

BACKGROUND

Will the U.S. receive visits from other countries?

The Coast Guard invites countries with ports that send ships to the United States to participate in reciprocal visits to observe the United States Coast Guard's ISPS Code implementation procedures and other aspects of our port security. During the visit, delegates will have opportunities to visit with Coast Guard Headquarters' staff and discuss regulatory and policy development processes, evaluation of security assessment and plan review and approval processes, and visit field units to observe implementation of the Port Facility Security Plan (PFSP). Delegations will tour ports with similar industries and capacities as their own. Since 2005, over 80 countries have visited the United States to share valuable insight with our port officials and return home with new perspectives for the security in their own ports. Requests for these visits should be made through your Coast Guard International Port Security Liaison Officer (IPSLO) or through the U.S. Embassy in country.



United States Coast Guard

Where can I find more information regarding maritime security programs in the United States ?

The Coast Guard has developed an extensive library of information on the implementation and enforcement of maritime transport security regulations and policy. This information is located under "Maritime Security" on the United States Coast Guard Homeport website: <https://homeport.uscg.mil>. This site provides access to the United States' Maritime Transportation Security Act regulations and the ISPS Code. Additionally, various forms, frequently asked questions, best practices, presentations, training modules, and liaison officer assignments can be found at this website.

If you have questions on this program, contact:

The Maritime Security Help Desk
Phone: 1.877.687.2243 (toll free)
option "8"

Website:

<https://homeport.uscg.mil>
Navigate to the IPS Program Tab



United States Coast Guard

INTERNATIONAL PORT SECURITY PROGRAM



ENHANCING U.S. PORT SECURITY AND THE GLOBAL MARITIME TRANSPORT SYSTEM

Threats to the maritime transportation industry are not limited to storms, shoals, and other natural perils of the sea. The actions of terrorists, pirates, smugglers, stowaways, and criminals exploiting the sea for illicit ends has demonstrated the need for the world's flag and port states to work cooperatively to reduce risk. In an effort to codify and standardize a comprehensive approach to effective, consistent international maritime security, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and its Member States developed the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code.

The U.S. Coast Guard's International Port Security (IPS) Program was established in 2003 to reinforce implementation of the ISPS Code as part of the U.S. Maritime Transportation Security Act (MTSA). Through the assessment of ISPS Code implementation and other anti-terrorism security measures in foreign ports and through bilateral discussions to share and align port security practices, the Coast Guard IPS Program seeks to reduce risks to U.S. ports and ships, and to the entire maritime transport system.

As an internationally accepted blueprint for maritime security measures, the ISPS Code serves as a sound foundation from which countries can build their own domestic maritime security system. Through its IPS Program, the U.S. Coast Guard is committed to assisting those nations that have not fully implemented the ISPS Code. We are also committed to furthering our engagement and security dialogue with our maritime trading partners that are moving beyond the ISPS Code through advancements in their maritime operational capabilities, maritime situational awareness, and maritime governance.

These efforts require international cooperation between the maritime industry and all flag and port states. By exchanging port security-related information and sharing best practices, we can better protect the international maritime transport system through the application of adequate and proportionate security measures. Ultimately, vessels arriving in the United States from foreign ports with adequate security measures are less likely to be targeted for port state control actions. This reduces potential delays and facilitates safe and secure maritime trade.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

What is the objective of the International Port Security Program?

In partnership with our maritime trading partners, the International Port Security Program seeks to reduce risk to U.S. maritime interests, including U.S. ports and ships, and to facilitate secure maritime trade globally. Through reciprocal port visits, the discussion and sharing of port security best practices, and the development of mutual interests in securing ships coming to the United States, both U.S. port security and the security of the global maritime transport system are enhanced.

IPS Program visits and discussions are instrumental to the U.S. Coast Guard having confidence in the effectiveness of a port state's implementation of the ISPS Code and other international maritime security standards and to enhance port security measures beyond the minimum requirements of the ISPS Code.

We seek to improve port security in foreign ports to provide mutual benefits to the United States and our maritime trading partners.

Why is this important?

Maritime security standards have not traditionally been a part of the culture; however, those days are over. More so than perhaps any other industry, maritime shipping and passenger transportation involves the collective investment of all nations. Between a vessel's flag, crew, owner, cargo, passengers, insurers and port calls, each of its voyages can involve dozens of nations. This interdependence that leads to mutual prosperity during periods of productive trade, can also bind us together in loss during disasters or terrorist incidents. A terrorist attack

involving the shipping industry in one nation would have ramifications around the world. For that reason, it is important that maritime states align their understanding of the best, most practical, and most cost effective means to reach the goal of a secure global maritime transport system.

What is your general approach?

We believe personal interaction is the best way to improve and uphold international port security standards and to achieve mutual goals. The U.S. Coast Guard has liaison officers dedicated to all maritime trading nations in the world. These liaison officers maintain regular communication with our respective Embassies and local maritime professionals, including government authorities responsible for maritime and port security as well as port officials and port facility security officers – fostering relationships and sharing security related information. In addition, these officers coordinate regular visits to foreign ports to observe port security measures in place. These visits ensure the smooth and secure movement of people and goods between our ports and throughout the global maritime transport system.

What countries have you visited?

The Coast Guard IPS Program has visited nearly every coastal state in the world. Our strong partnerships with over 150 countries is the result of personal visits both in the host nation and on reciprocal visits to the United States, when we share new information, offer recommendations to each other, and review improvements. We seek to visit countries at least annually to maintain our cooperative relationship and to further our mutual goals of a secure maritime transport system.

What can a country expect when the Coast Guard visits?

Each of our visits are tailored to reflect a mutually agreeable agenda. Visits typically include:

- **Government Engagement:** We meet with representatives of the ISPS Code Designated Authority and other agencies with maritime and port security responsibility to share how nations implement the ISPS Code as well as other measures that improve security.
- **Port Visits:** We tour local ports alongside the Port Facility Security Officers to observe security measures in action and exchange recommendations.
- **U.S. Embassy:** The Coast Guard is one of several U.S. Government entities focusing its attention on the security of maritime trade. When appropriate, we strive to work with our partner agencies to maximize benefits to the host nation and minimize redundancy. We meet with officers at our embassy to coordinate our efforts with the Department of State as well as other agencies in the Department of Homeland Security such as Customs and Border Protection, as well as the Department of Energy, and the Department of Defense.

Is Training Available?

The IPS Program is dedicated to supporting nations that show a commitment to improving their port security. We are involved in workshops, conferences, and tailored seminars. In addition, the Coast Guard's Office of International Affairs offers a variety of port safety and security related courses. Our liaison officers can help make this information available. The IPS Program also partners with the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), the Organization of American States (OAS), and other multi-lateral bodies to provide subject matter experts for the port security training these organizations offer.

If a ship arrives in the United States from a port or a country that does not comply with the IMO standards, what happens?

As the Port State Control authority in the United States, the Coast Guard is responsible for protecting U.S. ports. Foreign states that do not, or cannot, maintain effective antiterrorism measures are listed in a public Port Security Advisory, published on the Coast Guard's Homeport web site at <https://homeport.uscg.mil>. The Coast Guard imposes conditions of entry on vessels sailing to the United States from foreign ports that do not comply with IMO standards, particularly the ISPS Code. These conditions of entry could result in additional costs for the vessels while in U.S. ports, delays in transit times due to security requirements, or decreased traffic to that foreign port because of increased costs in security, insurance, and other precautionary measures. Additional requirements may be imposed regarding the transit or operation of the vessel. The vessel may be able to reduce some of the requirements by taking measures consistent with a higher security level while in a less secure port prior to transit to the United States.

