



**Australian Government**  
**Department of Infrastructure  
and Regional Development**



# Guidance for security zone signage



## Contents

|   |    |
|---|----|
| 1: Purpose.....   | 3  |
| Approaches to signage .....                                       | 3  |
| Notices.....  | 3  |
| 2: Signage in context.....  | 3  |
| 2.1: Purpose of maritime security zones .....                     | 3  |
| 2.2: Establishment of maritime security zones .....               | 4  |
| 2.3: Types of maritime security zones.....                        | 4  |
| 2.3.1: Port security zones and maritime security planning.....    | 4  |
| 2.3.2: Landside restricted zones.....                             | 4  |
| 2.3.3: Waterside restricted zones .....                           | 5  |
| 2.3.4: Cleared zones and screening points.....                    | 5  |
| 2.3.5: Ship security zones .....                                  | 6  |
| 2.3.6: On-board security zones .....                              | 6  |
| 2.3.7: Offshore security zones.....                               | 6  |
| 3: Additional uses of MSZ signage .....                           | 6  |
| 4: Using security barriers to identify the existence of MSZs..... | 7  |
| 5: International and Australian signage standards .....           | 7  |
| 5.1: Signage size .....   | 8  |
| 6: Maritime security level signage.....                           | 8  |
| 7: Contact details.....   | 9  |
| Attachment A .....  | 10 |
| Attachment B .....  | 11 |

## 1: Purpose

This paper is designed to assist maritime industry participants to:

- meet their obligations in relation to informing people of the existence of maritime security zones (MSZ) created under the *Maritime Transport and Offshore Facilities Security Act 2003* (the Act) and *Maritime Transport and Offshore Facilities Security Regulations 2003* (the Regulations); and
- develop appropriate approaches to inform the public that a MSZ is in force at a security regulated port, ship or offshore facility.

### Approaches to signage

When considering signage it is important to note that signage alone may not be sufficient to inform the public of the existence of a security zone. Other methods that could be used to inform the public may include the use of buoys, picket boats, booms, publishing notices and announcements in local media. These mechanisms should target each user group, for example: commercial ships, commercial and recreational fishers, local residents, tourists and recreational boaters. A public awareness campaign may be a cost effective method of informing the general public of access restrictions connected with MSZs.

### Notices

A notice is a separate information device to a sign. Notices include more information than is expected to be included in a sign. For example, there are prescribed requirements for what must be included in a notice that is displayed at screening points. The notice is required to detail the full list of weapons and prohibited items that must not be carried through the screening point.

## 2: Signage in context

### 2.1: Purpose of maritime security zones

Maritime industry participants (MIPs) may request MSZs to be established for a range of reasons including:

- to control the movement of people;
- to provide cleared areas within the port environs;
- to prevent interference with ships and offshore facilities; and
- to restrict access to specified areas including critical installations.

The Act and the Regulations detail a range of offences that apply in relation to port security zones, ship security zones and offshore facility security zones. Different types of MSZs have different obligations for the MIP who is responsible for the particular zone.

## 2.2: Establishment of maritime security zones

The Secretary (or their delegate) may declare a maritime security zone by giving written notice to the:

- port operator when establishing port security zones;
- ship operator when establishing on-board security zones;
- ship operator or the master of a security regulated ship and the port operator when establishing ship security zones; or
- offshore facility operator when establishing offshore security zones.

## 2.3: Types of maritime security zones

Part Six of the Act details four types of MSZs. These zones include:

- port security zones;
- ship security zones;
- on-board security zones; and
- offshore security zones.

### 2.3.1: Port security zones and maritime security planning

The Secretary may establish one or more port security zones within a security regulated port. Port security zones may be requested through individual port, port facility and port service provider maritime security plans (MSPs). If proposing a security zone, the MSP must detail the period and/or circumstances for when the proposed port security zone will be in force, for example:

- at all the times;
- at a specific maritime security level (MARSEC); or
- when a certain class of ship is at berth.

Maps of each security zone showing the operation of each zone are also required to be included with the MSP. The Regulations detail three different types of port security zone that may be established. These are landside restricted zones, waterside restricted zones and cleared zones.

### 2.3.2: Landside restricted zones

To inform people that a landside restricted zone is in force and that unauthorised entry into the proposed zone is an offence the Regulations<sup>1</sup> provide that the port operator or port facility operator that requested the landside restricted zone must set out in their maritime security plan:

---

<sup>1</sup> Refer to regulations 3.77 and 3.150 of the Maritime Transport and Offshore Facilities Security Regulations 2003 (the Regulations).

- 
- the purpose;
  - the security zone boundaries;
  - the period when, or the circumstances in which, the zone is to be in force; and
  - the security measures and procedures to be taken to monitor and control access into the zone; including measures to detect and deter unauthorised access.

In reference to signage for landside restricted zones, permanent signage is recommended where practical. Where zones are not permanently in force, it is advisable that signs not be permanently affixed (refer the scenarios in Attachment A).

