



**CIRCULAR N° PSC 002**

**PORT STATE CONTROL  
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

**TO: SHIOWNERS & SHIPS' OPERATORS & MANAGERS  
SURVEYORS TO FLAG STATE ADMINISTRATION**

Monaco, 01 April 2005.

The aim of this circular is to draw the attention of Shipowners, ships' Operators & Managers on Port State Control regimes, in particular on Paris MOU.

**Introduction**

Port State Control is the means by which a nation exercises authority over foreign merchant vessels that are within waters subject to its jurisdiction. Maritime Authorities who are signatories of a MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING agree to maintain an effective system of PSC to check that foreign ships calling, or anchoring off, its ports comply with the International standards.

PSC aims to verify whether foreign flagged vessels comply with applicable International Conventions on safety, pollution prevention and crew living and working conditions. When vessels are found to be not in substantial compliance, the PSC system imposes actions to ensure they are brought into compliance.

Inspections are targeted at vessels of most concern and/or most likely to be substandard, based on identified risk factors.

The following International Conventions include provisions for port states control and enforce compliance with applicable standards:

- a) International Convention for the Safety of the Life at Sea 1974/1978 authorises port State to board foreign vessels to check the validity of their SOLAS certificates. If there are "clear grounds" to believe that a vessel does not comply with applicable requirements, the port state is

authorised to take action to ensure that the vessel does not sail until it can do so without danger to the vessel or the persons on board.

- b) International Load Line Convention 1966 ( ILLC ) authorises port State to board foreign vessels to check the validity of the vessel's certificate and the position of the load line marks, to verify that the vessel is not overloaded and to check that the vessel has not been so materially altered as to make it unsafe. The port state is authorised to take action to ensure the vessel does not sail until it can do so without danger to the vessel or the persons on board.
- c) International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL ) 73/78 authorises port State to board foreign vessels to check the validity of the MARPOL certificates. If there are “ clear grounds “ to believe that the vessel does not comply with applicable requirements, the port state is authorised to take action to ensure that the vessel does not sail until it can do so without presenting unreasonable threat to the marine environment.
- d) International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watch keeping (STCW) 1978 as amended authorises port states to verify that all seafarers aboard the vessel are certified as required. The port state may also carry out assessment of the crew's ability to maintain the watch keeping standards when their ability is questioned due to the vessel's involvement in an accident, illegal discharge, or movement in an erratic or unsafe manner. Port state are authorised to detain a vessel if they find that the seafarers do not hold a valid or appropriate certificate or when the navigational or engineering watch arrangements do not comply with the requirements specified for the vessel by the flag State.
- e) International Labour Organisation (ILO) Convention No. 147 authorises port states to take measures necessary to rectify any conditions on board which are clearly hazardous to safety or health.

## Targeting

The inspection effort is aimed at ships that are most likely to be substandard. This targeting allows PSC resources to be used more efficiently while rewarding well-managed vessels with less frequent controls. PSCOs are expected to use the targeting regime by targeting vessels of the highest priority first. The targeting regime has two levels:

- At the general level ships are ranked by means of a single “target factor“ number. As a guidance to encourage the selection of higher priority ships there is a scale of relative priority (lower, medium and higher). The scale does not replace the order of priority indicated by the target factor. A higher target factor does not necessarily mean a ship is substandard; only the inspection can reveal such conditions.

- At a higher level, the priority for inspection may be indicated by specific information or criteria about the ship. These causes are known as “overriding factors” and indicate an increased risk that the ship is substandard. Ships to which one or more of these factors apply have the highest level of priority regardless of their target factor value

When the PSCO/PSC Office has a list of foreign ships in port or expected in port, the record of each ship is checked in SIRENAC.

### **Types of inspection**

A PSC inspection is not intended to be a survey for certification. It is intended to be of sufficient breadth and depth to satisfy the PSC team that the vessel has the required certification, does not pose a risk to the safety, health or the environment and the crew possesses sufficient proficiency to safely operate the vessel.

The PSC inspection is designated to determine that the required certificates are on board and valid, and that the vessel conforms to the conditions required for the issuance of the required certificates. This is achieved by visual assessment of the ship’s key areas and may include limited testing of systems and the crew. If the standards of the ship reveal questionable equipment, systems, or crew incompetence, the inspection become more detailed.

