



# COMPETENCY ASSESSMENT OF COAST GUARD SEA MARSHAL PERSONNEL: BASIS FOR A TRAINING PROGRAM ENHANCEMENT

Paolo Carlo A. Tiongson

*Philippine Merchant Marine Academy, Manila, Philippines*

<https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.15229409>

---

## ABSTRACT

This study employed a mixed-methods descriptive design with a sequential exploratory approach to evaluate the competencies of Coast Guard Sea Marshal Force (CGSMF) personnel and assess the effectiveness of the Basic Sea Marshal Orientation Course (BSMOC). The qualitative phase involved structured interviews and document reviews with seven purposively selected respondents, including CGSMF personnel and ship crew members, to identify key operational competencies and training gaps. Findings from this phase informed the development of a validated, researcher-made 32-item competency exam, administered to a random sample of 198 Sea Marshals out of a population of 404. The competency assessment focused on knowledge and skills essential for maritime law enforcement, including safety protocols, arrest techniques, and basic life support. The exam yielded a high reliability coefficient of 0.91487. Data collection was conducted from August to November, using interviews, document reviews, and Google Forms for the online exam. Thematic analysis was applied to qualitative data, while descriptive statistics were used to interpret the quantitative results. The study revealed significant competency gaps in critical areas such as terrorist profiling, bomb threat response, arresting procedures, and first aid. These findings highlight the need for an enhanced BSMOC curriculum that includes more scenario-based practical training and expanded modules on crisis management, negotiation, and water search and rescue. The study concludes that targeted training improvements are essential to ensure the operational effectiveness of sea marshals and recommends further inclusion of female personnel in sea marshal roles to promote gender inclusivity.

## **INTRODUCTION**

The Philippines as an archipelagic nation has its islands surrounded by 1,830 square kilometers of water with a coastline measuring 36,289 kilometers (Central Intelligence Agency, 2023). The oceans provide resources that drive the country's progress. Mainly, the maritime industry contributes to the Philippine economy as a major means for domestic and international trade as well as traveling. The country remains one of the leading providers of seafarers in the global maritime industry next to China (MARINA, 2023). In 2021, it contributed 3.6 percent, or about PHP 707.8 billion, to the country's gross domestic product (GDP) (Ramos Yeo & Sicangco, 2023). Further, maritime industry statistics show that 90 percent of the country's trade is through the sea, while approximately 72.1 million passengers are carried by sea vessels (Villar, 2019).

Because of the vast marine environment and its significant economic bearing, the need for a law enforcement authority at sea emerged. With this, the Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) was created to be the principal agency responsible for the safety and security of the maritime domain. The PCG's mandate is inclusive of broad and complex tasks such as maritime law enforcement, search and rescue, and environmental protection. Over the years, its mission has become increasingly complex and challenging due to the evolving threats to maritime security and the congestion of the marine environment. Adding to this is the responsibility of coast guards to maintain a rules-based order in the Philippines' marine environment. Chan & Guilfoyle (2022) acknowledged the shifting roles of coast guards in the Indo-Pacific when it comes to de-escalating tensions at sea. Coast guards are now perceived as less provocative entities when addressing issues in contested maritime areas.

In the national context, the Philippines has a long history of maritime concerns within its vast maritime domain. The country remains a hotspot for maritime piracy, even during the COVID-19 pandemic. It is also recognized as a transit point and destination for human trafficking, including maritime trafficking, and faces significant issues with illegal, unreported, and unregulated (IUU) fishing as well as the illicit trade in marine wildlife (Laroza and Adan, 2023).

Additionally, the Philippines has a history of maritime terrorism. A prominent example is the Superferry 14 bombing in 2004, a major catastrophe during a peak period of terrorism in the country. The Abu Sayyaf Group (ASG) was responsible for this bombing and several maritime terror operations, including large-scale kidnappings for ransom and vessel bombings, such as the Our Lady Mediatrix incident (Oreta, 2023). The Superferry 14 attack is recognized as one of the world's deadliest maritime terrorist incidents (Center for International Security and Cooperation, 2022).

The incident led to the creation of an Ad-Hoc Committee under the Cabinet Oversight to address the safety and security of ports and ships. The committee

established Task Force Sea Marshal (TFSM) under the Coast Guard District National Capital Region-Central Luzon (CGDNCR-CL). The TFSM is a composite team comprised of two (2) Armed Forces of the Philippines (AFP) personnel, two (2) PCG personnel, two (2) Philippine National Police-Maritime Group (PNP-MG) personnel, and the vessel's security personnel. Its main objective is to ensure the safety and security of commercial passenger vessels plying routes vulnerable to threats (CGSMF handbook, n.d.).

In November 2014, the TFSM was transferred to the newly constituted Maritime Security and Law Enforcement Command (MARSLEC). The MARSLEC is a functional command of the PCG responsible for the formulation of rules and regulations, memorandum circulars, standard operating procedures, directives, instructions, and advisories related to maritime security and law enforcement. It plays a vital role in the prevention and suppression of maritime crimes and helps to ensure the safety and security of the maritime domain. Subsequently, the Coast Guard Sea Marshal Group (CGSMG) was created as a unit attached to the TFSM solely dedicated for sea marshalling. In 2022, the CGSMG expanded its operations nationwide and activated six Sea Marshal Units (SMUs) in NCR, Bicol, Eastern Visayas, Northern Mindanao, and Southwestern Mindanao. This development led to the renaming of the CGSMG to the current Coast Guard Sea Marshal Force (CGSMF) which holds the critical task of ensuring the protection of passenger-laden vessels on domestic routes (CGSMF Handbook, n.d.).

The PCG deploys most of its personnel as sea marshals because of the shortage of personnel from other services. PNP-MG marshals are only deployed in NCR while they remain at ports in the regions. In some cases, certain voyages in SMU-Southwestern Mindanao have AFP personnel on board alongside the PCG. If a route is critical or dangerous, such as the Basilan or Jolo routes, Philippine Army personnel take on sea marshal duties aboard vessels.

When first established, the Sea Marshaling system had to depend on the military expertise of uniformed personnel affiliated with the PCG, AFP, and PNP-MG. The composite team's deployment revealed numerous instances and circumstances in which the TFSM's cohesiveness was deemed inadequate. As a result, the TFSM recognized the necessity to enhance personnel training and education regarding Sea Marshal responsibilities. In view of the need to adequately prepare sea marshal personnel prior deployment, the PCG created the Basic Sea Marshal Operations Course (BSMOC) to "further sharpen the skills, knowledge, efficiency, and competence of Sea Marshals" (CGSMF Handbook, n.d.). The BSMOC intends to capacitate PCG personnel of relevant skills and knowledge needed in responding to terrorist related incidents and ensuring security and safety aboard passenger vessels.

The course is comprised of knowledge-based and skills-based topics such as emergency evolution procedures for firefighting, man-overboard, abandon ship, and collision at sea as well as lifesaving techniques like Water Search and Rescue (WASAR), basic life support, and survival at sea that will equip Sea Marshals to respond to emergency situations. It also includes the PCG Rules of Engagement, which serve to

instruct Sea Marshals on the proper utilization of lethal weapons, if needed, in situations involving terrorists, as well as non-lethal approaches for minor incidents.

With a wide operating environment and complex threats, the PCG needs to ensure that its personnel have the necessary competencies. The PCG Strategic Development Plan (SDP) for 2013–2028 outlines the organization's priorities to achieve effective performance of PCG's mandates. Among the its strategic objectives is to have a competent and well-equipped workforce. Undeniably, developing the knowledge and skills of Coast Guard personnel is crucial to ensuring the security and safety of our maritime domain.