### **2.3.3: Waterside restricted zones**

The port operator has the responsibility of ensuring that persons who are in, or in the vicinity of, the security regulated port are informed that access to a waterside restricted zone is monitored and that any unauthorised entry into the zone is an offence<sup>2</sup>.

Waterside restricted zone signage which needs to be visible from significant distances may not be an effective way of informing the public of the existence of waterside restricted zones. In these circumstances MIPs should also consider using water based identification measures such as booms, picket boats and buoys<sup>3</sup>, or publishing or posting notices and broadcasting announcements in local media<sup>4</sup>.

### **2.3.4: Cleared zones and screening points**

Port facility operators must ensure that a cleared zone is inspected for unauthorised persons, goods, vehicles and vessels and that persons and goods are screened and cleared in accordance with the Regulations<sup>5</sup> before they are allowed to enter and remain in any cleared zone.

Notices<sup>6</sup> are required to be displayed at screening points and state that it is an offence to carry weapons and prohibited items through a cleared zone. The notice is required to include the list of weapons and prohibited items referred to in the Act and Regulations<sup>7</sup>. This acts to inform the public of the requirement

---

<sup>2</sup> Ibid nder regulation 6.70

<sup>3</sup> Refer to the International Association of Lighthouse Authorities (IALA) System 'A' for a simple, logical system of waterside marking and choice of appropriate buoy types

<sup>4</sup> Sub-regulations 6.65(2)(a) – (d). Examples of local media would include recreational club newsletters, community newsletters, local newspapers, television or radio announcements etc.

<sup>5</sup> Op. cit. refer to regulation 6.50.

<sup>6</sup> Op. cit. 1 at regulation 7.33.

<sup>7</sup> Regulations 1.60 and 1.65 and section 10 of the Act.



for screening and clearing and that it is an offence to carry weapons and prohibited items into a cleared zone.

### **2.3.5: Ship security zones**

The Secretary may declare a ship security zone for specific ships within a port or near an offshore facility. A ship security zone operates around a ship while the ship is in motion or berthed in a port<sup>8</sup> or near an offshore facility<sup>9</sup>. The port operator for a security regulated port in which a ship security zone is established must ensure that persons who are in the vicinity of the security regulated port are informed that access to the ship security zone is controlled and any unauthorised entry into the zone is an offence and penalties may apply<sup>10</sup>. In order to inform the public signage may be used and hung from the ship (see an example of this at Attachment B).

### **2.3.6: On-board security zones**

The Secretary may establish on-board security zones on a security regulated Australian ship to subject those zones to additional security measures. The Regulations include an 'on-board restricted area' as a type of on-board security zone. The boundaries of an on-board restricted area must be clearly identified with signs<sup>11</sup>.

### **2.3.7: Offshore security zones**

The Secretary may establish security zones within and around security regulated offshore facilities, in order to subject these areas to additional security measures. The Regulations prescribe an 'offshore facility zone' and an 'offshore waterside restricted zone' as types of offshore security zones. Distance issues may mean that signage cannot be the primary method used to inform persons of the security zone. MIPs should consider using water based identification measures, publishing zones in navigation charts or broadcasting notices<sup>12</sup>.

## **3: Additional uses of MSZ signage**

People entering, or in the vicinity of a MSZ need to be informed of the range of restrictions and penalties that apply to breaching a security zone. Posting notices detailing this information is an effective method

---

<sup>8</sup> See section 106(1) of the Act.

<sup>9</sup> See section 106(1A) of the Act.

<sup>10</sup> Op. cit. regulation 6.95.

<sup>11</sup> Op. cit. Regulation 6.110.

<sup>12</sup> Op. cit.1 at regulation 6.145(a) – (c).



of conveying a large amount of information to the public. Publishing information in local media would assist with raising public awareness of the requirements and obligations surrounding MSZs.

Signage can also be used to inform the public of matters such as:

- the location and perimeter of each security zone in force;
- the relevant screening and clearing requirements applying to those seeking to enter a cleared zone;
- the Maritime Security Identity Card scheme being in force;
- access restrictions that apply, enabling only those with an operational need to be in a MSZ; and
- the offences relating to the carriage of weapons and prohibited items.

#### 4: Using security barriers to identify the existence of MSZs

Security barriers are required to clearly identify and define the boundaries of a MSZ. Signs do not constitute security barriers<sup>13</sup>. It is recommended that MIPs use signs in conjunction with appropriate security barriers.

#### 5: International and Australian signage standards

Various Australian and international standards exist for the use of signs in the occupational and maritime environments. Australian standard AS1319 on prohibition signage and the international standard ISO3864 on safety signage are useful references. These standards advocate using a combination of clear and simple text, colours, symbols and graphics and the minimum size required for viewing at certain distances.

MIPs are advised to consider these standards in relation to signage used for MSZs. These principles should guide all MSZ signage, depending on the specific MSZ requirements and in conjunction with the appropriate standards.

- There should be as many signs as is necessary for a person approaching the MSZ to see at least one sign.
- Signage should be a minimum of 400 millimetres wide by 300 millimetres high.
- Signage should be permanently affixed on the MSZ boundary.
- On the security barrier of permanent MSZs.

