

Subject: Passenger Musters

For: US Coast Guard Foreign Passenger Vessel Examiners/OCMI Reps

Ref: PSC Information for Feb 2012, R 021808Z FEB 12

To carry out the expectations in the referenced PSC message, the CSNCOE recommends the following:

1. Communication between unit PSCO's and the ship (and company) will be crucial. In the pre-exam notice sent to the vessel (see MMS procedure [MPS-PR-CSNCOE-01\(01\)](#)) state that a passenger muster will have to be observed by the Coast guard before the exam is complete. This notice should be sent at least one, preferably two voyage cycles prior to the scheduled exam (i.e. if on a 7 day turn-around, send no later than one week prior). We strongly encourage a follow-up phone call with the company's port captain for that ship if no response is received from the ship. Sample pre-exam notices are available on CG Portal in the library on the CSNCOE collaboration website under References & Sample Documents ([Pre-exam email](#)).
2. For units considering underway observation of the passenger muster, logistics and timing of this option are best if worked out in the pre-exam communication with the ship Master and company. It is not uncommon for post-departure passenger musters to occur outside the sea buoy so transportation off the ship will likely be limited.
3. The need for PSCO's to observe a passenger muster should be reiterated at the beginning of the exam during the initial meeting. At this time consideration and allowances can be made for inclement weather if there are any exposed passenger muster areas. To facilitate departure from the vessel after the passenger muster, we recommend conducting the final meeting with the master prior to observing the muster. As such, it is best to discuss specifics on the timing and delivery of the new COC or endorsing the current COC during the initial meeting.
4. Note the ship's procedures for mustering passengers in accordance with SOLAS III/Reg 19.2.2. In most cases, it will not include steps typically associated with the Reg 19.3.3 abandon ship drill (i.e. cabin checks, stairway guides, lifeboat manning, etc). As such, the two steps of evaluating the abandon ship drill and evaluating the muster of passengers should be separate and independent. A thorough evaluation during the abandon ship drill should identify any obvious shortfalls in crew competency and allow PSCO's to focus on crew performance in a more realistic setting during the passenger muster.
5. The abandon ship drill is the best opportunity to evaluate (in detail if necessary) the competency of the crew involved in directing passengers in an emergency (cabin stewards, stairway guides, muster station leaders, lifeboat crews, etc). In evaluating the steps outlined in SOLAS III/Reg 19.3.3, an excellent reference to use in questioning these crewmembers during the abandon ship drill is the ship's crew training guide. We recommend asking for a copy of this guide during the opening meeting. Though varying by company/ship, it will typically contain the specific information you can expect to observe/hear from the crewmembers during the drill; particularly instructions on the use of lifejackets and actions to take in an emergency. During the abandon ship drill, the most straightforward method for PSCO's to evaluate this particular competency is to ask the muster station leaders to treat you like a passenger and ask questions as the crew proceeds.
6. During the passenger muster, observe the performance of the muster station leaders: how they manage the passengers and whether or not the training/information they provide is in alignment with what was witnessed during the abandon drill. Even if there are different crew members filling the positions, the information provided to the passengers should be consistent with what was witnessed during the abandon ship drill.

The CVE exam process subject matter expert at the CSNCOE is LT Mike Metz. He may be reached by email at Michael.w.metz@uscg.mil or by phone, 954-767-2140 xt 1071005. Alternatively, any CSNCOE member can be reached through csncoe@uscg.mil. Thank you!