
ISPS Code Port and Ship Security Leadership: Assessments, Drills and Audits Training Course

26 – 30 October 2026
Amsterdam





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Programme Summary

ISPS Code port and ship security leadership is a five-day training course for senior port, shipping and maritime security leaders at advanced level, culminating in a security assurance plan for a port facility or fleet they oversee. Security plans are often approved once and then left untested as threats change. The approach moves from obligations to assessments, security levels, access and cargo controls, drills and audits. Mars Training Centre UK delivers this programme in ISPS Code port and ship security.

The Business Case

A port facility or ship that cannot show a working security plan risks control measures, delayed berthing and damage to its standing with authorities. Leaders who keep assessments current, test plans and audit them turn a compliance file into a working system.

- Security Incident Exposure: Falls as assessments, access control and screening are matched to current threats.
- Inspection and Verification Findings: Reduce as plans, records and drills are kept audit-ready.
- Berth and Cargo Delay: Shrinks as security level changes and Declarations of Security are handled through rehearsed procedures.

Principles and Evidence Base

- ISPS Code Parts A and B: Its mandatory part and guidance under SOLAS Chapter XI-2 structure Sessions 1 and 2.
- IMO Model Courses 3.19, 3.20 and 3.21: Their officer competences frame the security roles in Session 1.
- ILO/IMO Code of Practice on Security in Ports: It extends the facility plan to the whole port area in Session 3.
- MSC-FAL.1/Circ.3 Guidelines on Maritime Cyber Risk Management: These bring cyber exposure into Sessions 2 and 4.

Intended Participants

- Leaders accountable for the security assessment and plan of a port facility or terminal.
- Managers responsible for the security of a fleet and its ship security plans.
- Officials who approve plans, set security levels or verify compliance.
- Port leaders who coordinate security with marine and cargo operations.

The programme serves port authorities, terminal operators, shipping companies and maritime security administrations.



Learning Outcomes

1. Participants will be able to evaluate the security duties of ports, ships and companies under the ISPS Code.
2. Participants will be able to construct a risk-based security assessment that includes cyber and insider threats.
3. Participants will be able to design access control, restricted area and cargo and stores screening measures for each security level.
4. Participants will be able to justify a drill and exercise programme that tests the security plan.
5. Participants will be able to diagnose weaknesses in a security plan through internal audit and review.
6. Participants will be able to prioritise improvement actions in a security assurance plan for their organisation.

Programme Structure

Day 1: ISPS Code Port and Ship Security Obligations

Who carries which duty at the ship and port interface?

- SOLAS Chapter XI-2 and the Structure of the ISPS Code
- Roles of the Ship, Company and Port Facility Security Officers
- Duties of the Designated Authority and the Administration
- International Ship Security Certificate and Statement of Compliance
- Continuous Synopsis Record and Ship Security Alert System

Day 2: Security Assessments and Security Plans

How is threat assessed and turned into a plan?

- Port Facility Security Assessment Method and Asset Ranking
- Ship Security Assessment and On-Scene Security Survey
- Threat, Vulnerability and Consequence Scoring
- Cyber and Insider Threat Assessment for Ships and Terminals
- Port Facility and Ship Security Plan Content and Approval

Day 3: Security Levels, Access and Cargo Control

Which controls apply at each security level?

- Security Levels 1, 2 and 3 and Escalation Procedures
- Access Control, Identification and Restricted Areas
- Cargo, Ship's Stores and Unaccompanied Baggage Screening
- Declaration of Security Between Ship and Port Facility
- Wider Port Area Security and Waterside Monitoring



Day 4: Drills, Exercises and Security Audits

How is the security plan proven before an incident?

- Drill and Exercise Frequency, Scenarios and Evaluation
- Tabletop and Live Exercises With Port and State Agencies
- Internal Security Audit Planning and Evidence Sampling
- Security Records, Reporting of Incidents and Breaches
- Preparing for Flag and Port State Verification

Day 5: Applying ISPS Code Security Leadership

Is the security assurance plan current, tested and ready to govern?

- Updating the Day 2 Assessment After Audit Findings
- Linking Day 3 Security Level Controls to Day 4 Drill Results
- Security Training and Awareness for Personnel With Duties
- Coordination Protocols With Authorities From Day 1
- Security Assurance Plan Completion and Peer Review

Methodology

The programme relies on case analysis and tabletop simulation drawn from container terminals, oil and gas berths and cruise ports. Each session pairs a short briefing with group work on a facility or ship chosen by participants.

- Suggested activity: Scoring threats for a multipurpose terminal.
- Suggested activity: Running a tabletop exercise on a change from security level 1 to level 2.
- Suggested activity: Auditing a sample ship security plan against its own records.

Capstone Output

Each participant completes a security assurance plan for a port facility, terminal or fleet. It contains an updated assessment, controls for each security level, a drill and exercise schedule, an internal audit plan and coordination arrangements with authorities, and is used to brief senior management.

Frequently Asked Questions

Is ISPS Code port and ship security leadership training suitable for experienced security officers?

Yes. It is set at advanced level and assumes you already hold security duties and know the basic requirements of the Code.



Which standards does the ISPS Code port and ship security course rest on?

It rests on the ISPS Code and SOLAS Chapter XI-2, IMO Model Courses 3.19, 3.20 and 3.21, the ILO/IMO Code of Practice on Security in Ports and the MSC-FAL.1/Circ.3 cyber risk guidelines.

How is the security assurance plan from ISPS Code port and ship security training used at work?

You can use it to schedule drills and audits, update your port facility security assessment and brief management and authorities.