



Office of the  
Deputy Commissioner of  
Maritime Affairs

# THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

## LIBERIA MARITIME AUTHORITY

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### Marine Advisory: 09/2026

## **SUBJECT: AMSA National Compliance Plan 2025–26 – Port State Control (PSC) Preparation Guidance for Vessels Calling Australia**

### **PURPOSE**

The purpose of this Marine Advisory is to inform shipowners, operators, Designated Persons Ashore (DPAs), Superintendents, Masters and crew of the [Australian Maritime Safety Authority \(AMSA\) National Compliance Plan 2025-26](#). This advisory is issued to assist Liberian-flag vessels and their operators with the preparation of the vessel to meet the AMSA compliance Plan requirements prior to arriving Australian ports. The Advisory:

- a. Summarizes AMSA's compliance strategy and priority risk areas relevant to foreign-flagged vessels trading to Australia
- b. Highlights inspection trends and enforcement focus that may lead to deficiencies or detention
- c. Assist vessel operators in preparing for Port State Control (PSC) inspections

This Advisory is intended as guidance only, to support compliance readiness and does not replace any statutory requirements.

### **AMSA COMPLIANCE STRATEGY – WHAT OWNERS & MASTERS SHOULD EXPECT**

AMSA applies an intelligence-led, risk-based compliance model, recognizing that incidents typically arise from a combination of operational, organizational, environmental, and human factors rather than single failures. The National Compliance Plan confirms that in 2025–26 AMSA will:

- i. Conduct a minimum of 2,400 PSC inspections on foreign-flagged vessels
- ii. Use an enhanced risk-profiling algorithm to target higher-risk ships
- iii. Expand inspections where systemic or repeated deficiencies are identified
- iv. Combine inspections with education and enforcement where warranted
- v. Continue to focus on shipboard maintenance during PSC inspections

Vessels with poor maintenance standards, weak Safety Management System (SMS) implementation, or previous deficiencies can expect more detailed and intrusive inspections.

### **PRIMARY PSC FOCUS AREAS FOR FOREIGN-FLAGGED VESSELS**

The following focus areas are directly drawn from AMSA's 2025–26 National Compliance Plan and associated inspection data.

## 1. Shipboard Maintenance (High-Risk Area)

Shipboard maintenance remains a leading cause of PSC detention in Australia. AMSA has confirmed this will continue as a core inspection focus.

Inspectors will pay close attention to:

- i. Main and auxiliary engines (leaks, alarms, safeguards)
- ii. Power generation and emergency power systems
- iii. Steering gear and emergency steering arrangements
- iv. Fire safety systems and critical safety equipment
- v. Planned Maintenance System (PMS) implementation
- vi. Defect reporting and close-out records

Temporary repairs, oil contamination, outstanding defects, and incomplete maintenance records regularly trigger expanded inspections.

## 2. Occupational Safety & ISM Code Effectiveness

AMSA recorded 74 serious seafarer injuries in 2024, many related to maintenance and cargo operations. This has resulted in increased scrutiny of:

- i. Risk assessments carried out under the ISM Code
- ii. Task-based risk controls (maintenance, cargo operations, access)
- iii. SMS implementation beyond paperwork compliance

AMSA inspectors will verify whether risk assessments are practical, vessel-specific, documented, and implemented.

## 3. Pilot Ladder & Pilot Transfer Arrangements

Following 84 reported pilot ladder incidents in 2024, AMSA has elevated pilot ladder safety as a priority PSC risk area. Checks will include strict compliance with SOLAS Chapter V / Regulation 23 and applicable IMO resolutions and AMSA guidance - [Marine Notice 04/2023 "Pilot transfer arrangements"](#)

Key inspection points include:

- i. Condition, certification, and age of pilot ladders
- ii. Correct rigging and securing arrangements
- iii. Side ropes, stanchions, man-ropes, and embarkation platforms
- iv. Crew knowledge and supervision during pilot transfer operations

Non-compliance in this area is frequently considered detainable and pilot transfer arrangements remain a critical safety risk requiring attention.

## 4. Cargo Handling and Cargo Securing (Marine Order 32)

AMSA analysis shows cargo-related deficiencies remain a significant safety and environmental risk. PSC inspections will concentrate in the verification of:

- i. Availability and approval of a ship-specific Cargo Securing Manual (CSM)
- ii. Condition and certification of lashing equipment and any equipment related to lashing e.g; lashing eye, sockets etc.

- iii. Proper stowage and safe access to securing gear
- iv. Practical compliance with the CSS Code
- v. Officer and crew competence in cargo securing procedures

Inadequate securing arrangements, damaged lashing gear, or unfamiliarity with the CSM are common deficiency findings.

Reminder: The Tokyo MOU & Indian Ocean MOU will conduct a concentrated inspection campaign (CIC) on cargo securing scheduled for late 2026.

## **5. Marine Pollution Prevention (MARPOL)**

AMSA continues strong enforcement of pollution prevention requirements due to inconsistent compliance trends, particularly as discharges from sewage, garbage, and systems such as exhaust gas cleaning units can have significant detrimental impacts on the marine ecosystem. AMSA Inspectors will focus on:

- i. Oily Water Separator (OWS) operational integrity
- ii. Absence of bypass arrangements or tampering
- iii. Accuracy and consistency of Oil Record Book entries
- iv. Garbage Management Plans and Record Books (Annex V)
- v. Sewage discharge controls (Annex IV)

Serious breaches may result in detention, fines, or prosecution.

## **6. Maritime Labour Convention (MLC) – Seafarer Welfare**

AMSA continues joint inspections with the Fair Work Ombudsman (FWO), particularly on vessels operating under temporary licenses and focusing on seafarer wages. Inspection focus includes:

- i. Seafarer employment agreements (SEA) and wage payment
- ii. Hours of work and rest compliance
- iii. Crew fatigue management
- iv. Accommodation, food, and welfare conditions
- v. Complaint procedures

Wage-related non-compliance remains the most common MLC issue reported to AMSA. As part of the Australian Government's Strategic Fleet Review, a two-year pilot program has been launched, which will increase compliance activity on foreign vessels operating under temporary licenses and enforcement of wages.

## **RECOMMENDE ACTIONS**

Shipowners, operators, and Masters are strongly encouraged to use this Advisory and focus items listed above as part of their pre-arrival readiness process.

Proactive identification and rectification of deficiencies remain the most effective way to reduce the risk of detention, delay, or enforcement action.