

Project CETO

ProtectUK publication date

06/05/2025

What is Project CETO?

Project CETO is a national engagement strategy between UK law enforcement, maritime organisations and the cruise industry. CETO is managed by Police Officers in the UK's Joint Maritime Security Centre (JMSC).

The objective of Project CETO is to provide a hostile environment for criminals and terrorists seeking to compromise the safety of vessels, passengers and crew within UK waters, and to UK nationals on the high seas. Project CETO also facilitates the assessment and development of information relating to broader threats projected towards the UK and beyond.

The aims of Project CETO are:

- Protecting National Security
- Protecting passengers and crew
- Prevention and detection of serious crime
- Security of cruise ships
- Security of the wider cruise ship community

Project CETO seeks to improve the flow of information through enhanced professional relationships between ship security managers and law enforcement officers, encouraging and developing the exchange of information to prevent and detect serious crime and terrorism.

Reporting of concerns from passengers, crew and port staff is welcomed through our anonymous reporting mechanism.

Joint Maritime Security Centre

The Joint Maritime Security Centre (JMSC) is the UK government's centre of excellence for maritime security. Its mission is to increase awareness and understanding of maritime security threats and enable cross-government coordination to deliver a whole-system response to mitigate them.

The Joint Maritime Security Centre is the multi-agency organisation responsible for ensuring the UK maintains its understanding of the UK maritime domain and develops the cross-government coordination frameworks to respond to threats to security, law and order, and the marine environment.

The JMSC hosts representatives from a number of UK agencies who have a maritime safety or security remit. The agencies represented include:

- Police
- Border Force
- National Crime Agency
- HM Revenue and Customs
- Maritime and Coastguard Agency
- Department for Transport
- Marine Management Organisation
- Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office
- Royal Navy

Link to JMSC - <https://www.gov.uk/government/groups/joint-maritime-security-centre>

How does CETO work?

Project CETO is underpinned by frontline staff from Police and Border Force visiting vessels to raise awareness of Project CETO and to encourage reporting of security concerns.

Information regarding these security concerns or suspicious and unusual behaviours can be communicated by e-mail and through direct face-to-face liaison with ship staff responsible for the security of vessels, passengers and crew whilst alongside in UK ports. Crew members and the public can also report concerns anonymously by contacting CETO via the online reporting form.

The timely assessment of reporting can then be undertaken by agencies within the JMSC, the

resulting information is then disseminated and tasked for action as appropriate.

CETO is supported internationally by the Cruise Lines International Association (CLIA) and by the European maritime police organisation AQUAPOL. Within the UK, CETO is supported by Counter Terrorism Policing, National Counter Terrorism Security Office (NaCTSO), Department for Transport, Border Force and the Joint Maritime Security Centre.

Project CETO – What do we ask of you?

We ask that whenever you see or learn of any activity or behaviour you feel is suspicious or unusual within the cruise environment, whether on the vessel or in port, that you make contact with Project CETO via the Police Desk at JMSC.

If you, or someone else is in immediate danger, or a crime is in progress, always call the emergency services directly.

Types of incident to report (list not exhaustive):

- Behaviours indicative of hostile reconnaissance
- Reports of absconding passengers or crew
- Detections of drugs, weapons or other banned articles
- Security breaches on board
- Security breaches within port
- Unusual passenger activity (i.e. not consistent with the majority of passenger activity)
- Unusual booking activity (i.e. last minute bookers)
- Sightings of unauthorised drones/Uncrewed Aerial Systems (UAS) in close proximity to your vessel