

2026 CONCENTRATED INSPECTION CAMPAIGN (CIC) CARGO SECURING

Guidelines for Port State Control Officers (PSCOs)

Purpose

This document provides guidance to Port State Control Officers (PSCOs) as they answer questions related to the Concentrated Inspection Campaign (CIC) on Cargo Securing.

The purpose of the Concentrated Inspection Campaign (CIC) is to collect data on compliance with current SOLAS requirements in respect of the loading, stowage and securing of cargo units and cargo transport units and how failure to comply may have contributed to the loss of containers over the last fifteen years as identified by studies such as the Marin Top Tier Joint Industry Project (JIP).

The Marin Top Tier JIP will look beyond compliance with SOLAS and will consider other factors that may also contribute to the loss of containers and the outcome of this CIC will provide further data for such studies in respect of current practices and the condition of equipment employed in the stowage and lashing of cargo containers.

Scope

This CIC applies to all ships required to have a Cargo Securing Manual, carrying (or intending to carry) cargo transport units or cargo units in accordance with Regulation 5 of Chapter VI of SOLAS.

General Guidance to Answer Questions of the CIC

The campaign does not affect the type of inspection to be conducted in accordance with the procedures. The campaign consists of a list of questions to be answered in addition to the regular inspection.

It is understood that during the conduct of the CIC ships may be at various stages of loading/unloading. Apart from making a physical examination of the lashing equipment, the PSCO can complete some of the checklist on advice given by the Master as to the procedures they intend to follow in securing the cargo.

In carrying out the CIC, the PSCO should answer every question in the checklist, with either a 'Yes', 'No', or 'N/A'. This is essential in order to conduct a meaningful analysis of the CIC results, noting:

- Should a question be answered "No" (except for Q6 and Q10a), a deficiency using the appropriate deficiency code listed in the guidance to the question must be used on the report of inspection Form B.

- A “No” answer in the questionnaire should not automatically lead to detention of the ship. In this case, the PSCOs should use their professional judgment to determine whether the ship should be considered for detention. Where a PSCO identifies a deficiency related to a checklist item, it is advisable for the PSCO to engage with the Master to discuss their plans regarding the necessary rectification efforts to bring the items back into compliance with the approved Cargo Securing Manual (CSM).
- Consideration may also be given to stopping the operation if the professional judgement of the PSCO considers it necessary.
- The column “N/A” is to be used only if the question is not applicable to the ship and consequently the question cannot be answered.
- Where a detainable deficiency is identified against a particular question then a Yes should be marked in the detention column.

If a ship does not have an approved CSM onboard, and one is required; the PSCO should normally consider this as a detainable deficiency.

Note: As reflected in paragraph 6 of SOLAS regulation VI/5, the CSM should cover all cargoes except bulk liquids and dry bulk. While this CIC focuses on cargo units and cargo transport units (Containers) the PSCO should still confirm that any cargo on board is stowed in accordance with the CSM.

Port State control is a sampling exercise, and this must be stressed to the Master when providing a copy of the CIC report, since it is unrealistic noting the size of some container vessels to effect a thorough check of all securing devices.

The health and safety of the PSCO should be given priority during the loading/unloading operations of ships. The inspection should be carried out according to the national risk assessment.

The intention of the following is to provide guidance to PSCOs in answering the questions asked in the CIC checklist. However, these guidance notes are not exhaustive, and the PSCOs should use their professional judgement when answering the questions.

CIC Questionnaire (Annex 1)

The table below shows the questionnaire to be completed during the inspection. Questions 1 to 10, excluding 6 and 10a, answered with a “No” must be accompanied by a relevant deficiency on the report of inspection. If “No” is ticked for questions marked with an asterisk “*”, the ship may be considered for detention.

No.	Question	Yes	No	N/A	Detention
1	Is the CIC applicable to the vessel? (question for information only)				
2a*	Does the ship have an approved cargo securing manual onboard?				
2b*	Does the CSM contain clear lashing instructions for all specific stowage situations found on board? (NA can only be recorded if Q2a is answered with No)				