Human resources are considered the backbone of the organization and key components to improve effectiveness. A number of studies found that training personnel has good effects on organizational performance in terms of improvement, maintaining positive performance, and increased efficiency (Al-Rawahi, 2022; Anwar & Abdullah, 2021; Oluwaseun, 2020). As a result, personnel at the core of the unit require continuous development of higher skills and must have updated knowledge relevant to their functions. In fact, a previous study found that investing in human capital is central to improving the organization (Pasban & Nojehdeh, 2016).

The present state of the PCG when it comes to capacity-building and capability development has been noted to be lacking for the efficient performance of its mandates. Abad et al. (2023) noted that the PCG, like other organizations, frequently faces limitations in resources, including budget constraints and insufficient personnel, which can hinder its capacity to fulfill its mandates effectively. Additionally, the PCG's equipment and assets are due for maintenance or replacement to ensure operational efficiency.

In view of these developments and challenges, an assessment of competencies is needed to obtain data on the personnel's current level of adeptness and identify any gaps in skills and knowledge. The International Organization for Standardization (ISO) defines competency as "the application of knowledge, skills and behaviors used in performing specific job tasks." The results of the assessment can be utilized to enhance the Basic Sea Marshal Operations Course. Therefore, this study assessed the current knowledge and skills of Coast Guard Sea Marshal Force personnel and identified areas in the existing Basic Sea Marshal Operations Course that could be enhanced to address performance gaps.

## **Research Questions**

This study evaluated the competencies of Coast Guard Sea Marshal Force personnel to enhance the Basic Sea Marshal Operations Course.

Specifically, it addressed the following questions:

1. What are the required competencies of CG Sea Marshal personnel in relation to their tasks, duties, and responsibilities?

2. What is the current competence level of the CG Sea Marshal personnel in terms of:
  - 2.1 Knowledge
  - 2.2 Skills
3. What are the gaps identified in the current and required competencies of CG Sea Marshal personnel?
4. How effective is the course in equipping CG Sea Marshal personnel with the required competencies to perform their jobs?
5. Based on the findings, what can be recommended to enhance the current content of the Basic Sea Marshal Operations Course?

## **METHODOLOGY**

This study employed a mixed-methods descriptive design with a sequential exploratory approach, integrating qualitative and quantitative methods to assess the competencies of Coast Guard Sea Marshal Force (CGSMF) personnel and evaluate the effectiveness of the Basic Sea Marshal Orientation Course (BSMOC). Initially, qualitative data were collected through structured interviews and document reviews involving seven purposively selected respondents, including CGSMF personnel and ship crew members, to identify key competencies and operational insights. These findings guided the development of a researcher-made competency exam, which was administered in the quantitative phase to a randomly selected sample of 198 Sea Marshals from a total population of 404.

Ethical standards were strictly observed, including informed consent, voluntary participation, confidentiality, and data privacy, with a Turnitin similarity index of only 11%. The study utilized two main instruments: a validated semi-structured interview guide and a 32-item multiple-choice competency exam covering knowledge and skills related to maritime operations. Instrument validation involved expert review, pilot testing, and reliability analysis, yielding a Spearman-Brown corrected coefficient of 0.91487. Data were gathered from August to November through interviews, document reviews, and online exam distribution via Google Forms. Thematic analysis was employed for qualitative data, while descriptive statistics were used to analyze quantitative results, categorizing competency levels from "Needs Improvement" to "Excellent." The study was limited to select CG units in NCR and provincial areas due to logistical constraints and relied on self-reported data and test results. Despite these limitations, the study's mixed-methods design and validation procedures provided a reliable and in-depth basis for evaluating CGSMF competencies and recommending improvements for BSMOC.

---

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Profile of the Respondents

**Figure 1**

*Distribution of Exam Participants by Rank*

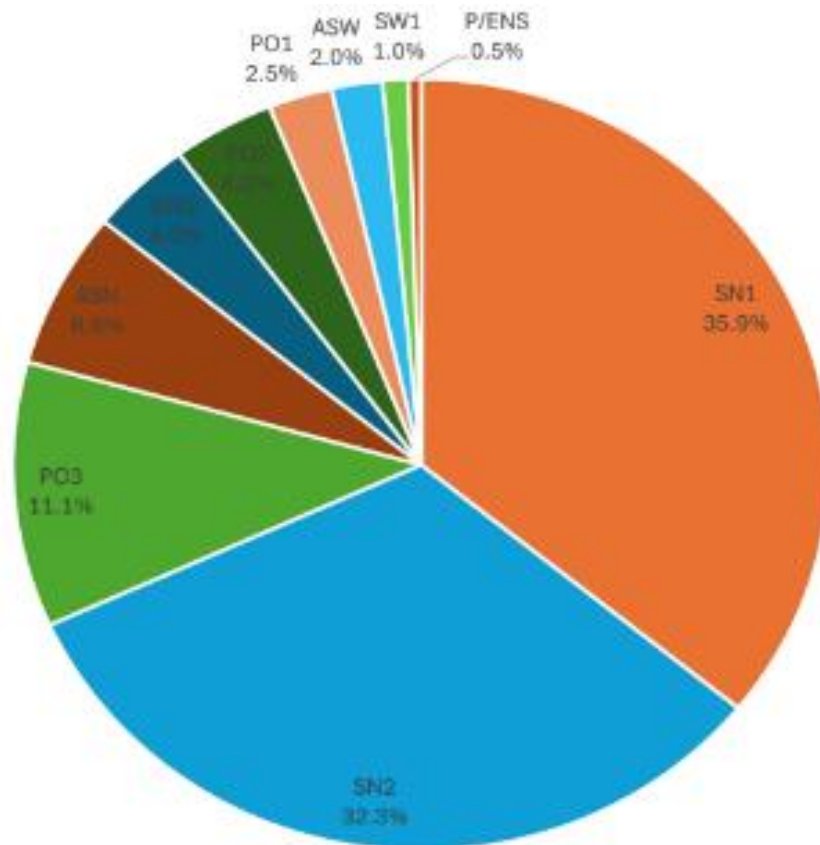


Figure 1 illustrates the distribution of Sea Marshal personnel who participated in the competency exam according to their rank. The figure shows a diverse representation of ranks, which includes officers, non-commissioned officers (NCOs), and enlisted personnel. The majority of respondents belong to the non-officer category, which aligns with the composition of the Coast Guard Sea Marshal Force, where frontline duties are primarily carried out by enlisted non-officer personnel. This distribution supports the study's goal of assessing competencies across the operational ranks responsible for implementing maritime law enforcement and security protocols. The presence of officers among the respondents, although fewer in number, ensures that supervisory perspectives are also included. Overall, the rank-based distribution of participants provides a comprehensive view of competency levels across the command hierarchy, enabling the

identification of both individual and structural training needs relevant to the Basic Sea Marshal Orientation Course (BSMOC).

**Table 1**

*Distribution of Respondents by Gender and Years in Service*

<b>Characteristic</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	180	90.9%
Female	18	9.1%
<b>Years in Service</b>		
1- 5 years	79	39.90%
5-10 years	104	52.52%
11-15 years	8	4.04%
16-20 years	7	3.54%

Table 1 presents the demographic distribution of respondents in terms of gender and years in service. In terms of gender, the majority of the respondents were male (180 or 90.9%), while only 18 respondents (9.1%) were female. This significant gender disparity reflects the current composition of the Coast Guard Sea Marshal Force, which remains predominantly male, consistent with the traditionally male-dominated nature of maritime security and law enforcement roles.

Regarding years in service, the largest group of respondents had been in service for 5 to 10 years (104 or 52.52%), followed by those with 1 to 5 years of service (79 or 39.90%). A smaller proportion of respondents had served for 11 to 15 years (8 or 4.04%) and 16 to 20 years (7 or 3.54%). This suggests that a substantial portion of the Sea Marshal personnel are in the early to mid stages of their careers, which is a critical period for competency development and professional training. The data highlights the importance of continuous learning and capacity-building programs like the Basic Sea Marshal Orientation Course (BSMOC), especially for those in the formative years of service.

