



**ORGANISATION MARITIME INTERNATIONALE
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The International Association of Airport and Seaport Police Yearbook

**Personal Introduction by
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The International Maritime Organization (IMO) is the specialized agency of the United Nations that deals with matters relating to ships and shipping on the international level. Since its inception more than 50 years ago, the remit of IMO has been to promote safer seas and cleaner oceans, and this it has done largely through a series of international conventions, many of which are in force on more than 95 per cent of the world's fleet.

Since the terrible terrorist atrocities of September 11th 2001, IMO has added a third, although closely related, core value to its mission statement, namely that of maritime security. In the aftermath of the attacks on the United States it seemed obvious that the global transport infrastructure was extremely vulnerable, not simply as a target for terrorist activity but also, in the wrong hands, as a potentially highly destructive weapon. Although aircraft were the chosen weapon of the 9-11 terrorists, ships might just as easily have been selected and one only has to consider the implications of one of the mammoth cruise ships falling into the hands of terrorists or of a laden chemical tanker being hijacked, or of even a conventional cargo ship loaded with explosives being blown up in a densely populated area or in a vital shipping channel to see how serious the consequences of terrorist action involving ships might be.

Following the unanimous adoption of a resolution by IMO Assembly in November 2001, the Organization embarked on an intense period of work to develop a proper regulatory framework that would deal with the issues of ship and port security. December 2002 saw the culmination of this massive effort with the successful adoption, by a Diplomatic Conference, of new measures that provide the maritime community with a well-considered regulatory regime on which to build a suitable maritime security infrastructure.

Among the raft of measures that have been adopted, the most far-reaching is the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code (ISPS Code), which will be implemented through a new chapter of the SOLAS Convention. The Code has two parts, one mandatory and the other recommendatory. In essence, the Code takes the approach that ensuring the security of ships and port facilities is basically a risk management activity and that, to determine what security measures are appropriate, an assessment of the risks must be made in each particular case.

The purpose of the Code is to provide a standardized, consistent framework for evaluating risk, enabling Governments to counterbalance changes in threat with changes in vulnerability for ships and port facilities by determining appropriate security levels and corresponding security measures. As the perceived threat increases, vulnerability will be reduced

by a consequent increase in the security provisions. Additional requirements for ships and for ports include monitoring and controlling access, monitoring the activities of people and cargo and ensuring that communication systems for security purposes are readily available.

It must be stressed, however, that all of the hard work and dedication that was put into creating this regulatory framework in such a short space of time will be of little value if the same level of commitment and expertise is not brought to bear on its implementation. Because of the worldwide escalation of acts of terrorism, it would be prudent for all parties concerned to start putting in place as soon as possible, all the legislative, administrative and operational infrastructure needed to give effect to the decisions of the Maritime Security Conference without waiting until the entry-into-force date of 1 July 2004, so as to avoid having to take hasty action at the last minute.

In the meantime, we have urged Governments and the shipping industry to take steps to increase awareness of the potential dangers so that ships' crews can be vigilant and alert to any security threat they may encounter or be suspicious of, whether they are in port, at offshore terminals or underway. The need for co-operation among all parties involved is of paramount importance, and I have every confidence that members of the International Association of Airport and Seaport Police will make a significant contribution to a culture of heightened vigilance and awareness.