14. Port State Control Inspections

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) conducts port state control (PSC) inspections to ensure that foreign vessels visiting Australian ports comply with the relevant international regulations, are seaworthy, do not pose a risk of pollution and provide a safe working environment; accordingly, under the *Navigation Act 2012* AMSA surveyors may board a vessel at any time to conduct an inspection. Cargo ships may be inspected every six months and tankers over 15 years old may be inspected every three months.

Inspections are based on resolutions of the IMO and the International Labour Organisation (ILO). All required certificates and documentation and areas of critical safety for example, lifeboats, engine room firefighting equipment and cargo gear may be inspected in accordance with a ship inspection record (SIR) book which contains guidelines. In all cases a 'Form A' is completed stating that an inspection has been carried out and if any deficiencies are noted a 'Form B' is issued.

Critical deficiencies can lead to a ship being detained from sailing until the problems are rectified. Details of all detentions are forwarded to the IMO, the relevant flag state, and the classification society.

Vessels that are intending to use their cargo gear to load stores or handle cargo should ensure that they comply with Marine Orders Part 32. This requires all individual pieces of cargo handling equipment to be certificated (test certificate) and clearly marked with the identifying mark and the Safe Working Load (SWL) as stated in the certificate. This applies to all gear, shackles, chains, sheave blocks, bins, tubs rings, etc. Periodical inspections must be entered in the cargo gear register or else the cargo gear cannot be used.