Hence, the table shows that the study captured a representative sample of the primary workforce demographic, ensuring that the findings are reflective of the actual training needs and competency levels of the CGSMF personnel.

### **Distribution of Respondents by Unit of Assignment**

The distribution of respondents by unit of assignment reveals a diverse representation from various operational areas within the Coast Guard Sea Marshal Force (CGSMF). A significant portion of the respondents were assigned to units based in Metro Manila, reflecting the high concentration of Sea Marshal activities in the National Capital Region. Others came from regional or provincial stations, including ports in Visayas and Mindanao, demonstrating the nationwide scope of CGSMF deployment. This distribution

ensured that the study captured insights from Sea Marshals operating in different maritime contexts—ranging from high-traffic commercial ports to more remote or region-specific assignments. Such diversity strengthens the study’s findings by incorporating perspectives and competencies shaped by varying operational demands and geographical challenges.

**Table 2**

*Distribution of Respondents by Unit of Assignment*

<b>PCG District</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
BARMM	13	6.6%
Bicol	4	2.0%
Central Visayas	15	7.6%
Eastern Visayas	5	2.5%
NCR – Central Luzon	36	18.2%
Northeastern Mindanao	3	1.5%
Northern Mindanao	13	6.6%
Palawan	12	6.1%
Southeastern Mindanao	18	9.1%
Southern Tagalog	28	14.1%
Southwestern Mindanao	47	23.7%
Western Visayas	4	2.0%

Table 2 presents the distribution of respondents by their unit of assignment across different Philippine Coast Guard (PCG) districts. The Southwestern Mindanao district has the highest representation, with 47 respondents (23.7%), indicating a strong presence of Sea Marshal personnel in this high-risk maritime area, likely due to its strategic and security-sensitive location. This is followed by NCR – Central Luzon with 36 respondents (18.2%) and Southern Tagalog with 28 respondents (14.1%), both of which are central hubs of maritime activity and major port operations. The Southeastern Mindanao and Central Visayas districts also have notable shares at 9.1% and 7.6%, respectively. Meanwhile, regions such as Northeastern Mindanao (1.5%), Bicol (2.0%), and Western Visayas (2.0%) have the least number of respondents. The distribution highlights the concentration of Sea Marshal deployment in areas with either high maritime traffic or security concerns, ensuring representation across varied geographical and operational contexts in the study.

## **Required Competencies of CG Sea Marshal Personnel**

The analysis of interview transcripts and existing literature identified two main categories of required competencies for Coast Guard (CG) Sea Marshal personnel: specialized knowledge areas and practical skills. Despite some participants having less than the preferred five years of service, their direct experience with vessel security duties justified their inclusion in the study. Most sea marshal assignments were found to be carried out by enlisted personnel, typically led by Petty Officers, with practical, experience-based knowledge playing a crucial role in their qualifications. The Basic Sea Marshal Orientation Course (BSMOC) was consistently recognized by participants as a foundational training requirement, equipping personnel with essential skills before vessel deployment. However, discrepancies were noted between policy and actual deployment practices, with some personnel assigned without completing BSMOC. The course serves as a structured onboarding mechanism, echoing best practices in organizational socialization by providing both theoretical and hands-on training. Topics covered in the BSMOC include maritime laws, shipboard protocols, crisis response, counter-terrorism, arrest and search procedures, and even media relations. From this, eight core competencies emerged: five knowledge-based (rules aboard ship, enforcement of laws, safety protocols, threat assessment, and crisis decision-making) and three skills-based (arrest/search techniques, search and rescue, and basic life support). Overall, the BSMOC plays a vital role in bridging the gap between policy and field performance, emphasizing both technical preparation and operational readiness for CG Sea Marshals.

### ***Awareness of the Rules Aboardship and Operating Guidelines***

Participants in the interviews frequently highlighted the importance of understanding the sea marshal's operating guidelines and rules aboardship. The TFSM operating guidelines and the PCG Rules of Engagement provide the legal and procedural framework for sea marshal operations (CGSMF Handbook, n.d.). Furthermore, the PCG offers the Boarding Officer Course, which encompasses relevant marine regulations and practical skills such as unarmed defensive tactics, boarding procedures, and search and seizure techniques to minimize the risk of incidents occurring at sea (PCG, 2019). These provide the foundation of knowledge and skills for sea marshals.

Participants reiterated the content of the operating guidelines and courses (BSMOC and BOC) as needed competencies, particularly familiarity with intelligence and tactical procedures, including Explosive Ordnance Reconnaissance Agent (EORA) techniques, boarding procedures, and contingency planning, as needed competencies. Participant P4 expressed the need for every sea marshal personnel to attend “intel course, EORA course, and Boarding Officers Course including CQB (close quarters battle) and tactical procedures.” Given that sea marshals are responsible for ensuring the safety and security of the vessel and its passengers, it is crucial for them to be prepared to respond to any threats or incidents that may arise during voyages.

Bennell et al. (2022) identified understanding of organizational policies and laws as one of the knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSAs) needed to manage tense situations between law enforcement officers and the public. Familiarity with pertinent organizational

policies and laws, along with the ability to implement this knowledge in operational contexts, is essential for officers. The authors further explained that policies usually outline the actions that law enforcement officers in a specific unit can take and specify the situations in which various response options are deemed suitable. Participant P1 explained why it is necessary to be familiar with procedures when deployed on vessels:

*“Sea marshals support the implementation of the ISPS Code. When there is an incident, they need to coordinate with the ship security officer and vessel escorts and isolate the passenger, vessel crew or third parties whose presence is detrimental to the safety and security of all personnel and to be preceded with proper turnover to the police authorities upon arrival or departure at the port.”*

The participants' responses aligned with the findings of the abovementioned study, confirming that sea marshals must be knowledgeable of the basic operating guidelines and vessel rules to perform their duties effectively. The participants stressed the importance of how practical knowledge of protocols translates into effective action on the ground.

### **Enforcement of Applicable Laws and Circulars**

Understanding laws such as the Anti-Terrorism Law, the Comprehensive Drugs Act of 2002, the Anti-Trafficking in Persons Act of 2003, and other pertinent laws is a requirement for sea marshals according to the CGSMF Handbook. Law enforcement proficiency is important to ensure that sea marshals enforce legal provisions effectively and appropriately. Abanilla (2024) emphasized the essential role of comprehensive legal knowledge as the basis for effective enforcement and proper application of laws by PCG personnel. Similarly, Cyr (2016) examined the challenges that arise from the difficulties police officers face in understanding and applying their legal powers. The author found that there is a gap in the use of necessary force when enforcing the law and maintaining public order, which increases the risk of legal errors.

The interview responses further reinforce these perspectives. Participants (P1 and P2) explicitly recognized that familiarity with applicable laws and circulars is vital for sea marshals to “avoid violating the rights of the persons involved” and ensure that “everything is within what is allowed by law.” This is supported by Participant P5 who underscored the need for an adequate understanding of laws:

*“It is mandatory because, without a solid understanding of the legal frameworks, they (sea marshals) cannot effectively fulfill their duty and conduct lawful operations. There is also the risk of misconduct and wrong decisions. They must be careful when it comes to a person’s rights, especially when performing tasks like search and seizure, interrogations and arrests.”*

Both existing literature and interview responses highlight the essential role of strong legal knowledge for sea marshals to carry out their responsibilities lawfully and

effectively, minimize the risk of legal errors, and protect individuals' rights. Having a solid understanding of legal frameworks is essential for sea marshals perform their functions effectively.

