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IFSMA

NEWSLETTER

The Shipmasters' International Voice



INATO uncrewed vessels

MASS (Maritime Autonomous Surface Ship)

See story on page 19.



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Readers are reminded that the opinions expressed in the IFSMA Newsletter are those of the various authors and providers of news and are not necessarily in accord with IFSMA policy.

Secretary General's Message

You will all have seen the increased tension in the Middle East, but after the intervention of the US in Iran, the ceasefire now seems to be holding for the time being, but tension remains high.

Iran has threatened to close the Straits of Hormuz, but the general consensus is that this will not happen as long as the ceasefire holds.

However, the industry will continue to watch this area closely and we in the Secretariat will keep you informed of any changes. The situation in the Red Sea and Black Sea remains unchanged and traffic is starting to increase through the Suez Canal as the security in the area improves.

Nevertheless, there have been increasing tensions and naval activity in the Baltic since January due to EU/ NATO countries intensifying their actions against sanctioned vessels prompting Russia to respond aggressively. Notable incidents within this period of intensity have been the Estonian attempt to detain mv *Jaguar*, which triggered a response from a Russian fighter jet, and Russia's subsequent detainment of mv *Green Admire*. The main consequences of this increase in activity have been signal jamming in the region, Finnish and Estonian authorities have issued warnings for the Gulf of Finland and parts of the Baltic to this effect. This is something that is very much on the increase around the world and is in active discussion at the IMO. I would be most grateful if you would ask all your shipmasters to let the IFSMA HQ know of any incidents connected with jamming or spoofing of GPS so that we can get a much better understanding of the extent of the problem.

From 18 to 27 June at IMO we were very busy with the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC110) and I am pleased to report a number of successes. You should all be aware that IFSMA campaigns on the topic of fatigue, hours of work and rest and how it is recorded. We have worked with ITF and the WMU and completed a number of surveys on the topic. Finally, our voices have been heard and next year we will be discussing this at the Human Element, Training and Watchkeeping Committee for the first time – again we will keep you informed. IFSMA is also very involved with the development of the voluntary code for MASS in its final stages. The final chapter on the Human Element will be finalised at the end of September and we are working hard to ensure the rights of seafarers and in particular, the Master, are not eroded with safety being the key word.

My final item of news this month is that I will be retiring towards the end of the year and I am delighted to announce that I will be replaced by a very experienced Master, Captain Andrew Cook, who has had many years at sea and in management appointments ashore. I will be announcing my final retirement date at this year's BGA in the Faroe Islands – there is still time to get your flights and hotels booked.

May you have fair winds and following seas,

Jim Scorer
Secretary General

Protecting seafarers against criminalisation

IMO, ILO, ICS, ITF united call

Global maritime leaders reaffirm commitment to fair treatment, due process, and coordinated action to protect seafarers' rights.

Seafarers detained in connection with their professional duties must be treated fairly and with dignity, with full respect for their human rights, high level participants from the IMO, ILO, ICS, and ITF have urged, following a joint event at IMO HQ in London in mid-June.

Participants urged commitment to due process and the fair treatment of seafarers to allow them to be swiftly repatriated to their families in accordance with the IMO/ILO Guidelines, acknowledging that unfair criminalisation of seafarers continues to be of significant concern to seafarers and the wider industry, and reduces industry confidence.



IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez, commented: *'Global trade depends on the people – the seafarers – who are onboard ships day in, day out. The well-being of seafarers must remain a shared global priority. Stronger legal protections, increased awareness, and continued collaboration across the maritime community are essential.'*



People who had experienced criminalization shared their stories during the event.

Ms Corinne Vargha, ILO Director, International Labour Standards Department, reflected: *'Ratification and*

enforcement of the MLC are crucial to protect seafarers against criminalization. Let us continue to join forces to ensure that good practices on the implementation of the IMO/ILO guidelines are shared and prosecutors and judges are made aware of the particularities of the work of seafarers, essential to ensure their fair treatment. ILO remains committed to use all the mechanisms at its disposal to support seafarers faced with these dreadful situations.'

Thomas Kazakos, Secretary General of the International Chamber of Shipping, added: *'I look forward to carrying on the vital work that my predecessor Guy Platten has been leading and continuing to collaborate with our partners at the IMO, ILO and ITF – it is of the utmost importance. Strengthened cooperation across the maritime industry is vital to safeguard our seafarers against unfair criminalisation – seafarers should not be the victims of such actions and must be supported. This is for the betterment of the whole maritime sector and the movement of global trade.'*

Mr Stephen Cotton, ITF General Secretary, said: *'Seafarer criminalisation is a growing crisis that demands urgent and coordinated action. We need to move beyond policy and into implementation because while the Guidelines exist, too many governments are still falling short. As industry leaders, we have a shared responsibility to push for enforcement, to collect the data, and to hold the industry accountable. This crisis demands joint, sustained action from all industry stakeholders to ensure seafarers are treated fairly and protected. The power to protect seafarers lies in our joint voice, with the IMO, ILO, ICS and ITF united – we can drive the change that seafarers need and deserve.'*

Case studies

The event heard case studies from people directly involved in cases including from the seafarer, port, supply chain and shipowner perspective.

