



Homeland
Security



Port State Control (PSC)

U.S.C.G Guard's Boarding Priority Matrix

In developing its risk assessment methodology, the Coast Guard first recognized that three entities directly influence a vessel's operational condition and compliance with international safety and environmental protection standards. These entities are: **1) Ship Management List, 2) Classification societies, and 3) Flag States.** If any of these entities fails to fully undertake its responsibilities for a ship's safe operation, then the ship is likely to be considered a substandard vessel by the U.S. Coast Guard.

The Coast Guard's previous experience with a particular ship provides another indication of whether or not that vessel poses an unacceptable risk. In addition, certain types of ships pose a higher risk to themselves and the cargo they transport. These vessel types include: oil and chemical tankers, gas carriers, passenger ships, bulk freighters more than ten years old, and any vessel carrying low value commodities in bulk.

The **Safety Targeting Matrix** enables the Coast Guard to rationally and systematically determine the probable risk posed by non-U.S. ships calling at U.S. ports. The Matrix is used to decide which ships Port State Control Officers should board on any given day, in any given port. Points are assessed in each of the five columns and then summed for a total point score. This numerical score, along with other performance based factors, determines a ship's boarding priority. The Safety Targeting Matrix illustrates the priority categories and associated operational restrictions which may be imposed on ships by U.S. Coast Guard Captains of the Port.