### **Implementing Safety and Security Protocols**

Sea marshals play a critical role in safeguarding commercial passenger vessels against a spectrum of threats, extending beyond traditional maritime security concerns to include organized crime and potential terrorist activities (Virtual Maritime Academy, 2024). The CGSMF Handbook outlines the procedures that sea marshals must follow when conducting arrests, hostage negotiation, and managing the carriage of firearms, explosives, and other weapons onboard commercial passenger vessels, among others.

This critical responsibility entails specialized training as noted in the previous section. Participant P3 emphasized that personnel must receive focused training on EORA techniques due to their responsibilities in counter-terrorism activities. As detailed by the Philippine Security and Safety Practitioner Association (2025), the EORA training covers the investigation, detection, location, marking, initial identification, and reporting of suspected unexploded ordnance. It also provides guidance on how to accurately report and conduct reconnaissance activities regarding unexploded ordnance. This ensures that the military obtains the essential information and coordination to perform effective disposal operations in affected areas.

Comparably, the CGSMF Handbook provides specific guidelines for handling bomb threats, encompassing basic search techniques, bomb component identification, handling protocols, evacuation strategies, and post-explosion hazard considerations. Participants consistently agreed that procedures for managing security threats such as bomb handling and profiling—are particularly valuable in their daily operations. This is significant given that sea marshals are often the first responders in such scenarios.

The International Association of Chiefs of Police (2019) emphasizes the critical role of law enforcement officers in managing bomb threats. Police officers are largely responsible for the immediate assessment and reaction to potential explosive devices. Any mistake in their protocol can lead to severe consequences, which underscores the necessity of robust bomb threat response training for all first responders, including sea marshals.

Since sea marshals are the initial point of contact for bomb threats on commercial passenger vessels, their proficiency in bomb handling and passenger evacuation is crucial for preventing loss of life. Therefore, comprehensive preparation and knowledge of bomb threat procedures are essential for sea marshals to effectively fulfill their security mandate.

### ***Assessing and Responding to Potential Threats Onboard Vessels and at Ports***

With the evolution of maritime terrorism in Southeast Asia over the past two decades, enhanced counter-terrorism efforts and international cooperation have reduced the

capacity of groups such as Jemaah Islamiyah and Abu Sayyaf Group, although the threat has not been entirely eliminated (Oreta, 2023). The Abu Sayyaf Group's attack strategy involves the bombing of passenger vessels, as demonstrated during the *bombing of Superferry 14 and the ferry Our Lady Mediatrix*.

Participants in earlier sections emphasized that knowledge of responding to bomb threats and bomb handling is crucial for developing competencies in sea marshals. Additionally, knowledge of effective profiling and covert observations is important for sea marshals on duty, as individuals with ill intentions may disguise themselves among passengers. This significance arises from their frequent encounters with bomb jokes and situations involving wanted individuals aboard vessels. Furthermore, sea marshals collaborate with the vessel's security when there is disorder among passengers under the influence of alcohol and in occasional cases of theft and voyeurism. Participants (P3, P4, P6, P7) noted the events requiring the aforementioned skills:

*"We really need these skills because we frequently encounter several incidents of arresting wanted persons onboard and the need to detain persons with standing orders on the previous address. There are also cases of bomb jokes which is a serious offense."*

The CGSMF Handbook enumerates the guidelines for covert operatives and for performing random checks on ship passengers, as well as for terrorist profiling. Participant responses align with the handbook's guidelines, indicating that sea marshals are assigned to both covert and overt duties while en route to the next destination port. Law enforcement's effective profiling is crucial to preventing terrorists' illegal activities like firearm smuggling (UNODC, 2020). Profiling allows authorities to strategically focus on specific individuals and cargo during searches, increasing the likelihood of apprehension.

Sea marshals play a crucial role in mitigating potential threats, and their effectiveness relies on their specialized skills, compliance with established guidelines, and ability to adapt to real-world scenarios. The persistent threat of maritime terrorism, along with other security challenges, highlights the necessity of possessing the knowledge and skills to manage potential risks both at sea and in ports.

### ***Application of crisis management and decision-making skills***

Potential threats aboard passenger vessels are not exclusively caused by terrorists or criminals; they may also emerge from the actions of ordinary passengers. Participants (P6, P7) recounted several incidents involving passengers that necessitated the intervention of sea marshals:

*"Most arrests or detentions occur during nighttime because of "happy hour" where passengers are intoxicated with liquor. Sea marshals are more active during nighttime because of drunkenness of passengers and there are many reports of sexual harassment. There are also cases of voyeurism, "pamboboso," and theft cases."*

Participants who have ample firsthand experience on such incidents (P1, P2, P3, P5, P6) emphasized the need for adequate familiarity on hostage negotiation and gathering and/or preservation of evidence. The competency in crisis management and hostage negotiation was prevalent among participants, with Participant P2 remarking that these incidents arise due to the growing number of individuals with mental disorders and depression.

The interview data reveals that sea marshals frequently encounter incidents involving intoxicated, disorderly, or mentally distressed passengers, leading to arrests, detentions, and the need for crisis intervention. This aligns with Thomson and Jensen's (2023) findings, which underscore the demanding nature of crisis negotiation, particularly when dealing with individuals experiencing mental health crises. The participants' emphasis on hostage negotiation, evidence preservation, and crisis management further reinforces the importance of specialized training for personnel operating in these high-stress environments.

Cazarin (2024) highlighted the importance of individual-level emergency preparedness and plan development for uniformed personnel. The interview responses support this, indicating that sea marshals need specific training in hostage negotiation, de-escalation, and dispute resolution to effectively manage passenger-related incidents. The existing CGSMF Handbook guidelines, along with additional training from the PNP, establish a solid foundation. However, the frequency and nature of these incidents indicate a need for more specialized and continuous training.

The combination of interview data and existing literature underscores the critical need for specialized, continuous, and integrated training programs for sea marshals, focusing on crisis intervention, de-escalation techniques, and passenger conflict resolution. Therefore, it is important to note that the BSMOC should cover lessons that prepare sea marshals to identify and effectively respond to passengers experiencing mental health crises, including de-escalation strategies; improve their ability to resolve passenger disputes and conflicts through effective communication and negotiation; and ensure they can accurately gather and preserve evidence for legal proceedings, particularly in cases of assault, theft, or sexual harassment.

### ***Arresting, handcuffing, and hands-on search***

In addition to knowledge competencies, this study also identified skills that are essential for effective sea marshalling. Previous research emphasized the significance of assessment in enhancing organizational skills (De Vos and De Hauw, 2013) and understanding job competencies that foster an environment conducive to skill development (Campbell and Wiernik, 2015). Despite these findings, the challenge of applying knowledge to actual incidents persists. Therefore, staying current with evolving criminal tactics requires law enforcement to actively pursue and maintain a strong skillset, which is achieved through continuous training and education. This involves transforming classroom knowledge into practical proficiency, rather than just accumulating certifications (McHenry, 2019).

The participants have similar perspectives on developing the ability to conduct arrests, handcuffing, and hands-on searches. Parallel to the CGSMF Handbook, the participants explained why these skills are relevant for sea marshals as they deal with wanted persons onboard a vessel:

*“Sea marshals will try to locate the person, check the manifest to identify the accommodation (room) of the person of interest and then he/she will be interrogated. The person will be isolated in a room for questioning. This is why the skills in hands-on search, arresting and handcuffing is important. With proper execution, we can prevent instigating panic among the other passengers and reduce risk of harm.”*

Kleygrewe et al. (2022) discussed how law enforcement agencies prioritize ongoing training to equip officers with the necessary skills for on-duty situations. While core competencies like weapon handling, handcuffing, self-defense, and communication are consistently addressed, the specific implementation of these training components varies significantly between agencies. The authors further noted that agencies use scenario-based training, which is considered the most holistic and effective form of training.

