Advanced Port Facility Security Officer (PFSO) Training Course

23 - 27 Nov 2026

Boston

7500 € (Per Person)

Ref: #SM4057_132287

Course Introduction / Overview:

This advanced training course is designed to equip Port Facility Security Officers (PFSO) and maritime security professionals with the comprehensive knowledge and sophisticated skills required to excel in their roles under the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code. The curriculum moves beyond basic compliance, delving into advanced threat assessment, strategic security planning, and effective crisis management. As noted by maritime security expert Dr. Michael D. Greenberg, the modern PFSO must be a proactive risk manager, not just a reactive administrator. This course, offered by BIG BEN Training Center, embodies this principle by integrating complex scenarios and strategic decision-making exercises. Participants will explore the intricate dynamics of the ship-port interface, the nuances of developing a robust Port Facility Security Plan (PFSP), and the leadership qualities needed to manage security operations effectively. Drawing on principles discussed in texts like "Maritime Security: An Introduction," the program provides a holistic framework for protecting port facilities against a spectrum of modern threats, ensuring both regulatory adherence and operational resilience in the global supply chain.

Target Audience / This training course is suitable for:

- Newly appointed Port Facility Security Officers (PFSOs).
- Experienced PFSOs seeking advanced training and recertification.
- Port and terminal operations managers.
- Maritime security managers and consultants.
- Ship security officers and company security officers.
- Port authority personnel with security responsibilities.
- Law enforcement and coast guard officers involved in port security.
- Corporate security and risk management professionals in the maritime industry.

Target Sectors and Industries:

- Port authorities and terminal operators.
- Shipping and logistics companies.
- Oil and gas terminals.
- Container and cargo handling facilities.
- Cruise line terminals.
- Governmental agencies, including coast guards, customs, and border protection.
- Maritime security service providers.
- Offshore supply and support industries.

Target Organizations Departments:

- Security and Safety Departments.
- Port Operations and Management.
- Compliance and Regulatory Affairs.
- Risk Management and Corporate Governance.
- Emergency and Crisis Management Teams.
- Logistics and Supply Chain Management.
- Human Resources and Training Departments.
- Facilities Management.

Course Offerings:

By the end of this course, the participants will have able to:

- Conduct a comprehensive Port Facility Security Assessment (PFSA) in complex environments.
- Develop, implement, and maintain a highly effective Port Facility Security Plan (PFSP).
- Manage and coordinate security responsibilities with ships, companies, and government agencies.
- Lead security drills and exercises to enhance port facility emergency preparedness.
- Master advanced techniques for threat identification, risk assessment, and mitigation.
- Oversee the implementation and testing of modern security equipment and systems.
- Ensure the continuous improvement of security measures through regular audits and reviews.
- Effectively manage security incidents and make critical decisions under pressure.
- Foster a strong security awareness culture among all port facility personnel.
- Navigate the legal and regulatory frameworks governing international maritime security.

Course Methodology:

The training methodology at BIG BEN Training Center is designed for maximum engagement and practical skill acquisition. This course employs a blended learning approach that combines expert-led instruction with highly interactive and participatory sessions. We move beyond traditional lectures to immerse participants in real-world challenges through detailed case studies of past maritime security incidents and complex simulation exercises. Group discussions and collaborative workshops encourage the sharing of diverse experiences and perspectives, fostering a rich learning environment. Participants will engage in practical activities such as drafting components of a Port Facility Security Plan (PFSP) and developing response strategies for simulated threats. Our instructors facilitate these sessions, providing personalized feedback and guiding participants to connect theoretical knowledge with their operational realities. This hands-on, problem-solving approach ensures that attendees not only understand the ISPS Code requirements but also develop the critical thinking and leadership skills necessary to implement them effectively in their own port facilities.

Course Agenda (Course Units):

Unit One: The International Maritime Security Framework

- Review of the ISPS Code, SOLAS, and relevant international conventions.
- The roles and responsibilities of the PFSO, CSO, and SSO.
- Understanding the legal implications and liabilities for port facilities.
- Interpreting circulars and guidance from the International Maritime Organization (IMO).
- Coordination with Designated Authorities and government agencies.
- Defining the three security levels and their practical application.
- Documentation and record-keeping requirements for compliance.

Unit Two: Advanced Port Facility Security Assessment (PFSA)

- Methodologies for conducting a comprehensive PFSA.
- Identifying critical assets and infrastructure within the port facility.
- Advanced threat assessment techniques for terrorism, piracy, and cyber threats.
- Vulnerability analysis of physical barriers, access control, and procedures.
- Integrating risk management principles into the PFSA process.
- Utilizing assessment tools and checklists effectively.
- Documenting and presenting the PFSA findings for the security plan.

Unit Three: Developing and Implementing the Port Facility Security Plan (PFSP)

- Structuring the PFSP in accordance with ISPS Code requirements.
- Developing robust procedures for access control for personnel and vehicles.
- Implementing measures for monitoring restricted areas and cargo handling.
- Procedures for the delivery of ship's stores and bunkers.
- Integrating security equipment and technology into the PFSP.
- Communicating the plan to port personnel and relevant stakeholders.
- Managing amendments and updates to the PFSP.

Unit Four: Security Operations and Crisis Management

- Implementing security measures for different security levels.
- Managing the ship-port interface and the Declaration of Security (DoS).
- Conducting effective security patrols and surveillance.
- Planning and executing security drills and exercises.
- Developing a comprehensive crisis management and incident response plan.
- Coordinating with external emergency response services.
- Media handling and communication during a security incident.

Unit Five: Auditing, Training, and Future Security Challenges

- Techniques for conducting internal audits and security inspections.
- Preparing for external audits and verifications by the Designated Authority.
- Developing and implementing a security awareness and training program.
- Addressing emerging threats such as cybersecurity and drone intrusions.
- Best practices in supply chain security and container security initiatives.
- Fostering a proactive security culture within the port facility.
- Continuous professional development for the Port Facility Security Officer.

FAQ:

Qualifications required for registering to this course?

There are no requirements.

How long is each daily session, and what is the total number of training hours for the course?

This training course spans five days, with daily sessions ranging between 4 to 5 hours, including breaks and interactive activities, bringing the total duration to 20 - 25 training hours.

Something to think about:

Beyond regulatory compliance, how can a PFSO proactively transform a port's security culture from a cost center into a strategic asset for trade facilitation and resilience?

What unique qualities does this course offer compared to other courses?

This course distinguishes itself by moving beyond procedural instruction to cultivate strategic security leadership. While many programs focus solely on the "what" of the ISPS Code, we emphasize the "why" and "how," equipping participants with the critical thinking skills needed to adapt to evolving threats. Our curriculum is built on a foundation of advanced risk management principles, teaching PFSOs not just to follow a checklist, but to conduct dynamic threat assessments and make informed, defensible decisions under pressure. We utilize a scenario-based learning model where participants are challenged with complex, realistic simulations that mirror the ambiguities and pressures of a real security incident. This approach, which integrates elements of crisis management, inter-agency coordination, and strategic communication, ensures that graduates are prepared for leadership roles. The course content is continuously updated to reflect emerging challenges, including cybersecurity threats to port systems and

he integration of new technologies, ensuring our participants are at the forefront of maritime security management rather than simply reacting to outdated paradigms.