



Homeland Security

Homeland Security and Situational Awareness of Vessel Operators

Enhanced vigilance through increased awareness is the key to helping prevent unlawful acts, including terrorism. In addition to this information, the guidance in the Navigation and Vessel Inspection Circular No. 10-02 should be consulted or implemented on board your vessel. The U.S. Coast Guard Seventh and Eighth Districts have increased protection as part of supporting Operation Liberty Shield.

The Coast Guard encourages the maritime industry to be alert and to immediately notify them of any observed unusual or suspicious activity by calling on VHF-FM Channel 16 or call the National Response Center Terrorism Hotline at 1-800-424-8802. For vessel operators, the following are possible indicators of suspicious activity or factors that may raise maritime security concerns.

Possible Indicators of Suspicious Vessel Activity

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unmarked or unattended vessels in unusual locations. • Unusual vessel characteristics or number of people on board. • Unusual nighttime operations. • Vessel operating at night without navigation running lights. • Lights flashing between a vessel and shore. • Sophisticated radio or scanner devices; electronics on board that are inconsistent with vessel's design or intended purpose. • Recovering of or tossing items into or onto the waterway or shoreline. • Unusual photographic activity. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vessel that makes drastic course changes away from other vessels, particularly those marked as law enforcement. • Vessels that anchor or cruise in one area for no apparent reason. • Smaller vessels laying to in the vicinity of another vessel or offshore platforms for no apparent reason. • Vessels that ride low in the water, or display of false load lines. • Unusual transfer of cargo or personnel while underway. • Unusual diving activities. • Divers near vessels. |
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The above list is not intended to be inclusive. Any decision regarding what should be reported to the Coast Guard will generally be based totally on the circumstances and the exercise of prudent judgement.

Always be sure to record all pertinent information, such as, time and date, personnel descriptions, vessel names/numbers, vessel description, and as near as possible the exact location(s).