In essence, the findings emphasize that sea marshals require more than just theoretical knowledge. To develop an effective sea marshal team, training programs should prioritize hands-on, scenario-based exercises that simulate real-life incidents. Skills such as arresting, handcuffing, and conducting thorough searches are crucial for sea marshals who encounter potentially dangerous individuals on vessels. Regular and consistent training in these areas is essential to ensure they can effectively apply their knowledge in high-pressure situations.

### **Perform search and rescue procedures**

In 2023, the MARINA recorded an increase in the number of reported maritime accidents, including man overboard incidents, vessel listing/capsizing, vessel ramming/collision/allision, vessel sinking, grounding, and mechanical failure, among others. The ability to respond to man-overboard incidents involving persons with suicidal tendencies and depression is a required skill consistently highlighted in the responses of the participants. As Participant P3 remarked, “sea marshals need to be excellent and trained swimmers for rescuing a person who jumped off the ship and needs immediate response.” Further, Participant P4 explained the circumstances why the skill is needed:

*“We really need to know how to rescue a man overboard because there are instances that the rescue boat of vessels did not launch to act on the incident and it is we sea marshals who swim to rescue the person.”*

Given the consistent acknowledgment of participants and the role of sea marshals in responding to emergencies, such as drowning, and the tendency of encountering defective rescue boats aboard vessels, it was determined that search and rescue skills are a crucial competency for sea marshals.

A study by Liu (2017) highlighted the crucial role of strong literacy and professional skills in maritime SAR operations. The research emphasized that these competencies are essential for effective operations and personnel safety, necessitating enhanced training to develop robust safety and security protocols. Liu also indicated that blending theoretical knowledge and practical skills is vital for successful SAR outcomes.

### **Perform basic life support procedures**

Besides search and rescue skills, sea marshals must be trained in first-aid techniques and basic life-saving procedures. Participants P1 and P3 recalled, “Not all vessels are equipped with medical kits. Only companies like 2GO provide a complete medical kit for emergencies. Training in basic life-saving will be beneficial for us in handling medical emergencies onboard and in ports.”

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) offers an Emergency First Aid (EFA) module that includes both lectures and practical training to equip individuals with essential skills for providing immediate emergency care at sea. This program covers adult CPR techniques, ensuring that participants gain practical knowledge and hands-on experience to enhance their emergency response capabilities.

As discussed in previous sections of this paper, sea marshals play a crucial role in maintaining peace aboard the vessel, particularly when dealing with intoxicated passengers. They are also responsible for ensuring the safety and survival of passengers during man-overboard incidents. Therefore, it is vital to invest in the first aid and basic life support skills of sea marshals. Likewise personnel who have adequate knowledge in providing immediate care to an injured person or someone who suddenly becomes ill are capable of administering first aid to others. Consequently, sea marshals must be skilled in administering basic life support procedures as first responders aboard passenger vessels.

### **Other Ideal Traits of Sea Marshals**

Additionally, effective communication skills when working with other agencies like PNP-MG or private security personnel. Behavioral traits such as attention to detail, constant alertness to detect unusual or suspicious activity, discipline, and respectfulness also emerged as essential competencies for an ideal sea marshal. Participant P7 mentioned the ideal traits of a CG Sea Marshal personnel as follows, “Sea marshal must have vigilance, attention to detail, constant alertness, and attentiveness to detect any unusual or suspicious activity.” Further, Participants (P6) noted that a competent sea marshal demonstrates discipline, respects the vessel crew, coordinates effectively with other vessel authorities, and is trained in negotiation:

*“From our end, we expect them to coordinate properly with regards to the safety and security concerns. Also, since they are from the uniformed service, we expect them to be disciplined, respectful, and well-trained in negotiations to support peace and order.”*

The above responses affirm the critical responsibilities of CG Sea Marshals in ensuring the vessel's security and the safety of passengers at sea. The PCG annually monitors an average of 993 marine incidents, successfully addressing 972 confirmed cases. In 2023, PCG personnel assisted a total of 1,558 passengers and crew members and rescued 1,766 individuals (MARINA, 2023). These responses indicate the diverse and complex nature of the challenges sea marshals face, underscoring the necessity for specific competencies such as crisis management, law enforcement skills, and collaboration with the vessel's security teams. While the high number of successful responses and rescues suggests a solid foundation in operational skills, incorporating specialized training in areas like negotiation, advanced security protocols, and enhanced investigative techniques could further improve the capability to manage the evolving challenges sea marshals encounter.

This aligns with the need to assess the current competencies of the Coast Guard Sea Marshals and develop training programs based on these competencies. A study conducted by Manglicmot (2019) emphasized the necessity of training and equipping PCG members with the requisite skills and knowledge to provide effective maritime security and safety. Furthermore, the author stressed that to achieve this, it is essential to continue investing in training and professional development programs.

### **Current Competence Level of the Respondents**

To obtain data on the current level of competence among CG Sea Marshal personnel, the researcher administered a multiple-choice exam through Google Forms. The exam has 32 items divided into two sections: knowledge assessment and skills assessment.

#### ***Knowledge Assessment Results***

The knowledge assessment contains 20 items divided into five (5) competency categories: awareness of the rules aboardship and operational guidelines, enforcement of relevant laws and circulars, implementation of safety and security protocols, and assessment and response to potential threats onboard vessels and at ports.

The results show that awareness on the rules aboard ship and operating guidelines scored the highest percentage of correct responses (63.01%). This indicates that respondents have a basic understanding of the CGSMF operating guidelines and procedural tasks while on vessel duty. During the interviews, participants emphasized the significance of being familiar with the basic operating guidelines and rules on board, as these serve as the foundation for sea marshal operations. The current POI for the BSMOC allocates seven (7) hours of classroom discussion and one (1) hour of module examination for this competency.

Eze and Ombajo (2017) argue that prolonged lectures negatively affect teaching and learning outcomes, primarily due to the limited nature of human attention. Their inquiry suggests that optimal attention spans are restricted to around 20 minutes per hour. However, the results of the competency exam contradict Eze and Ombajo's claims, as

sea marshals achieved the highest percentage of correct responses on this assessment. This illustrates that the amount of lectures sea marshals received contributed to their proficiency in the basic operating guidelines and rules they must follow. Furthermore, sea marshals' familiarity with basic protocols enables them to implement the most suitable response to address a situation, as asserted by the study of Bennell et al. (2022).

In the context of specific areas of competencies, most participants achieved the highest percentage of correct responses in the following topics: case preparation for trial (84.85%), guidelines for conducting arrests (84.34%), and guidelines for hostage situations (81.82%). In the current POI, the module on enforcement procedures and techniques has the most topics and the greatest amount of classroom instruction time. Unlike the other modules, this section is the only one that includes time for theoretical discussion, practical demonstration, and assessment. While the exam results indicate a strong understanding of the said guidelines, it was noted that the comprehensive approach used in the module is beneficial.

Jenkins et al. (2021) found that one of the most effective methods for cultivating flexible problem-solving skills among law enforcement officers is to integrate thoughtfully developed scenario-based training into both initial and follow-up training programs. The outcomes of this study are consistent with the findings of Jenkins et al., indicating that while the current POI is effective in facilitating knowledge transfer, the integration of additional scenario-based exercises could further augment sea marshals' capacity to apply that knowledge in real-world contexts.

On the contrary, questions regarding the implementation of safety and security protocols received the lowest average score (36.99%). These questions focused on bomb handling and counter-terrorism protocols and procedures for sea marshals. The results suggest that respondents may not consistently adhere to safety and security protocols, which could pose potential risks to themselves and others.

During interviews with experienced sea marshals, it was unequivocally confirmed that procedures for managing security threats such as bomb handling are especially valuable in their daily operations considering that sea marshals are often the first responders in these scenarios. As the primary point of contact for dealing with bomb threats aboard commercial passenger vessels, sea marshals bear the critical responsibility of managing bomb situations and evacuating passengers. To effectively safeguard lives, they must possess extensive preparation and knowledge of bomb handling procedures.

