

Updated instructions for commercial vessels entering Egyptian waters with weapons on board

Previous Gard Alerts have provided guidance on the subject of weapons and armed security guards on board commercial vessels entering Egyptian waters (see links at the end of this update).

A letter dated 9th January 2012, from the Egyptian Maritime Transport Sector (MTS) of the Ministry of Transport to the Alexandria Chamber of Shipping, sets out new requirements regarding weapons on board commercial vessels entering and leaving Egyptian ports and the Suez Canal. In summary, the letter states that:

- The presence of weapons on board commercial vessels is against the law and if undeclared weapons are found on board while a vessel is in Egyptian territorial waters, berthed at ports or during transit of the canal, the vessel could be detained and crew members arrested and charged.
- If a vessel calling at Egyptian ports has weapons on board, the Master must lock up the weapons and issue a certificate to be handed over to the pilot at the pilot station, stating that the Master intends to hand the weapons to port police, in a locked box, upon berthing. The box will be checked by the port police and will be returned to the Master upon the vessel's departure. Should the vessel fail to comply with these instructions, the vessel will be refused entry to the port.
- For vessels transiting the Suez Canal, port security will collect the weapons at the entry point and redeliver them on board at the exit point.

[A free translation of the letter from the MST can be found here.](#)

Gard's Egyptian correspondent, El Hamamsy Marine Services, advises that the port police have not yet fully implemented the new requirements and there are currently no clear indications as to how the authorities will implement and follow-up the requirements, including details of the certificate stating that weapons are locked up.

Prior to entering Egyptian territorial waters Members and clients should contact their local agents to obtain the latest information on the requirements and make the necessary arrangements for handing over the relevant documentation and weapons to the authorities.

We would like to thank Gard's correspondent in Egypt, El Hamamsy Marine Services, for their assistance in the preparation of this update.

Previous Gard Alerts on this topic:

- [Gard Alert dated 12.12.2012](#)
- [Gard Alert dated 02.11.2012](#)