

**U.S. Customs and Border Protection**

Port of Philadelphia
200 Chestnut Street
Philadelphia, PA 19106

**U.S. Customs and Border Protection
Pipeline #010-2018
May 18, 2018**

To: Terminal Operators, Vessel Agents, Carriers, and Others Concerned

SUBJECT: Deserters / Absconders

United States Customs and Border Protection (CBP), to include the Area Port of Philadelphia, has seen an increase in absconders and deserters. In response to this increased activity, CBP will be conducting additional random enforcement operations on arriving vessels. This will include interview of crewmembers, searches of crew quarters and the vessel. Enforcement boardings are separate from the entrance and clearance process and may be performed at any time the vessel is within the confines of the Area Port of Philadelphia.

The Master of the vessel is responsible to ensure he/she is in possession and in control of all crewmembers' passports and other immigration related documents. At no time should a crewmember have possession of these documents; especially, while on shore leave. The Master of the vessel is required to have routine checks of crewmembers performed and must report any signs of potential deserters or absconders to CBP. Some of the signs of a potential deserter may include, but are not limited to: personal effects prematurely packed, disgruntled employees, family in the area, etc.

CBP may require a security plan that requires the owner of the vessel to employ guards to secure the interest of the United States. These decisions are made on a case-by-case basis, where many factors are taken into consideration. At any time, CBP may order a crewmember detained onboard the vessel if he/she poses any risk.

The Master of the vessel is ultimately responsible to ensure timely notification is made to CBP either directly or via the vessel agent, in the event of a deserter/absconder. A vessel's departure may be delayed until all CBP's investigation is completed. A CBP Form I-259 will be issued to the Master of the vessel and/or the vessel agent. The vessel operator is liable for any and all related costs for the detention and removal of the alien once he/she is apprehended by CBP.

Any questions can be directed to the Chief CBP Officers below:

Antonio Blackwell Antonio.D.Blackwell@cbp.dhs.gov 215-419-7705

Paul Mulhern Paul.Mulhern@cbp.dhs.gov 215-717-5892

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Joseph V. Martella".

Joseph V. Martella
Area Port Director
Area Port of Philadelphia