The exam results indicate that sea marshals require enhancement and reinforcement of their knowledge-based proficiencies related to bomb handling, terrorist profiling, and other procedures for addressing security threats. Specifically, the question on the proper evacuation procedures during a bomb threat incident garnered the lowest number of correct responses. The study by Voynov et al. (2020) emphasizes the importance of considering individual characteristics and activity patterns to enhance training for law enforcement personnel. Additionally, the authors recommend that to achieve more effective outcomes, topics and tasks should be introduced with gradually

increasing difficulty across different types of emergency scenarios for which training is provided. The low score on questions regarding bomb handling and counter-terrorism protocols highlights a significant gap in a crucial competency of sea marshals. Moreover, experienced participants acknowledge the critical importance of these procedures in their daily tasks. Thus, it is essential to integrate enhanced scenario-based lessons into the existing BSMOC. This training should reflect real scenarios faced by sea marshals and progressively increase complexity to improve their knowledge and skills in managing security threats. The overall rating for the knowledge assessment is satisfactory; however, a careful examination of the participants' performance on specific topics revealed potential knowledge gaps regarding the operating guidelines for sea marshals. This suggests that respondents may require further interventions to enhance their awareness and familiarity with the existing protocols and procedures.

**Table 3**

*Knowledge Assessment Results of the Respondents*

Competency	Percentage of Correct Responses	Verbal Interpretation
Awareness on the rules aboard ship and operating guidelines	63.01%	Satisfactory
Application of crisis management and decision-making skills	58.84%	Satisfactory
Enforce applicable laws and circulars	55.43%	Satisfactory
Assess and respond to potential threats onboard vessels and at ports	54.92%	Satisfactory
Implement safety and security protocols	36.99%	Needs Improvement
<b>OVERALL AVERAGE</b>	<b>53.84%</b>	<b>Satisfactory</b>
<i>Verbal Equivalent: Excellent=100%-86%; Proficient=85%-66%; Satisfactory=65%-51%; Needs Improvement=50% and below</i>		

Table 3 presents the results of the knowledge assessment for sea marshals across five key competencies, offering valuable insights into their performance in specific areas. The highest score was achieved in "Awareness on the Rules Aboard Ship and Operating Guidelines" with a result of 63.01%, falling within the "Satisfactory" range. This indicates that sea marshals possess a basic understanding of the operational guidelines and rules they must adhere to while on duty, though further refinement may be needed to improve proficiency. The competency "Application of Crisis Management and Decision-Making Skills" scored 58.84%, which also falls within the "Satisfactory" range. This suggests that while sea marshals generally understand crisis management and decision-making, additional practical training could enhance their ability to perform in high-pressure situations. Similarly, the competency "Enforce Applicable Laws and Circulars" received a score of 55.43%, signaling that while sea marshals have a moderate grasp of their legal responsibilities, more practice is required to improve their application of legal protocols. The competency "Assess and Respond to Potential Threats Onboard Vessels and at Ports" scored 54.92%, indicating that while sea marshals can assess and respond to threats, further development of their threat assessment and response strategies is needed for more effective real-world application. The lowest score was recorded in the competency "Implement Safety and Security Protocols" with 36.99%, highlighting a significant gap in knowledge, particularly in bomb handling and counter-terrorism

procedures. This area clearly requires immediate attention and substantial training to improve proficiency. Overall, the respondents scored an average of 53.84%, which places their performance in the "Satisfactory" range. While their knowledge across most competencies is adequate, there is room for improvement, particularly in handling safety and security protocols. The results suggest that targeted interventions, including scenario-based exercises and enhanced training, are necessary to address these gaps and strengthen sea marshals' capabilities in critical areas.

**Table 4**

*Skills Assessment Results of the Respondents*

Competency	Percentage of Correct Responses	Verbal Interpretation
Perform search and rescue procedures	64.90%	Satisfactory
Perform basic life support procedures	38.01%	Needs Improvement
Arresting, handcuffing and hands-on search	28.54%	Needs Improvement
<b>OVERALL AVERAGE</b>	<b>43.81%</b>	<b>Needs Improvement</b>
<i>Verbal Equivalent: Excellent=100%-86%; Proficient=85%-66%; Satisfactory=65%-51%; Needs Improvement=50% and below</i>		

Table 4 presents the results of the skills assessment for sea marshals, evaluating three critical competencies. The findings show a mixed level of performance, with some areas showing satisfactory results while others highlight significant gaps that require improvement. The first competency, Perform Search and Rescue Procedures, received a score of 64.90%, placing it in the "Satisfactory" range (51%-65%). This indicates that sea marshals have a reasonable understanding of search and rescue procedures. However, there is still room for improvement to increase their proficiency in this area and ensure they are fully prepared for emergencies.

The second competency, Perform Basic Life Support Procedures, scored 38.01%, which falls into the "Needs Improvement" category (50% and below). This highlights a notable deficiency in sea marshals' skills related to life-saving techniques in emergencies. Given the critical nature of basic life support, this area requires immediate attention and focused training to bring the marshals' skills up to an acceptable level. The third competency, Arresting, Handcuffing, and Hands-on Search, received the lowest score at 28.54%, also categorized under "Needs Improvement." This indicates that sea marshals face significant challenges in performing these fundamental law enforcement tasks, which are vital to maintaining security on vessels. To address this gap, comprehensive, hands-on training focused on these techniques is essential. The overall average score of 43.81% falls into the "Needs Improvement" category, suggesting that the sea marshals' performance in the skills assessment is below expectations. While they show some

proficiency in search and rescue procedures, the results clearly indicate that substantial improvement is needed across the board.

In conclusion, the skills assessment reveals that sea marshals need significant improvement in practical areas, particularly in basic life support and arresting, handcuffing, and hands-on search procedures. Despite satisfactory performance in search and rescue procedures, their overall skill set falls short. Targeted and comprehensive training, including real-life scenario simulations, is crucial to enhance their proficiency and ensure they are fully prepared to perform their duties effectively.

**Table 5**

*Analysis of Competency Gaps*

<b>Required Competency</b>	<b>Current Level</b>	<b>Gap Analysis</b>
Implement safety and security protocols (knowledge)	Low scores on topics including terrorist profiling, hostage negotiations, bomb threat reporting, and passenger evacuation during bomb threats	Need for a specific focus on profiling and negotiations and procedures on bomb threat response
Arresting handcuffing, and hands-on search (skill)	Needs improvement in conducting arrests, handcuffing, and performing hands-on searches	Need for comprehensive training on protocols for search and seizure, handcuffing techniques, arrest techniques
Perform basic life support procedures (skill)	Needs improvement in first aid for addressing immediate medical threats	A significant gap likely exists that requires focused training on how to respond to common medical emergencies on board

Table 5 provides a detailed analysis of the competency gaps observed in the skills and knowledge of sea marshals across key areas, highlighting the required competencies, current proficiency levels, and areas for improvement to enhance overall performance.

**Implement Safety and Security Protocols (Knowledge):** Sea marshals performed poorly in crucial areas such as terrorist profiling, hostage negotiations, bomb threat reporting, and passenger evacuation during bomb threats. These low scores indicate a significant need for specialized training in these areas. Sea marshals would benefit from more comprehensive instruction on threat profiling, effective negotiation techniques during hostage situations, and the proper response protocols for bomb threats. Addressing these gaps will improve their ability to manage and mitigate security risks effectively while ensuring a safer environment aboard vessels.

**Arresting, Handcuffing, and Hands-on Search (Skill):** The analysis indicates that sea marshals struggle with executing arresting procedures, handcuffing, and performing hands-on searches, which are fundamental law enforcement skills necessary to maintain safety and security on ships. There is a clear need for comprehensive training on search and seizure protocols, proper handcuffing techniques, and arresting procedures. Enhancing these skills will ensure that sea marshals are well-prepared to handle

situations that require law enforcement action, ensuring their interventions are legal and effective.

