



BY BRYONY MCCABE
04 DEC 2020



COVID-19 prevention and detection at MB92 Barcelona

The yard's stringent procedures against COVID-19 mean refit activity can continue apace...



Following Spain's national lockdown in response to the COVID-19 pandemic earlier this year, [MB92 Barcelona](#) made the decision to close its facilities for four weeks from 16 March to 14 April, 2020 to ensure the safety and protection of everyone involved in the shipyard's day-to-day operations. Since activity recommenced, MB92 Barcelona has enforced stringent COVID-19 prevention and detection procedures within its facilities.

"Health and safety has always been an important part of our way of working," explains Jordi Ariet, chief operating officer at MB92 Barcelona. "We cannot stop COVID-19 but we can try to prevent its spread. So, we have created protocols based around early detection and adding as many barriers as we can to reduce the risk of infection within the shipyard as much as possible."

As well as the mandatory use of face masks, health assessment questionnaires and temperature readings for everyone accessing the facilities, MB92's prevention and detection procedures require all employees, collaborating companies, contractors, owners' representatives, crewmembers and other visitors to take a COVID-19 Antibody, Antigen and PCR test on first arrival at the shipyard. Antibody & Antigen tests are then repeated periodically every two weeks to allow for the early detection of any positive cases. A medical testing centre has been set up onsite to make the process easier and more efficient.

The 86m motoryacht *Ecstasea* is currently in the shipyard undergoing works and its captain, Florin Bordeanu, believes the procedures are working well. "The rules are strict with regards to masks and the bi-weekly testing controls the situation," he comments. "We have access to a really good setup in the yard, with a testing facility that features a waiting room and numerous testing points, so it is quick and easy to get tested."

MB92 Barcelona has also organised for accommodation to be available for the quarantine of any positive or possible cases, if persons are unable to adequately quarantine on board or in a crew apartment. The accommodation is fully furnished and equipped and includes 24-hour assistance from the health and safety and customer care teams, as well as catering or any other services that the quarantining person may need.

"The good thing is that we are a refit yard, so we are very used to challenges and finding solutions, and this is another challenge..."

Of course, for MB92 Barcelona, there are challenges to overcome when a positive case is detected on a boat undergoing works. "You have to trace all the close contacts and apply quarantine protocols if required," adds Ariet. "In these situations, we have worked together with the crew, project managers and health and safety department to find ways to keep things moving on the critical chain of the project, such as continuing with exterior works or isolating specific areas. The good thing is that we are a refit yard, so we are very used to challenges and finding solutions, and this is another challenge."

Dave Collinson, refit and technical director at DCB Yacht Refit Management, is currently involved with multiple refit projects at MB92 Barcelona and believes that the measures have been very effective. "The few cases found amongst crew and personnel have been caught very quickly and quarantine measures have been put in place, so the yard has been able to keep operating well," he reflects. "Obviously, if there's a company that has any cases amongst its employees, it changes the game a little, but all the refits I have here at the moment are planned to tight schedules and we are keeping to those schedules, so COVID-19 is not impacting project delivery times."

Working within MB92 Barcelona since September, Jan Mittelmann, owner's representative for a 100m motoryacht undergoing works, has also found the shipyard to be professional and well prepared with regards to its COVID-19 procedures. "There is some extra forward planning required," he acknowledges. "For example, if somebody new needs to come on the boat, whether it's a crewmember or contractor, they can't come before they have received a negative test result, which can take 24 hours.

"So, you have to factor the time it takes to get the result and organise accommodation away from the yard. However, when there is a positive case, we have managed to avoid any spreading on board and have kept the virus off the boat throughout this time, even though we are fully crewed and getting a lot of work done by MB92 and contractors from other parts of Europe."

For MB92 Barcelona, focusing on people's health is the first priority in order to continue operating successfully. "All our clients and collaborators have very quickly understood the reasons behind all the measures and how effective they are. And the results so far have been good because, through early detection, we have found any potential positive cases early and have been able to isolate them," concludes Marina Peyrard, customer care manager at MB92. "As a result, we have prevented any outbreaks and have been operating normally throughout this time despite the situation in the wider area."