3*	Are relevant officer's familiar with the contents of the cargo securing manual in respect of container stack weight and tier weight distribution as well as weight limitations for tank top, hatch covers and decks?				
4*	Is the Cargo Securing Manual being complied with?				
5*	Does the cargo plan reflect the verified gross mass of the containers being loaded?				
6	Does the ship have a "Cargo Safe Access Plan" (CSAP) to facilitate the proper stowage and securing of containers? (question for information only)				
7*	Does the ship carry sufficient approved portable cargo securing devices, from the correct brand and type, onboard to properly stow and secure the cargo in accordance with the cargo securing manual?				
8*	Are the fixed and portable cargo securing devices in good condition, compatible with the ship and maintained in accordance with Inspection and maintenance scheme contained in the CSM?				
9*	Does the cargo stow comply with bridge visibility requirements?				
10a	Does the ship have procedures or arrangements in place, for example within the ships safety management system, covering heavy weather navigation, including precautions to prevent the loss of cargo, and are appropriate checklists available? (question for information only)				
10b	Where they exist, have the procedures covering heavy weather navigation, including precautions to prevent the loss of cargo been complied with? (NA can only be recorded if Q10a is answered with No)				

Ship's name / IMO No. / Date of Inspection should be recorded on the form. An answer 'yes' to any of the questions in this checklist does not indicate that the lashing arrangement and associated equipment complies with the intended design parameters.

Questionnaire Guidance (Annex 2)

This section provides guidance for Port State Control Officers on the CIC on Cargo Securing 2026 (Cargo Securing of Cargo Units and Cargo Transport Units), covering the matters to be checked, the relevant requirements, convention references, deficiency codes and suggested actions for each question.

Q1* – Is the CIC applicable to the vessel?

*This question is for statistics information purposes only.

This CIC is only applicable to vessels carrying Cargo Transport Units and Cargo Units. If the vessel does not carry Cargo Transport Units and/or Cargo Units, Q1 must be answered “NO” and no further questions need to be answered.

Q2a* – Does the ship have an approved cargo securing manual onboard?

If Q2a is answered with ‘NO’ the ship could be considered for detention.

Q2b* – Does the CSM contain clear lashing instructions for all specific stowage situations found onboard?

SOLAS requires cargo units and cargo transport units (CTU) to be loaded, stowed and secured throughout the voyage in accordance with the cargo securing manual (CSM) which has been approved by the ship's flag Administration (or Recognised Organisation) and drawn up to a standard at least equivalent to the relevant IMO guidelines contained in MSC.1/Circ.1353/Rev.2.

The CSM should provide information on the appropriate securing procedures for all sizes of containers carried onboard.

The approved CSM might not cover all loading situations or conditions found on board. Generally, the CSM contains a number of example situations that are rarely 1:1 comparable to the actual situation found on board. In this case no deficiency should be recorded.

Furthermore, it is to be noted that the information in the CSM is generally based on a standard GM value. In practice, the actual GM value is higher than which the CSM takes into account. The consequence is that the containers and the lashings are subject to larger (acceleration) forces.

The PSCO should check:

- That the ship has an approved cargo securing manual (CSM) onboard,
- That the CSM appears to cover the matters identified in MSC.1/Circ.1353/Rev.2 (this should be examined if a more detailed inspection is carried out),
- That the CSM covers the cargo being loaded onboard the ship (i.e: cargo unit size such as HiCube containers or other units of abnormal physical dimensions).

Requirements:

- All cargo units and cargo transport units shall be loaded, stowed and secured throughout the voyage in accordance with the approved Cargo Securing Manual (CSM) (SOLAS VI/Reg 5.6),
 - Where a CSM is required to be onboard, and it isn't, this may be detainable,

- Where the CSM does not contain clear lashing instructions for all specific stowage situations found on board no deficiency should be recorded.

Deficiency Code: 06101 – Cargo Securing Manual

Convention Reference: SOLAS VI/Regulation 5.6

Suggested Action Taken: 17/30* – Grounds for Detention (PMoU - tick box)

Q3* – Are relevant officers familiar with the contents of the cargo securing manual in respect of container stack weight and tier weight distribution as well as weight limitations for tank top, hatch covers and decks?

Recent incidents have highlighted officers on some ships are not aware of, or are not complying with, the requirements of the cargo securing manual and associated shipboard procedures related to cargo loading and securing. This may result in potentially hazardous stowage arrangements.

The PSCO should check:

- That the loading is compliant with the ship's approved CSM (noting that the loading computer is likely only approved against Class rules, and not statutory requirements.)
- Ships officers are familiar with the requirements of the CSM in relation to stack weight, weight distribution and stack heights (see note below)

Note: When considering compliance Officers should also be able to explain height limitations of container stacks. Instances have been identified where 9'6" 'hi cube' containers have been loaded (resulting in an increase over the entire stack height) where this was not permitted by the CSM (and the loading computer may not provide height warnings). An increase in height (whilst keeping within the weight limits) increases the wind profile area of the stack, and thus increases the wind heeling effect.