**Perform Basic Life Support Procedures (Skill):** Sea marshals demonstrated deficiencies in performing basic life support procedures, particularly in addressing immediate medical emergencies. Given the importance of first aid in managing health crises aboard vessels, this gap is concerning. Focused training on responding to common medical emergencies, such as cardiac arrest, breathing difficulties, and other life-threatening conditions, is necessary to ensure sea marshals are prepared to provide timely and effective medical assistance in emergencies. Improving proficiency in basic life support will make a crucial difference in life-threatening situations.

**Effectiveness of the Course in Equipping Sea Marshals:** While the existing training program aims to equip sea marshals with essential skills and knowledge, the analysis reveals that certain critical areas, particularly safety protocols, law enforcement techniques, and first aid, have not been adequately addressed. To improve the effectiveness of the training, additional modules focusing on these areas should be incorporated. By enhancing the course content to cover these vital competencies, sea marshals will be better prepared to handle a broader range of challenges they may face while on duty.

In conclusion, the competency gap analysis underscores the need for targeted training to address deficiencies in key areas such as safety protocols, law enforcement techniques, and first aid procedures. Tailored training programs focusing on these competencies will ensure sea marshals are fully equipped to respond to security threats, law enforcement situations, and medical emergencies with confidence and skill. Closing these gaps will significantly improve their overall effectiveness, contributing to the safety and security of both passengers and crew aboard vessels.

**Table 6**

*Recommendations for BSMOC Enhancement*

<b>Required Competency</b>	<b>Topics</b>	<b>Recommended time allotment (in hours)</b>
Implement safety and security protocols (knowledge)	Terrorist profiling, negotiations and procedures on bomb threat response	Theoretical: 44 Practical: 26 Assessment: 18
Arresting handcuffing, and hands-on search (skill)	Search and seizure protocols, handcuffing techniques, and arrest techniques	Theoretical: 8 Practical: 24 Assessment: 8
Perform basic life support procedures (skill)	First aid techniques for common medical emergencies on board	Theoretical: 16 Practical: 16 Assessment: 8

Perform search and rescue procedures (skill)	Water search and rescue	Theoretical:	16
		Practical:	40
		Assessment:	16

Table 6 provides a set of recommendations for enhancing the training program for sea marshals, with a focus on addressing key competency areas. The table outlines the required competencies, the specific topics to be covered, and the recommended time allotments for theoretical instruction, practical exercises, and assessments.

In terms of Implement Safety and Security Protocols (Knowledge), the recommended training for this competency includes terrorist profiling, negotiation techniques, and procedures for responding to bomb threats. To ensure comprehensive understanding and skill development, a total of 44 hours is suggested, with 26 hours dedicated to theoretical instruction, 18 hours for practical application, and 18 hours for assessment. This breakdown ensures that sea marshals not only grasp the theoretical concepts but also have ample opportunity to apply their knowledge in real-world scenarios and undergo rigorous evaluation.

Moreover, arresting, handcuffing, and hands-on Search (Skill):, the training for this competency focuses on search and seizure protocols, handcuffing techniques, and arrest procedures. A total of 40 hours is recommended, with 8 hours for theoretical instruction, 24 hours for practical exercises, and 8 hours allocated for assessment. This allocation prioritizes hands-on practice, which is essential for sea marshals to gain proficiency in these critical law enforcement skills. The assessment portion ensures that their ability to perform these tasks is thoroughly evaluated.

Furthermore, Perform Basic Life Support Procedures (Skill), for this competency, the training includes first aid techniques for responding to common medical emergencies on board. A total of 40 hours is recommended, with 16 hours for theoretical learning, 16 hours for practical skills development, and 8 hours for assessment. The balance between theory and practice ensures that sea marshals are equipped to handle medical emergencies with confidence, while the assessment portion evaluates their readiness to perform these procedures under pressure.

In conclusion, the recommendations presented in Table 6 provide a clear framework for enhancing the training program for sea marshals. By focusing on key areas such as safety and security protocols, arresting techniques, and basic life support procedures, with a balanced emphasis on theory, practical exercises, and assessment, the program will ensure that sea marshals are well-prepared to handle various security and emergency situations. The suggested time allotments for each competency reflect the need for both in-depth understanding and hands-on proficiency, which will enhance their overall effectiveness and readiness in their roles.

## Conclusions

In conclusion, this study reveals that the Coast Guard Sea Marshal Force is comprised primarily of entry to mid-level personnel engaged in critical sea marshal operations, operating within a context of evolving gender inclusivity. While the foundational value of the Basic Sea Marshal Operations Course is acknowledged, significant competency gaps, particularly in implementing safety and security protocols and mastering essential skills like arrest techniques and basic life support, were identified.

The identified gaps necessitate a revision of the BSMOC program of instruction to incorporate more practical, scenario-based training and to expand modules on critical areas such as terrorist profiling, negotiation, bomb threat response, and water search and rescue. Moreover, including modules that address negotiation with individuals under psychological distress and mediation techniques is essential, given the nature of the incidents faced by sea marshals.

Lastly, targeted enhancements to the training program, focusing on practical application and addressing identified knowledge and skill deficiencies, are crucial to ensure the effectiveness of sea marshal operations and enhance the competencies of sea marshal personnel.

## Recommendations

Based on the conclusions, the following are the recommendations for the study:

The following are recommendations for enhancing the BSMOC module. Incorporate a comprehensive module focusing on identified topics with key competency gaps in both knowledge and skills, such as bomb handling, counter-terrorism procedures, crisis management, search and seizure protocols, handcuffing and arrest techniques, and basic life-saving techniques. Furthermore, increase the time allocated for this module to ensure a thorough understanding of protocols and pertinent laws essential for sea marshals. It is also important to incorporate practical exercises and simulations to reinforce learning outcomes. These enhancements are crucial to addressing the deficiencies and ensuring that the BSMOC maintains its effectiveness in training sea marshals. It is also recommended to include a module on negotiation and mediation techniques for responding to conflicts aboard vessels. A module focusing on water search and rescue is also recommended to ensure that sea marshals are equipped to respond to man-overboard incidents.

With the PCG's strong advocacy for inclusivity, the CGSMF may consider deploying more female personnel on passenger vessels. Recognizing that initiatives like "Angels of the Sea" have proven effective and feasible, involving women in security functions such as sea marshaling contributes to greater gender parity.

For future researchers, the findings of this study are confined exclusively to the personnel of the CGSMF. The data presented may serve as a foundational reference in mapping the competencies required by PCG personnel. This mapping will facilitate the

identification of priority competency areas and aid in assessing the complexity of these competencies. By systematically documenting the competencies associated with specific roles within the organization, the PCG will be equipped to develop standardized training programs that address the required knowledge and current skills essential for effective maritime law enforcement.

### **Compliance with Ethical Standards**

The authors of this study declare full compliance with ethical standards in the conduct of the research. Informed consent was obtained from all respondents, ensuring they were fully aware of the nature and purpose of the study, and their participation was voluntary. The respondents were informed of their right to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences. Throughout the research, the anonymity of the respondents was maintained, and all personal information was kept confidential. The well-being of the respondents was safeguarded by ensuring that no harm or discomfort occurred during their participation. Furthermore, the authors affirm that no conflict of interest exists in the conduct of the study, and the research was carried out with objectivity and integrity. Plagiarism was strictly avoided, and all sources were appropriately cited. The interpretation of the findings was free from bias, and the results were used solely for research purposes, without any external influences.

