



Regional Maritime Programme



Safe &
Secure Shipping

Security Notice

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Effective Access Control and Port Facility Monitoring to Deter Stowaways

Four years after the introduction of International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code, can we say all issues of security threat to the ports or ship-port interface have been eliminated or accounted for? With stringent measures in place for access control at the port facilities having exceeded the traditional measures for general access control, we would believe that the security systems implemented are adequate. The danger of becoming complacent and thinking that all is safe and secure could be costly. The port's reputation could take a dent due to breaches of security while ships can become a target for thorough inspection in foreign ports due to a past history of security concerns.

The issue of stowaways is an important consideration for access control, especially when foreign ships are in port. Effective access control and port facility monitoring can deter those who intend to become stowaways.

Some considerations for monitoring potential stowaways:

1. Stevedores should be issued IDs. In addition, there should be check systems in place to ensure IDs are checked prior to entering port and on completion of work at the dockside or from the ship.
2. All shore personnel boarding vessels for cargo related duties must have visible clothing for easy identification, (eg. wearing visible vests).
3. Personnel boarding the vessel as stevedores or contracted specialists must register their names in the ship's register at the gangway and check out when disembarking the vessel.
4. Any difficulties with IDs of those boarding the vessel as stevedores must be referred to the Port Facility Security Officer (PFSO) and the stevedoring foreman.
5. The 'challenge principle' used by port facility security personnel to check on any person within the security regulated area of the port facility or ship-port interface area, can deter those who may be considering that option.
6. There should be some agreement with the PFSO and the Ship Security Officer (SSO) to coordinate appropriate actions of personnel responsible for monitoring the ship-port interface area and the seaward side of the ship in port. This practice needs to be agreed for day and night times.
7. Prior to the ship raising its gangway for departure, it is a good practice to check the gangway register to confirm action on all logged shore personnel having disembarked.
8. During the ship-port interface period, no motorised dinghys should be allowed to stop along side the vessel. Any stops made by motorised dinghys should be investigated and their purpose for stopping established.
9. If there has been reports of stowaways from a particular port facility, an audit should be conducted to address weaknesses in the system.
10. Port facilities should have audits conducted on them regularly in order to ensure that the security system implemented is sound and effective.

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