Note: The PSCO should be aware that the loading computer is a tool to determine the stability and is not related to lashing of cargo. A loading computer might have a lashing module. This facility may only be relied on if it is class approved, which in many cases is not the case. When asked for the correct lashing configuration the crew might refer to the lashing module if they cannot find the correct lashing configuration in the CSM. The CSM however is a convention requirement and prevails over a lashing module in the loading computer. Information from a lashing module cannot be seen as part of the approved CSM.

Requirements:

- Cargo units and cargo transport units carried on or under deck shall be so loaded, stowed and secured as to prevent, as far as is practicable, damage or hazard to the ship and the persons on board, and loss of cargo overboard.
- All cargo units and cargo transport units shall be loaded, stowed and secured throughout the voyage in accordance with the approved Cargo Securing Manual (CSM)
- The master, or crew, should be familiar with essential shipboard procedures relating to the safety of the ship.

Deficiency Code: 06107 – Cargo operation – Lack of familiarity

Convention Reference: SOLAS VI/Regulation 5.1

Suggested Action Taken: 17/30* – Grounds for Detention (PMoU - tick box)

Q4* – Is the Cargo Securing Manual being complied with?

It is likely that the PSCO will conduct the CIC whilst the ship is still loading and/or unloading, however, compliance should still be checked as far as safe and reasonable.

Accident reports published after container losses have identified that allowable stack weights and/or permissible vertical sequence of weights (masses) in stacks have been exceeded on multiple occasions. Reports also note failures to correctly stow and lash containers in accordance with the CSM and/or using lashing gear that is not detailed in the approved CSM.

The PSCO should check:

- That stack weights are not exceeded (Section 4.2.1.3 of MSC.1/Circ.1353/Rev.2).
- That the individual container weights within a stack do not exceed the permissible vertical sequence of weights (masses) in stacks (Section 4.2.1.4 of MSC.1/Circ.1353/Rev.2).
- That the cargo is being secured in accordance with the cargo plan and that plan complies with the CSM (SOLAS VI/Regulation 5.6)
- (noting that the cargo may not be lashed at the time of inspection) That the proposed lashing plan complies with the CSM (SOLAS VI/Regulation 5.6)
- That the lashing devices to be used to secure the cargo are those described in the CSM (Section 2.1 and 2.2 of MSC.1/Circ.1353/Rev.2)
- PSCOs may review the previous loadings and confirm that all types of containers that have been carried onboard are permitted to be carried as per the CSM.

In most container stacks the weight of containers permitted higher up in the stack will be lower than those at the bottom of the stack. This is to address ship stability and the forces on the stack when the ship is rolling in a seaway.

Requirements:

- Where non-compliance is discovered the PSCO should consider examining cargo plans from previous voyages as part of a more detailed inspection. This should confirm that the cargo was correctly loaded, stowed and secured throughout the voyage in accordance with the CSM.
- In addition, where the containers are onboard, consideration should be given to required re-stowing in compliance with the CSM. This may include detaining the ship under Chapter VI of SOLAS until load complies with the CSM.

Deficiency Code: 06107 – Cargo Operations

Convention Reference: SOLAS VI/Regulation 5.1 (cargo secured throughout the voyage)

Suggested Action Taken: 17/30* – Grounds for Detention (PMoU - tick box)

Q5* – Does the cargo plan reflect the verified gross mass of the containers being loaded?

A cargo plan may comply with the CSM but the effectiveness of the plan is dependent on the shipper providing the verified gross mass (VGM) of the containers. The VGM should be provided to the Master of the ship before containers are loaded.

The PSCO should check:

- That information on the VGM has been provided to the ship prior to loading commencing.
- That the VGM of containers is reflected in the stowage plan of the ship.

Requirements:

- Where VGM of containers has not been provided to the ship these shall not be loaded. Where the containers are on board then the PSCO should consider requiring cargo operations to cease until the issue is resolved. If non-compliance with the CSM is serious enough, then there would be cause to detain the ship until the issue is resolved.

Deficiency Code: 06107 – Cargo Operations

Convention Reference: SOLAS VI/Regulation 2.6 (VGM required for cargo to be loaded)

Suggested Action Taken: 17/99/30* – Grounds for Detention (PMoU - tick box)

Q6 – Does the ship have a “Cargo Safe Access Plan” (CSAP) to facilitate the proper stowage and securing of containers?

*This question is for information purposes only.

In order to properly stow and secure containers safe access to the cargo area needs to be provided. Safe access arrangements may be documented in a Cargo Safe Access Plan (CSAP) and provided to persons engaged in work connected with cargo stowage and securing as specified in subparagraph 1.3.8 and Chapter 5 of MSC.1/Circ.1353/Rev.2. (Chapter 5 of the MSC circular is applicable to container vessels with keel laid on or after 1 January 2015)

Failure to provide safe access may compromise the ability of crew and/or stevedores to properly stow and secure the cargo.

