



TECHNICAL ALERT No.15-02 Rev.01

Port State Control Inspections in Australia

1. Introduction

- 1.1. The Bahamas Maritime Authority (BMA) is concerned at the increase in Port State Control (PSC) detentions of Bahamian ships in Australian ports from seven in 2013 to eleven in 2014, an increase of more than 50%.
- 1.2. The BMA has produced this Technical Alert to bring to the attention of ship owners, manager and crews of Bahamian ships calling at Australian Ports the various web-based resources provided by the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) to assist in preparation for PSC inspections.¹

2. PSC Detentions in Australia

- 2.1. There were a total of 11 detentions of Bahamian ships in Australia during 2014 resulting from 191 inspections. The detainable deficiencies can be grouped into the following categories:
 - *ISM related (5);*
 - *Life Saving Appliances, including launching appliances (3);*
 - *GMDSS equipment, including reserve power batteries (2);*
 - *MARPOL related (2);*
 - *Fire Protection related (2).*
- 2.2. It is noted that some detentions were imposed under the ISM Code, owing to the cumulative effect of a number of non-detainable deficiencies being identified during the inspection.
- 2.3. Investigations into the detentions have identified that they were largely attributed to lack of maintenance, failings in the implementation of the Safety Management System and/or lack of crew training or familiarity.

¹ This Technical Alert is provided by the Bahamas Maritime Authority with the aim of highlighting incidents, lessons learnt and to increase awareness, which may help avoid similar incidents occurring elsewhere. Any queries on the content of the information provided should be referred to the party providing the information.

3. Preparation for PSC inspections in Australia

- 3.1. AMSA's website has extensive information on the scope and conduct of AMSA's PSC inspections and information to assist ship owners, managers and crews in the preparation for a PSC inspection by AMSA.

<http://www.amsa.gov.au/vessels/ship-safety/port-state-control/>

- 3.2 The AMSA website provides information on PSC statistics, Focused Inspection Campaigns, downloadable videos and specific details on the most frequent deficiency areas, which include:

- *Hours of Rest and Fatigue (STCW and MLC);*
- *Life-Saving Appliances and Fire Fighting Equipment;*
- *MARPOL;*
- *Radio Communication Equipment (GMDSS); and*
- *ISM Code.*

- 3.2. AMSA has also published a dedicated checklist addressing the general scope and the specific aspects of the PSC inspections as an aid to the Port State Control Officer (PSCO) inspecting international ships in Australian ports. This checklist can be used on board ships calling at Australian ports to prepare for any PSC inspection.

<http://www.amsa.gov.au/forms-and-publications/AMSA36.pdf>

4. Conduct of AMSA PSC Inspections

- 4.1. Before a PSC inspection by AMSA formally commences, the PSCO will hold an opening meeting with the Master.

- 4.2. At the opening meeting the PSCO will explicitly ask the Master if the vessel is in a seaworthy condition with all equipment working.

- 4.3. If the Master confirms to the PSCO that all equipment is working and that the ship is seaworthy, the Master will then be asked to sign the front page of the Ship Inspection Record (SIR) book alongside the statement "**Master advises that all equipment is operating satisfactorily and that the vessel is seaworthy**".

- 4.4. Once the SIR has been signed by the Master, any deficiency identified, which has not been previously advised to the PSCO, will be reported in the inspection form and allocated an appropriate action code (e.g. 16, 17, 30, etc).

4.5. AMSA's position on reporting of existing deficiencies is as follows:

"...if a Master advises his Administration, Class and local Port State Authorities of a deficiency that has, or may, impact on the vessel's seaworthiness, that deficiency should not be considered as grounds for detention, unless the ship intends to sail with the deficiency un-actioned."

This does not mean that a deficiency will not be recorded or that the vessel will be permitted to depart without rectifying a normally detainable deficiency but that actions to rectify the deficiency will be monitored to ensure proper remedial actions are taken before it is allowed to depart."

4.6. This reflects the existing guidance in [BMA Information Bulletin No.85](#), which states at paragraph 4.2:

*"Companies are reminded that failures and breakdowns of equipment need not be a cause for detention **provided that the Flag State and Recognised Organisation have been advised as soon as the breakdown is experienced, and the Port State has been alerted prior to arrival.**"*

5. AMSA policy tackling poor PSC performance - Prohibition to enter Australian waters

AMSA has recently advised the BMA of recent changes to the Australian Navigation Act 2012.

Where a ship has been detained in an Australian port 3 times during any 24 month period, the new powers conferred by the Act empower AMSA to prohibit:

- the entry of a ship to any Australian port; and,
- the operation of a ship within the waters of Australia's Exclusive Economic Zone (EEZ)

A copy of the policy can be found on AMSA's website:

<http://www.amsa.gov.au/vessels/ship-safety/port-state-control/refusal/index.asp>

The BMA continuously monitors PSC performance of Bahamian ships calling at Australian ports. The BMA will address any occasion where AMSA has prohibited the operation of a Bahamian Ship in Australian ports or EEZ pursuant to the provisions of the Australian Navigation Act

2012, in accordance with the requirements of section 5.4 of BMA Information Bulletin No.120.

6. Further Information

6.1. The BMA has produced a number of Technical Alerts related to PSC findings, as follows:

[TA 13-08 Port State Control Fire Fighting Equipment Rev. 01](#)

[TA 14-19 PSC deficiencies - OWS and 15ppm Monitor](#)

[TA 14-23 Port State Control & Qualship 21](#)

7. Validity

7.1. This alert is valid until further notice.

8. Revision History

Rev.1 (27 March 2015) – new paragraph 5 added