If the MSZ does not come into force until a particular event takes place – for example, an escalation in Maritime Security Level or when a security regulated passenger ship arrives in the port. The sign should

---

<sup>13</sup> Op. cit. 1 at regulation 6.25.



be displayed in a **prominent place** on the boundary or on the security barrier to communicate that there is a MSZs in force. Attachment A has an operational example.

- The terminology used in MSZ signage should be the same as the terminology used in the Act and Regulations. For example; port security zone, landside restricted zone, waterside restricted zone etc. as found under the Act or Regulations.

### 5.1: Signage size

The size of a sign will depend on the distance from which it needs to be viewed. Standards Australia provides guidance for signage size. According to Standards Australia<sup>14</sup>, if a sign needs to be read from 500 metres, a five metre sign would be required for just the capitalised word 'WARNING'. In some circumstances signage may not be the most practical or effective means of informing the public of a MSZ's existence.<sup>15</sup>

## 6: Maritime security level signage

Where referring to Maritime Security Levels in signage do not refer to Maritime Security Level as 'Low' 'Medium' or 'High'. If there is a need to explain security levels in signage, then in line with the *International Ship and Port Facility Security Code 2003*, it is preferable that security levels are referenced as 'Normal', 'Heightened' or 'Extreme' which are equivalent of Maritime Security Levels 1, 2 and 3.

'Normal' refers to the level at which ships and port facilities normally operate (Maritime Security Level 1), 'Heightened' refers to the level applying for as long as there is a heightened risk of a security incident occurring (Maritime Security Level 2) and 'Extreme' refers to the level applying for the period of time there is a probable or imminent risk of a security incident occurring (Maritime Security Level 3).

---

<sup>14</sup> Specific recommendations for legibility, including font size and style can be found in the Road Signs Code AS1742.1.

<sup>15</sup> *International Ship and Port Facility Security Code 2002*, Part A 2.1: .9, 10 & 11.

## 7: Contact details

For further information, maritime industry participants may contact the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development:

Telephone: 1300 791 581

Telephone from outside Australia: +61 2 6274 7111

Email: [maritime.security@infrastructure.gov.au](mailto:maritime.security@infrastructure.gov.au)

Post: GPO Box 594  
CANBERRA ACT 2601

**Disclaimer:** This paper is provided as guidance only and on the understanding that the Department of Infrastructure and Regional Development is not giving legal advice. Before acting or relying on the content, you should obtain appropriate professional advice and should refer to the *Maritime Transport and Offshore Facilities Security Act 2003*

## Attachment A

| <i>Example</i>   | <i>Summary of requirements</i>  | <i>Suggested solutions</i>   |
|--|---|--|
| <p>A port facility operator receives security regulated passenger ships on an ad-hoc basis.</p> <p>When there are no vessels berthed at the facility, no zones are in force.</p> <p>When a security regulated passenger ship is berthed at the facility, the entire facility becomes a landside restricted zone, and a screening point is established adjacent to a cleared zone, inside the passenger terminal.</p> <p>A waterside restricted zone (WRZ) is also established around the vessel while it is at berth.</p> <p>A ship security zone (SSZ) may also be in effect.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There are three MSZs in force while the security regulated passenger ship is berthed.</li><li>• The port facility operator is required to advise people of the existence of security zones and the prohibitions for entering these zones.</li><li>• The port facility operator must also erect a notice identifying the weapons and prohibited items which must not be carried into the cleared zone.</li><li>• The port operator is required to inform people approaching the waterside restricted zone that the zone is in force and that unauthorised entry is an offence .</li><li>• The port operator must monitor and control access to port security zones.</li><li>• The port facility operator must monitor and control access to security zones in their control.</li></ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The port facility operator has signs which are stored on site and erected when the landside restricted zone is in force.</li><li>• A notice is fixed at the screening point advising of the prohibited items and weapons that may not be brought into the zone.</li><li>• The port operator has signs at surrounding boat ramps and pamphlets have been distributed to local fishing cooperatives and yachts clubs explaining the waterside restricted zone requirements.</li><li>• The port operator also has a picket boat in the water during times when the waterside restricted zone is in force.</li><li>• The port operator engages a directional acoustic alerting system to deter and detect unauthorised waterside access into a waterside restricted zone or a ship security zone.</li><li>• The port operator may negotiate with the ship's master to display signage on the seaside of the ship to notify a WRZ or SSZ is in force.</li></ul> |



## Attachment B

**B.1** Please note that symbols communicate more than words and can communicate across languages. This makes symbols more effective than solely written signs.

However, it is preferable when using written expression, use terminology consistent with the legislation e.g. 'Port Security Zone', 'Maritime Security Zone' or 'Landside Restricted Zone'.



**B.2.** Example of perimeter fence signage (disregard outdated legislation citations)



**B.3.** Example of portage signage



**B.4** This is an example of simple and effective waterside restricted zone signage. Please note the use of a boating prohibition symbol to deter waterside access. Symbols communicate across all languages which makes them more effective than solely written English signs.