The PSCO should check:

- Whether the ship has a CSAP complying with Chapter 5 of MSC.1/Circ.1353/Rev.2
- Whether the CSAP covers the actual areas where cargo operations are being, or are to be, carried out.
- Whether the CSAP has been provided to those persons working to stow and secure and/or discharge containers.

Q7* – Does the ship carry sufficient approved portable cargo securing devices, from the correct brand and type, onboard to properly stow and secure the cargo in accordance with the cargo securing manual?

The ship should carry sufficient portable cargo securing devices as detailed in the CSM (Section 1.3.5 of MSC.1/Circ.1353/Rev.2) as well as a ‘sufficient quantity of reserve cargo securing devices’ (Section 1.3.6 of MSC.1/Circ.1353/Rev.2). The number required for the reserve is not specified but should be sufficient to address wastage through loss and/or damage.

In interpreting this requirement, the PSCO should consider that in addition to carrying the number and type of portable cargo securing devices specified in the CSM, there should be sufficient items to ensure the cargo is secured using the correct portable devices in the stow (i.e: cones should not be used in lieu of twist-locks, twist-locks should be used on all four corners of a stow). The PSCO may check how the information is exchanged between the ship and shore labour with respect to distinguishing between base locks from twist locks.

Professional judgement should be exercised where there is a minor difference, noting if spare parts have been ordered to replace these in appropriate time frames. Where the containers on board are not secured with the correct portable devices and/or there are insufficient devices to properly secure the cargo then the PSCO should consider requiring cargo operations to cease until the issue is resolved. Non-compliance may warrant detention under SOLAS Chapter VI.

The PSCO should check:

- That there are sufficient portable cargo securing devices onboard along with reserve supply as specified in the approved cargo securing manual.
- That there are sufficient devices to use the correct portable devices throughout the container stow as specified in the CSM
- That the actual stow conforms to the cargo securing plan. This includes cargo already carried on the ship.

Deficiency Code: 06104 – Lashing material

Convention Reference: SOLAS VI/Regulation 5.1 (cargo secured throughout the voyage); SOLAS VI Regulation 5.6 (cargo loaded and secured in accordance with the CSM)

Suggested Action Taken: 17/65/99/30* – Grounds for Detention (PMoU - tick box)

Q8* – Are the fixed and portable cargo securing devices in good condition, compatible with the ship and maintained in accordance with Inspection and maintenance scheme contained in the CSM?

Section 2.3 of MSC.1/Circ.1353/Rev.1 specifies that the CSM should describe an inspection and maintenance scheme that is implemented on the ship. This should include:

The PSCO should check:

- Details of routine visual inspections of components;
- Details of periodic examinations/re-testing as required by the Administration; and
- The need for a record book (to be kept with the CSM) which includes records of inspection and information on the processes for accepting, maintaining, repairing and rejecting cargo securing devices.

This information could also be captured in computerised maintenance procedures referred to in the CSM.

Requirements:

- That the CSM, or an associated document, contains details of the record of the securing device inspection and maintenance scheme.
- The record of inspection is available, and the inspection and maintenance scheme is being complied with.
- Replacement materials should match those already onboard, such as left hand locking turnbuckles should not be used to replace right hand locking turnbuckles.
- That the cargo securing manual/record of inspections contains test certificates for the various items of lashing and securing equipment held onboard. Test certificates should be onboard for any replacement materials (if applicable).
- That the portable cargo securing devices being used in the stow are in good condition and there are no obvious signs of substantial corrosion, fractures, damage, distortion or wear and inspect items such as:
 - rods and tensioning devices, e.g. turnbuckles;
 - chains and wire tensioning devices;
 - twist locks.

- That the fixed securing devices are free of obvious signs of substantial corrosion, fractures, damage, distortion or wear and inspect items such as:
 - ISO deck sockets, dovetail foundations, hatch top container bases, container fittings on outboard pedestal platforms (particularly susceptible due to location);
 - If repairs are identified to items such as the dovetail foundations, verify how the ship has ensured that these repairs are to the original manufacturer's specifications.
 - container guides and buttresses;
 - lashing securing points, e.g. eye plates, D-rings.
- The ship's maintenance protocols should include procedures to ensure that damaged cargo gear isn't put back into recirculation. This may be included in the CSM.

