

PORT STATE CONTROL

Port State Control is based on the Paris Memorandum of Understanding (Paris MOU). It consists of 22 participating Maritime Administrations and covers the waters of the European coastal States and the North Atlantic basin from North America to Europe. Other agreements have also been signed in different regions of the world e.g. the Tokyo, Caribbean, Viña del Mar, Black Sea and Abudja Memoranda. Some countries such as Canada and the Russian Federation are party to more than one agreement.

The Paris Memorandum aims to eliminate the operation of sub-standard ships through a harmonised system of Port State Control. Ships can expect PSC boarding in almost every country. It is important that ship's officers and crew members understand the reasons for PSC and prepare for these inspections.

The inspections take place on board foreign ships in the Paris MOU ports, ensuring that these ships meet international safety, security and environmental standards, and that crew members have adequate living and working conditions.

It is clearly understood that the responsibility for ensuring that ships comply with the provisions of the relevant instruments rests upon the owners, masters and the flag states.

Unfortunately, certain flag states, for various reasons, fail to fulfill their commitments contained in internationally agreed legal instruments and as a result some ships sail the seas and oceans in an unsafe condition, threatening the lives of all those on board as well as the marine environment.

The Port State control is carried out by properly qualified Port State Control Officers, acting under the responsibility of the maritime authority.

A Port State Control visit on board will normally start with verification of certificates and documents such as the International Tonnage Certificate, Passenger Ship Safety Certificate, Cargo Ship Safety Certificate, Dangerous Goods List or Manifest, Oil Record Book, Cargo Record Book Minimum Safe Manning Document and other certificates.



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Documentation of crew members has to comply with international and flag state standards. When serious deficiencies are found the ship should be detained. The captain is instructed to rectify the deficiencies before departure. When the ship is not complying with the regulations, a more detailed inspection is carried out.

Flag States which are not a party to conventions shall receive no more favourable treatment. Every year the Paris Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control Committee publishes Black and Grey and White lists of vessels which have undergone the inspections. Port State Control is an international initiative and requires both regional and international co-operation of all parties involved.

Mandatory Expanded Inspections are compulsory and are held on board at intervals of no more than 12 months on board

- oil tankers with a Gross Tonnage of more than 3000 metric tonnes and older than 15 years of age
- bulk carriers older than 12 years of age
- passenger ships older than 15 years of age
- gas and chemical tankers older than 10 years of age

Mandatory Inspections are held on board any ship not subject to an Expanded Inspection provided that a period of at least one month has elapsed since the last inspection carried out in the Paris MOU region.

Overriding Priority Inspections are held on board:

- ships reported by pilots or port authorities as presenting a danger to the safety or the environment
- ships carrying dangerous or polluting goods, which have failed to report all relevant information to the competent authorities
- ships which have been the subject of a report or notification by another authority
- ships which have been the subject of a report or complaint by the master, a crew member or any person or organization with a legitimate interest in the safe operation of the vessel
- ships which have been involved in a collision, grounding or stranding on their way to the port



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- ships accused of an alleged violation of the provisions on discharge of harmful substances
- ships which have been handled in an erratic and unsafe manner
- ships which have been suspended or withdrawn from their class for safety reasons in the course of preceding 6 months

Initial and More detailed Inspections are held on board:

- vessels visiting the region for the first time or after an absence of more than 12 months
- other ships not inspected within the previous 6 months
- ships flying the flag of a state appearing in the black list
- ships with outstanding deficiencies
- ships which have been detained in the previous port
- ships older than 13 years of age

All inspections start with a check of the statutory certificates such as the International Tonnage Certificate, Passenger Ship Safety Certificate, Cargo Ship Safety Certificate, Dangerous goods special list or manifest or detailed stowage plan, Oil Record Book, Cargo Record Book, Minimum Safe Manning Document and other documents.

The initial examination is a general inspection which is a tour of the ship in order to judge her overall condition.

The more detailed inspection is carried out if the initial inspection gives grounds for believing that the condition of the vessel, its equipment or crew do not correspond to the particulars contained in the certificates. This inspection will include operational drills such as abandon ship drill, testing of the emergency fire pump, testing emergency lighting etc.

General Ship's Inspections include:

- start of emergency generator
- inspection of emergency lighting
- operation of emergency fire pumps plus pump with two fire hoses connected to the main line
- operation of bilge pumps



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- closing of watertight door
- lowering the lifeboat onto the water
- test of emergency stop for boilers, ventilation and fuel pumps
- testing of steering gear including auxiliary steering gear
- inspection of emergency source of power for radio installation
- inspection and test of oily water separator

Oil tankers:

- examination of fixed deck foam system
- examination of fire-fighting equipment in general
- inspection of fire dampers to engine room, pump room and accommodation
- control of pressure of inert gas and oxygen system
- inspection of ballast tanks from tank manhole
- verification that the following documents are on board:
 - a) reports of structural surveys
 - b) condition evaluation reports
 - c) thickness measurement reports

Bulk carriers are inspected for possible corrosion of deck and machinery foundation.

- possible deformation and corrosion of hatch covers
- possible cracks or local corrosion in transverse bulkheads
- access to cargo holds
- verification that the following documents are on board:
 - a) reports of structural surveys
 - b) condition evaluation reports
 - c) thickness measurements reports

Gas and chemical tankers:

- cargo tank monitoring and safety devices relating to temperature, pressure and ullage
- cabin escape sets giving suitable respiratory and eye protection for every person on board
- checking that the product being carried is listed in the International Certificate of Fitness or Certificate of Fitness for the Carriage of Dangerous Chemicals in Bulk or Liquefied Gases in Bulk



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- the fixed fire-fighting installations on deck whether they be foam or dry chemical or others

Passenger ships:

- testing of fire detection and alarm systems;
- testing of proper closing of fire doors;
- test of Public Address system;
- fire drill where, as a minimum, all sets of fireman's outfits must be demonstrated and part of the catering crew take part;
- demonstration that key crew members are acquainted with the damage control plan



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