#### Initial inspection

An initial inspection checks the documentation and the overall conditions of the ship and of crew. As a minimum the following items are part of the initial inspection:

- Certificates, licences and documents (the ship must have all the convention certificates required for its type, year of build and tonnage).
- General examination (general tour of the ship in order to judge its overall condition: Structure; machinery spaces; life-saving equipment; fire safety equipment; navigation safety; living and working conditions).

#### More detailed inspection

This is conducted when the *initial inspection* reveal “clear grounds” for believing that the condition of the vessel, its equipment, or crew do not correspond substantially with the particulars of the certificates. A *More detailed inspection* targets those areas where “clear grounds” have been detected and include a further checking of compliance with on-board operational requirements and may include other areas or systems.

A *more detailed inspection* is also carried out when:

- ship flies a targeted flag
- ship flies a flag whose Administration did not ratify all the international conventions.
- Ship’s certificates have been issued by a non-recognised organisation.
- Ship has been suspended or withdrawn from its class for safety reasons (indicated in SIRENAC).
- Ship is a targeted type.

- Ship has been permitted to leave a previous port under the condition to rectify the deficiencies within a specified period that has expired.
- Ship has been reported as sub standard by pilots or port authority.
- Ship has been the subject of a report or complaint by the Master, a crew member or any person/organisation with a legitimate interest.
- Ship carrying dangerous or polluting goods failed to report to the competent authority all the relevant information about the ship's particulars, the ship's movements and the information concerning the dangerous or polluting goods being carried out.
- Ship has been involved in a collision, grounding or a stranding on its way to the port.
- Ship has been accused of an alleged pollution.
- Ship is operated in such a manner as to pose a danger to persons, properties or environment.
- Ship emitted false distress alert which was not properly cancelled

Expanded inspection

This inspection is carried out on targeted ship types:

- passenger ships.
- Oil tankers, 5 years or less from the date of phasing out in accordance with Regulation 13G of the Annex I to MARPOL 73/78.
- Bulk carriers, older than 12 years of age.
- Gas and chemical tankers older than 10 years of age.

Common to the four above mentioned ship's type:

- black out and start of emergency generator.
- Inspection of emergency lighting.
- Operation of emergency fire pump with two hoses connected to the fire main line.
- Operation of bilge pumps.
- Closing of watertight doors.
- Lowering of one seaside lifeboat to the water.
- Test of remote emergency stop for boilers, ventilation and fuel pumps (remote controls in general).
- Testing of steering gear including auxiliary steering gear or emergency manoeuvre of steering gear.
- Inspection of emergency source of power to radio installations.
- Inspection and, to the extent possible, test of oily water separator.

Oil tankers :

In addition to the above mentioned common items:

- fixed deck foam system.
- Fire fighting equipment in general.
- Inspection of fire dampers to engine room, pump room and accommodation.
- Control of pressure of inert gas and oxygen content.
- Check of the Survey Report File (see IMO Resolution A.744(18)) to identify possible suspected area requiring inspection ).

Bulk carriers :

In addition to the above mentioned common items:

- possible corrosion of deck machinery foundation (mainly in way of the windlasses).

- Possible deformation and/or corrosion of hatch covers.
- Possible cracks or local corrosion in transverse bulkheads
- Access to cargo holds.
- Check of the Survey Report File (see IMO Resolution A.744(18)) to identify possible suspected area requiring inspection ).

Gas and Chemical tankers :

In addition to the above mentioned common items:

- cargo tank monitoring and safety devices relating to temperature, pressure and ullage.
- Oxygen analysing and explosimeter devices, including their calibration. Availability of chemical detection equipment (bellows) with appropriate number of suitable gas detection tubes for the specific cargo being carried.
- Cabin escape sets giving suitable respiratory and eye protection, for every person on board (if required by the products listed in the International Certificate of Fitness or Certificate of Fitness for the carriage of Dangerous Chemicals in Bulk or Liquefied Gases in Bulk, as applicable).
- Check 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, as applicable.
- The fixed fire fighting installation on deck whether they be foam or dry chemical or other, as required by the product carried.

Passenger ships:

In addition to the above mentioned common items:

- testing of the fire detection and alarm system.
- 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