



**REPUBLIC OF
THE MARSHALL ISLANDS**

**OFFICE OF THE
MARITIME ADMINISTRATOR**

Marine Guideline

No. 5-34-2

10/06

**TO: ALL SHIPOWNERS, OPERATORS, MASTERS AND OFFICERS OF
MERCHANT SHIPS, AND RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS**

SUBJECT: Guidelines for Undergoing a Port State Control Inspection.

PURPOSE:

This Marine Guideline is intended to provide a methodology by which port State control inspections should be managed by the ship's Master to avoid being drawn into an action for which there is no actual requirement, potential fines and costly delays.

APPLICABILITY:

This Marine Guideline is applicable to all vessels trading among countries actively engaged in port State control activities to ensure compliance with international conventions and local regulations.

REQUIREMENTS:

1.0 Rules

During visits by port State control inspection teams it is essential that the conduct of the master and crew be professional. Experience has shown that the following rules will assist in making a good impression on the port State officials and in facilitation of their visit.

- .1 The inspection team should be met at embarkation and escorted to the Master's office.
- .2 The Master should present himself as such, treating the port State inspectors like the important official visitors that they are. The Master, however, should not relinquish his role and should not appear to do so.
- .3 Require an opening meeting – even if not offered. Ensure a suitable business-like atmosphere.
- .4 Standards of dress should be high.

- .5 Key officers/personnel should be properly introduced and the same courtesy should be asked for in return. Ensure that the lead in the official party is identified. All key staff should be present unless duty requires otherwise, in which case this should be explained.
- .6 The inspection procedure contemplated by the port State inspection team should be explained. If not, ask for an explanation.
- .7 Identify ship's officers who will assist in key elements of the inspection. Identify their port State inspector counter-part.
- .8 Request notification of irregularities as soon as possible – in order to affect corrections “on the spot.”
- .9 Never intentionally misrepresent a condition to the port State officials.
- .10 Insist on a closing conference – even if not offered.
 - Listen to what the senior boarding officer says.
 - Compare it with what he writes – ask for corrections if necessary.
 - Ensure by direct question – “We see nothing here suggesting an intervention?”
- .11 Never offer the inspection team any improper gifts, either during or after the inspection. An invitation to join the officers at meals is perfectly acceptable (at which liquor of any kind is prohibited). Company logos, baseball caps, pins, etc. are not considered improper gifts but should not be extended until the inspection is concluded.
- .12 Ensure the inspection team is escorted at debarkation.

2.0 Assistance and Notification

- .1 Although every case is unique, the need for coordination and directness in dealing with authorities is always important. Many times a third party knowledgeable in the ways of the local port State authorities and experienced with port State authority and local regulations and policies can save an owner or operator time and money. The Master should never hesitate to seek such assistance when deemed necessary.
- .2 The Company and shipboard SMS should contain procedures for the immediate reporting of port State control and compliance actions to the Administration, Marine Safety office, via telephone (+1-703-620-4880), fax (+1-703-860-2284) or e-mail (dutyofficer@register-iri.com). This will allow the Administration to intercede as necessary while the action is actually taking place.