF THEIR
BIGGEST CHALLENGES.

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On the 12th of March 2020, ...

... the World Health Organization declared the COVID-19 disease to be a global pandemic. Ports around the world started to close and cruises were cancelled. At that time the M/S ARTANIA with Capt. Morten Hansen had just arrived in Sydney, Australia. Immediately the passengers on board of the ship were offered to fly home or sail back to Germany with the ARTANIA.

Just after leaving Sydney, the operator received a call from a passenger who flew home, advising that he had tested positive for COVID-19. Given the highly infectious nature of the disease, it was not long before several other passengers on board were showing symptoms of the virus.

While BSM Cruise Services, technical and deck & engine crew manager of M/S ARTANIA, took significant steps to implement a more intensive cleaning regime and enhanced its hygiene plans, Capt. Hansen, together with the whole crew, ensured the implementation of those on board and managed this difficult situation with calmness and professionalism.



Even though the situation was very challenging on board, Capt. Hansen (left picture: In the middle / right picture: On the left) and the crew tried to keep up the mood at all times.

Upon the arrival in Freemantle the ship was prepared for a 14-day-quarantine period. Everyone on board showing symptoms of COVID-19 was tested. Those tested negative were offered to either fly home with chartered flights or stay in a hotel for a 14-day-quarantine period. Those tested positive were taken straight to hospital.

The M/S ARTANIA was divided into a green and red zone, one cabin per person was assigned and all measures were taken to avoid personal contact and fulfil all hygiene matters. A professional cleaning company was hired in just 24 hours and two external catering companies were engaged to provide meals to the remaining crew.

Capt. Morten Hansen and the crew on board of M/S ARTANIA did a tremendous job by fulfilling and implementing all hygiene measurements and on the other hand performing their duties as cruise seafarers, not only by managing essential deck and engine tasks but also in regard to the communication with the guests and other crew on the ship.

Sadly, one passenger with underlying health problems and one member of the crew died of COVID-19.

Quarantine completed, the M/S ARTANIA sailed back to Germany and berthed in Indonesia and the Philippines, allowing several seafarers to return to their homes.



Left picture: The M/S ARTANIA leaving Freemantle / Right picture: The crew showing their gratitude during the departure and Capt. Hansen is waving goodbye to Freemantle.

“This has been an extraordinary and ever-changing situation, involving the most outstanding teamwork between our onshore support staff and the crew on board the vessel.” says Martin Springer, Managing Director of BSM Cruise Services.

Frank Oertel, Director Operations adds: “[...] The Captain was instrumental in maintaining the crew’s morale, managing the implementation of the quarantine, liaising with the authorities and updating those on board on the latest news every day over the public address system.”

On the 08th of June 2020, after a nearly 3 months lasting odyssey, Capt. Hansen and the crew brought the M/S ARTANIA and the remaining 8 passengers, which decided to stay on board of the ship, safely back to Bremerhaven, Germany.



Left picture: The M/S ARTANIA arriving in Bremerhaven / Right picture: Capt. Hansen upon arrival, leaving the ship for the first time since months.

Capt. Hansen and the whole crew of M/S Artania did an astonishing job and without their dedication, the management of this crisis would not have been possible. They clearly demonstrated to the outside world, that challenging situations on board can be handled, if everyone from the team is pulling together.

Impressions:



Farewell of M/S ARTANIA in Fremantle



From top to bottom: ARTANIA seafarers on their way back home; The crew after their arrival in Bremerhaven; Capt. Hansen touching land for the first time since months.