### **Acknowledgments**

The researcher would like to sincerely thank the Coast Guard Sea Marshal Force (CGSMF) for their invaluable participation in this study, which made the research possible and meaningful. Heartfelt appreciation is also extended to the faculty members of the Philippine Merchant Marine Academy Graduate School, led by Dean Ma. Nissa C. Espiritu, for their academic support and guidance. Special thanks go to the researcher's thesis adviser, CAPT Cynthia E. Esquivias, PCG, for her mentorship and encouragement, as well as to the esteemed panel members—RADM Mitzie Silva-Campo, PCG; CDR Victoria Paraggua, PMMA; and CDR Roel Saguid, PCG (LLM)—for their insightful comments, valuable suggestions, and expertise that helped strengthen this research. Lastly, the researcher wishes to express heartfelt gratitude to his family and friends for their unwavering encouragement, patience, and moral support throughout this academic journey.

---

## REFERENCES

- Abad, C., Aguilar, J., Canape, B., Cuevas, J., & Nano, C. Lived Experiences of the Philippine Coast Guards Personnel in Performing their Functions.  
<https://mjbas.com/data/uploads/55646.pdf>
- Abanilla, A. G. (2024). Competencies of Philippine Coast Guard Personnel in the Enforcement of Criminal Laws. *International Journal of Multidisciplinary: Applied Business and Education Research*, 5(6), 2235-2243. <https://doi.org/10.11594/ijmaber.05.06.25>
- AL-Rawahi, M.H. (2022). A Research Study on the Impact of Training and Development on Employee Performance during Covid-19 Pandemic. *International Journal of Managerial Studies and Research*. <https://arcjournals.org/pdfs/ijmsr/v10-i7/1.pdf>
- Anwar, K., & Abdullah, N. (2021). The impact of Human resource management practice on Organizational performance. ResearchGate.  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/350489870\\_The\\_impact\\_of\\_Human\\_resource\\_management\\_practice\\_on\\_Organizational\\_performance](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/350489870_The_impact_of_Human_resource_management_practice_on_Organizational_performance)
- Bennell C., Jenkins B., Blaskovits B., Semple T., Khanizadeh A-J., Brown A.S. and Jones N.J. (2022). Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities for Managing Potentially Volatile Police–Public Interactions: A Narrative Review. *Front. Psychol.* 13:818009.<https://www.frontiersin.org/journals/psychology/articles/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.818009/full>
- Campbell, J., & Wiernik, B. (2015). The modeling and assessment of work performance. *Annual Reviews.org*. <https://www.annualreviews.org/doi/10.1146/annurev-orgpsych-032414-111427>
- Cazarin, P. (2024). Emergency Management in the Military: Levels, Requirements, Benefits, and Challenges. <https://www.permuta.com/emergency-management-in-the-military-levels-requirements-benefits-and-challenges/>
- Center for International Security and Cooperation. (2022). Mapping Militant Organizations: Abu Sayyaf Group. Stanford University.  
<https://cisac.fsi.stanford.edu/mappingmilitants/profiles/abu-sayyaf-group>
- Central Intelligence Agency. (2023). Philippines. Central Intelligence Agency.  
<https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/philippines/#geography>
- Chan, E. S. Y., & Guilfoyle, D. (2022). Chapter 9 Coast Guards' Changing Nature. Brill.  
<https://brill.com/display/book/9789004532847/BP000013.xml>
- Cyr, K. (2016). Police use of force: assessing necessity and proportionality. *Alberta Law Rev.* 53, 663–679. doi: 10.29173/alr424  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/330329971\\_Police\\_Use\\_of\\_Force\\_Assessing\\_Necessity\\_and\\_Proportionality](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/330329971_Police_Use_of_Force_Assessing_Necessity_and_Proportionality)
- Coast Guard Sea Marshal Force. (n.d.). Maritime Security. Philippine Coast Guard.
- De Vos, A., & De Hauw, S. (2013). Linking competency development to career success: Exploring the mediating role of Employability. Handle Proxy.  
<http://hdl.handle.net/20.500.12127/3582>
- Eze, C, and Ombajo, E. (2017). Lecture duration: A risk factor for quality teaching and learning in Higher Education. *Integrity Journal of Education and Training*. 1. 1-5.  
10.31248/IJET2017.006.
- Jenkins, B., Semple, T., Quail, J., and Bennell, C. (2021). Optimizing Scenario-Based Training for Law Enforcement.

- [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/352427592\\_Optimizing\\_Scenario-Based\\_Training\\_for\\_Law\\_Enforcement](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/352427592_Optimizing_Scenario-Based_Training_for_Law_Enforcement)
- Kleygrewe L, Oudejans RRD, Koedijk M and Hutter RIV. (2022). Police Training in Practice: Organization and Delivery According to European Law Enforcement Agencies. *Front. Psychol.* 12:798067. doi: 10.3389/fpsyg.2021.798067
- Laroza, J. and Adan, M. (2023). Deterrence By Denial: The Philippine Coast Guard's Role In Mitigating Maritime Security Challenges. <https://cgssiac.coastguard.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2023/08/CGSSIAC-Coast-Guard-Maritime-Digest.pdf>
- Liu, L. (2017). The research of maritime search rescue personnel to their own security and risk aversion. *Maritime Commons: World Maritime University.*  
[https://commons.wmu.se/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1191&context=msem\\_dissertations](https://commons.wmu.se/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1191&context=msem_dissertations)
- Manglicmot, D. (2019). Optimizing the start-up of a public maritime education training institute: a case study of the Philippine Coast Guard Academy. *Maritime Commons: World Maritime University.*  
[https://commons.wmu.se/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2218&context=all\\_dissertations](https://commons.wmu.se/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=2218&context=all_dissertations)
- Maritime Industry Authority. (2023). 2023 MARINA Statistical Report. <https://marina.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2024/11/2023-MARINA-Statistical-Report.pdf>
- McHenry, M. (2019). A Need for Change: The Importance of Continued Training and Education for Modern Day Police Officers. *Criminal Justice Institute.* <https://www.cji.edu/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/aneedforchange.pdf>
- Oluwaseun, O. (2020). Employee Training and Development as a Model for Organizational Success. *International Journal of Engineering Technologies and Management 2016Research.*  
[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341143357\\_EMPLOYEE\\_TRAINING\\_AND\\_DEVELOPMENT\\_AS\\_A\\_MODEL\\_FOR\\_ORGANIZATIONAL\\_SUCCESS](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/341143357_EMPLOYEE_TRAINING_AND_DEVELOPMENT_AS_A_MODEL_FOR_ORGANIZATIONAL_SUCCESS)
- Oreta, J. (2023, 28 March). Terrorism as an Evolving Threat to Southeast Asia's Maritime Security. *Asia Maritime Transparency Initiative.* <https://amti.csis.org/maritime-terrorism-as-an-evolving-threat-to-southeast-asias-security/>
- Pasban, M., & Nojehdeh, S. H. (2016). A review of the role of Human Capital in the organization. *ScienceDirect.* <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S1877042816311338>
- Philippine Coast Guard. (2019, 27 December). PCG, PPA undergo vessel boarding procedure in Zamboanga. <https://www.coastguard.gov.ph/index.php/news/news-2019/145-news/news-2019/3647-pcg-ppa-undergo-vessel-boarding-procedure-in-zamboanga>
- Philippine Coast Guard. (2013). PCG Strategic Development Plan (SDP) for 2013–2028. <https://cgssiac.coastguard.gov.ph/wp-content/uploads/2023/09/DIRECTORS-REPORT-2022-2023.pdf>
- Philippine Security and Safety Practitioner Association. (2025). Explosive Ordnance Reconnaissance Agent (EORA). <https://pssppatraining.com/our-trainings/explosive-ordnance-reconnaissance-agent-eora/>
- Ramos Yeo, S., & Sicangco, S. (2023). A drowning maritime industry. *The GUIDON.* <https://theguidon.com/1112/main/2023/05/a-drowning-maritime->

