

# OVERVIEW

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA), in partnership with the U.S. Coast Guard (USCG), has developed the Port Security Training Exercises Program (PortSTEP) as a joint program to help meet the mandates of the 2002 Maritime Transportation Security Act (MTSA). PortSTEP is designed to provide maritime transportation security communities nationwide with training exercises, evaluations, and accompanying information technology products.

TSA and USCG have come together under this program to share authorities and expertise in an effort to enhance the preparedness of our nation's ports. TSA being concerned with the surface transportation system will focus on the intermodal aspects of PortSTEP, while the USCG will continue to focus on the water-side and maritime aspects of the program. PortSTEP is designed to address the unique transportation security issues found in the intermodal maritime environment of our Nation's ports.

PortSTEP exercises, which will begin in August 2005, will test the abilities of the government and the maritime industry to prevent, respond to, and recover from a Transportation Security Incident (TSI). Since ports vary in size and complexity and contain a mixture of modes of transportation, PortSTEP has analyzed the range of port characteristics to provide the right combination of tools and exercise types to address these variations.

## MISSION

We will develop and implement a port security intermodal transportation security exercise program for use by our Nation's port communities. The program will align with the Nation's infrastructure protection policies and programs. Through the Area Maritime Security Committees, we will engage all modes of the intermodal transportation community to continuously improve readiness. Our innovative and comprehensive system of tools and services will provide a foundation allowing stakeholders to strengthen their port security postures as they consider the economic impacts of a TSI on affected industries and the movement of people and commerce.

## VISION

To strengthen the nation's ability to prevent, respond to, and recover from a transportation security incident in a port and maritime environment.

## Program Goals

Our Nation's seaports are vital to the economic health of this country. PortSTEP will provide ports and their respective maritime communities with meaningful evaluations on issues associated with prevention, preparedness, and the ability to respond to a terrorist-related incident. PortSTEP's goals include: promoting stakeholder awareness and involvement through an outreach program; encouraging stakeholder participation in program development; encouraging program alignment with national standards and requirements; conducting exercises relevant to stakeholders' challenges and risks; and refining the program through evaluation and continuous improvement.

## Exercise Scope

PortSTEP will provide 40 port security training exercises between August 2005 and October 2007 that will include a mix of Basic Tabletop, Advanced Tabletop and Functional Exercises. These exercises will be conducted through the Area Maritime Security Committees (AMSC) and local stakeholders at each of the selected 40 ports. PortSTEP will achieve several performance objectives aimed at improving the intermodal transportation industry's ability to prepare for and contend with a TSI. These objectives are centered on increasing awareness, improving processes, creating partnerships, and delivering port incident training through the exercises.

PortSTEP will deliver the following exercise support documentation and services:

- **Facilitation** of all planning meetings and exercise activities;
- **Scenarios** that will drive exercise discussion;
- **Exercise Plans** that will address exercise scope and objectives, and assign tasks and responsibilities;
- **Situation Manuals** that will contain either a chronologically sequenced scenario or a partially pre-scripted narrative to be driven by player actions during the exercise;
- **Controller and Evaluator Handbooks** that describe the roles and responsibilities of exercise controllers and evaluators;
- **Exercise Evaluation Guides** that will provide evaluators a means to record their observations and questions to consider after the exercise;

**PortSTEP**  
Port Security Training Exercise Program



**Homeland Security**

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- **Master Scenario Events Lists** that will contain a chronological listing of the events;
- **Models and Simulations** that will provide players with visualization, instant feedback on the outcomes of their choices, and the underlying reasons for those results;
- **Media/Public Information Kits** that will notify local media prior to the exercise; and
- **Logistics Plans** that will allow for a smooth, seamless exercise.

## Stakeholder Involvement

The participation of port stakeholders in the design and execution of PortSTEP is critical to successful exercise preparation and execution. The program aims to increase the awareness of the intermodal maritime transportation community of the critical processes, issues, and activities that arise during and following a TSI. In addition, the program will foster and support institutional relationships within the port environment including the transportation industry, transportation security managers, emergency managers, law enforcement, medical professionals, media, and security personnel, and all others involved in preparing for and responding to a TSI. Facility and Vessel plan owners are encouraged to consider whether participation satisfies their internal exercise obligations.

## Information Technology and Simulations

The PortSTEP Business Information Center (BIC) will be an Internet-accessible knowledge management system, serving all stakeholders: industry, port authorities, federal agencies, and state and local governments. It will integrate all components of PortSTEP and provide stakeholders with valuable exercise information tailored to the port and intermodal transportation industry, allowing exercise developers to leverage past work and best practices. The BIC will provide maritime transportation industry stakeholders with the ability to choose scenarios and Master Scenario Events Lists (MSELs) based on their particular needs, such as transportation mode, geographical location, or exercise objective. The BIC is being designed to be adaptable to the changing needs of PortSTEP as it matures and evolves, and to support additional PortSTEP elements that may be developed in the future.

Models and simulations are valuable tools for conceptualizing threats to port security and for working through exercise concepts. For PortSTEP, models and simulations will be available as a supplement to exercise design, conduct, and evaluation. Although live exercises are an irreplaceable component of any preparedness program, simulations will illustrate in a cost-effective way the resources available within the area maritime transportation security community and the challenges to prioritizing their use. PortSTEP can use these to provide immediate feedback to players within the context of a given scenario. Models, simulations, and other software tools will be available during the design and development process to play out scenarios, provide visualization of incidents, and generate images for exercise documents.

## Program Team

The TSA and USCG have assembled a Program Team to provide strategic support, planning, and analytical and technical services for the port security training exercises. This team is comprised of government agencies and commercial vendors that have significant expertise in the maritime domain and in exercise program development and delivery. Federal government participants include: TSA; USCG; Department of Transportation, Customs and Border Protection, Office of Emergency Transportation, and the Office of State and Local Government Coordination and Preparedness. Commercial vendors include: Applied Science Associates, Inc.; Booz Allen Hamilton; Community Research Associates, Inc.; and UNITECH.

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