Deficiency Code: 06104 – Lashing material

Convention Reference: SOLAS VI/Regulation 5.1 (cargo secured throughout the voyage); SOLAS VI Regulation 5.6 (cargo loaded and secured in accordance with the CSM)

Suggested Action Taken: 17/65/99/30* – Grounds for Detention (PMoU - tick box)

When inspecting lashing arrangements, the PSCO should examine a random sample of cargo already loaded on the ship including that stowed in a different port.

For fixed cargo securing devices, there is no advice on allowable diminution of the devices, however, where fixed cargo securing devices have a significant amount of diminution then the PSCO should consider referring to the Class Society or manufacturer guidance for their advice.

If there is evidence that the fixed and portable securing devices are incorrect, in poor condition and/or incorrectly used then the PSCO should consider requiring cargo operations to cease until the issue is resolved. Non-compliance may warrant a detention.

Q9* – Does the cargo stow comply with bridge visibility requirements?

Regulation 22 of Chapter V of SOLAS specifies the minimum bridge visibility requirements to be met by a ship in respect of:

- Regulation 22/1.1 - The view of the sea surface from the conning position shall not be obscured by more than two ship lengths, or 500 m, whichever is the less, forward of the bow to 10° on either side under all conditions of draught, trim and deck cargo.
- Regulation 22/1.2 - No blind sector caused by cargo, cargo gear or other obstructions outside of the wheelhouse forward of the beam which obstructs the view of the sea surface as seen from the conning position, shall exceed 10 degrees.

Section 4.2.1 of MSC.1/Circ.1353/Rev.2 notes that the ship should be provided with stowage and securing plan(s) that include the maximum height of the cargo stack in respect of approved sight lines and the ship should comply. Where a stow includes over dimension cargo and/or containers (such as multiple hi cube containers within the stow) this may result in non-compliance with bridge visibility requirements.

The PSCO should check:

- Does the cargo stow plan take into account bridge visibility.
- Does the actual cargo stow comply with the bridge visibility requirements for the anticipated voyage.

- Did the cargo stow for preceding voyage comply with bridge visibility requirements (this would normally be examined as part of a more detailed inspection).

If there is evidence that bridge visibility does not, or will not, comply with bridge visibility requirements then the PSCO should consider appropriate action to ensure the ship complies prior to departure. Some Administrations have issued documentation that is not in accordance with the Convention allowing the carriage of cargo that obstructs bridge visibility by greater than 10°. Care should be taken around commercial expedience being used to obstruct bridge visibility, with the inherent risks of not being able to maintain an effective watch by sight. Detention may be considered if immediate action is necessary.

Deficiency Code: 10128 - Bridge Visibility

Convention Reference: SOLAS V/Regulation 22 (Bridge Visibility)

Suggested Action Taken: 17/99/30* – Grounds for Detention (PMoU - tick box)

Q10a – Does the ship have procedures or arrangements in place, for example within the ships safety management system, covering heavy weather navigation, including precautions to prevent the loss of cargo, and are appropriate checklists available?

*This question is for information purposes only

Noting regulation SOLAS Chapter VI/5(1) the ship's safety management system should have procedures and guidance in place to assist the master in dealing with heavy weather events for the safety of the ship and to prevent loss or damage to the cargo. The purpose of this question is to collect data on whether or not such plans are in place.

Q10b – Where they exist, have the procedures covering heavy weather navigation, including precautions to prevent the loss of cargo, been complied with?

After recent container loss incidents, it was discovered that weather routing was not considered along with correct heavy weather ship handling to reduce forces and adverse weather checklists were not completed.

Deficiency Code: 10127 – Voyage or passage plan

Convention Reference: SOLAS V/Regulation 34.2

Suggested Action Taken: 99

References

- SOLAS Chapter VI, Regulation 5 (Stowage and Securing)
- SOLAS Chapter V, Regulation 22 (Navigation Bridge Visibility) and Regulation 34 (Safe Navigation)
- MSC.1/Circ.1353/Rev.2 – Revised Guidelines for the Preparation of the Cargo Securing Manual
- Marin Top Tier Joint Industry Project (JIP) – ISSW2022, Seakeeping and Container Cargo Securing Safety

General Notes

- This CIC is conducted in addition to existing PSC inspection procedures and does not affect the type of inspection.
- Questions 1 to 10, excluding 6 and 10a, answered with a “No” must be accompanied by a relevant deficiency on the report of inspection Form B.
- A “No” answer to questions marked with an asterisk (*) may lead the ship to be considered for detention; however, the decision rests on the PSCO's professional judgement.
- THETIS should be checked to determine whether the CIC on Cargo Securing has been previously conducted on the ship during the campaign period.