

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

The Coast Guard invites officials from U.S. trade partner nations for reciprocal visits to the U.S. and select ports to assess the U.S. Coast Guard's ISPS Code implementation procedures. During the visit, delegates will have opportunities to visit with Coast Guard Port Security Directorate 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 State Control regime. Requests for these visits should be made through the country's embassy. Most visits will be coordinated through the regional USCG Port Security Liaison Officers.



Legislative Basis

Sections 70108-70110 of the Maritime Transportation Security Act (MTSA) of 2002 directs the Secretary (Department of Homeland Security) to assess the antiterrorism measures maintained by foreign ports which are served by vessels that also call on the U.S. or which are determined to be a security risk to international maritime commerce.



For more information concerning the MTSA or ISPS implementation, you may visit the Coast Guard's Helpdesk. See back panel for contact information.



United States
Coast Guard

If you have questions on this program, contact:

The Maritime Security Help Desk

Phone:
877.687.2243 (toll free)
202.366.9991

Website:
www.uscg.mil/hq/g-m/mp/mtsa.shtml

Email:
securityinfoexchange@comdt.uscg.mil



United States
Coast Guard

International Port Security Program



**Bilateral Discussions
to Share and Align
Security Practices**

The Basics

The events of 9/11 focused the global maritime transport sector on the higher risk of terrorism that now threatens the entire international trading community.

In an effort to codify and standardize a comprehensive approach to effective, consistent international maritime security, the U.S. Coast Guard, in its traditional role as the lead Federal agency for maritime transportation security in the United States, worked closely with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and member states to develop the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code. The ISPS Code is the only internationally accepted blueprint for the implementation of security measures for maritime infrastructure.

The Coast Guard's International Port Security (IPS) Program serves to reinforce implementation by combining multi-national best practices with international requirements to ensure a comprehensive and consistent approach to maritime security in the countries (and at their ports) that trade with us.

Frequently Asked Questions

What is the objective of the International Port Security Program?

The program objective is to engage in bilateral or multilateral discussions with trading nations around the world to exchange information and share best practices to align port security programs through implementation of the ISPS Code and other international maritime security standards.

What is your general approach?

The Coast Guard's approach for the International Port Security Program includes:

- The concept of information exchange and collaboration with trading nations regarding implementation of established international maritime security standards.
- The assignment of International Port Security Program Liaison Officers in three regions (Asia-Pacific, Europe/Africa/Middle East, and Central/South America) for world-wide coverage in order to assist other nations and facilitate the bilateral exchanges.
- The establishment of a Port Security Specialist Team based in Washington, DC, to conduct country/port visits to review and discuss security measures implemented and share "best practices".

Why is this important?

Implementation of security standards is generally new to the maritime community and has not traditionally been part of its culture. It is important that we seek to align our understanding of the best, most practical, and cost effective means to reach our goals of a secure worldwide maritime transportation system.

What countries will you visit?

We plan to offer visits to all countries with any of the last five ports of departure for vessels destined to the U.S. We developed a methodology to prioritize visits based on a variety of factors including number of vessels, amount of cargo, country's history with other international instruments, and other information. We will work bilaterally or multilaterally with countries to schedule visits.

Is training available?

The U.S. Coast Guard will work with countries to identify protective measures to help facilitate their compliance with the ISPS Code. In addition, the Coast Guard's International Training Division may be able to provide a variety of port safety and security related training. In partnership with the Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration, the Coast Guard is establishing a Port Security Training Program that will incorporate the Inter-American Port Security Training Program (IAPSTP) currently being offered to the Organization of American State member nations.

If a ship arrives in the United States from a port or a country that does not comply with the IMO standards, what actions will the U.S. undertake?

There are a variety of potential actions. The vessel may be subject to a boarding offshore before being allowed in the United States. Additional restrictions may be imposed regarding the transit of the vessel. The vessel may be able to ameliorate some of the actions by going to a higher security level while in a less secure port.



Courtesy photo