IMO and ILO, with the support of industry partners in the ILO–IMO Tripartite Working Group, have adopted Guidelines on Fair Treatment of Seafarers Detained in Connection with Alleged Crimes.

The guidelines were approved by the IMO Legal Committee (LEG 112) in April. They cover issues related to due process, protection from arbitrary detention, coercion or intimidation, and ensuring that wages, medical care and repatriation rights should remain intact during any legal proceedings. They aim to improve coordination among countries, including port States, flag States, coastal States, States of which the seafarer is a national, as well as shipowners and seafarers.

Future actions

Participants urged further practical and concrete outcomes, including robust policies, targeted training programmes, enhanced enforcement and monitoring, and the sharing of best practices across jurisdictions.

Judiciary Engagement: Recognizing that many judicial systems may lack the expertise to handle maritime cases swiftly and fairly, participants encouraged the training of judicial authorities in maritime law and seafarers' rights to ensure timely and just outcomes.

Stronger Industry Coordination: Emphasis was placed on greater coordination between Member States and industry to enable consistent implementation of legal protections and to support the rapid release and repatriation of detained seafarers.

Role of Insurers: Insurers, including P & I Clubs, were urged to provide legal support coverage and uphold seafarers' welfare in cases of unfair treatment of seafarers.

Logistics and supply chain stability: Participants highlighted how seafarer criminalisation disrupts crew changes, undermines maritime reliability, and creates reputational and operational risks throughout the global supply chain.

Maritime and logistics companies were urged to:

- Support clear protection protocols.
- Advocate for consistent treatment across jurisdictions.
- Invest in awareness and welfare initiatives across shipping and port networks.

Addressing seafarer abandonment and detention-related costs: There was strong consensus that seafarers – key workers essential to global trade – must not bear the burden of legal uncertainty, detention, or abandonment due to systemic gaps or negligence.

Proceedings video

Proceedings of the event are available on You Tube at: <https://tinyurl.com/ydd76phs>
Running time 11:54:59

A digital learning management system for online training:

marinePALS®

News has been received from long-standing friend of IFSMA, Captain Pradeep Chawla, CEO and founder of Hong Kong-based Marine PALS® a digital learning management system for online training.

MarinePALS® is focused on applying digital technology to maritime education and bringing measurable effectiveness in training for seafarers.

Ethos

The company has the following ethos:

- Prevention of accidents through bite-sized training.
- Innovation in learning methods using digital technology.
- Focused, concise and precise training content.
- Emphasis on proficiency and competence

development.

- Fostering a culture of continuous learning and improvement.

What MarinePALS® has to offer

MarineFlix is a categorized library of micro-learning educational videos meant for seafarers of all ranks, vessel managers, Port State inspectors and surveyors.

Marine Games are its gamified learning solutions to make learning enjoyable and competitive. Gamified is the application of typical elements of game playing

Marine VR is the company's Virtual Reality programmes providing several walkthroughs and immersive courses to keep pace with the shift in the learner's preferences for acquiring knowledge.

Marine Mentors is the mentoring service to connect seafarers to mentors within the organisation and with accomplished shore staff from the outside world.

Cadets is an offering of Digital Record Books of ICS and GlobalMET training record books. Learning content is provided for each competency required to be learnt by the trainee.

CMS module covers the requirements of Intertanko and OCIMF Guidelines on Competency Assessment and Verification.

Assessment system module is a platform for online assessment to aid in the recruitment process and training examinations.

Survey module allows for conduct of online surveys and takes the opinions of the workforce in real-time.

SMS Manuals are hosted to provide access from mobile devices for quick and ready reference. Pre-joining briefings are hosted digitally, from anywhere in the world.

Circulars module allows the delivery directly to the seafarer's mobile devices and allows the tracking of views by individuals.

The company also specializes in curating customized company-specific training content such as accident reconstruction animation and videos.

Microlearning content

Compact learning modules designed for engaging the seafarers of today and of future generations.

Mentors

Instant connection provided through the company's mentoring programme.

Encourage learning mindset

Gamified experience and rewards promote continuous learning and career growth.

Personalized Training

Role based training modules based on ship type and user rank.

Self-Paced Learning

Trainees can learn anytime, anywhere at their own pace. They can revisit modules, if required.

Tutorials and Assessments

Extensive library of tutorials and assessments.

Online learning dashboard

A company's training officer can access the learning dashboard online. The leader board shows the top learners.

Safe Operation Onboard

Structured shipboard safety familiarization, training and gaming modules to enhance safe working operations onboard.

Demonstration

marinePALS®

The Future of Training

Experience the demo:

- Go to the URL: www.marinepals.com .
- Click on "Experience Demo"
- Fill your contact details.
- Select the product and submit the form.

A request

marinePALS® requests readers to use the system and send feedback/queries to the company

Contact details

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The IMO Digest

A summary of some of the news received with grateful thanks from the excellent IMO Media service in recent weeks.

Illustrations per www.imo.org ©

Reducing marine plastic litter from ships

e-learning course launched

IMO regulations to prevent pollution from garbage must be implemented effectively. The greatest danger to the ocean and marine life comes from plastic, which can float for years and be mistaken for food.

New course

A new e-learning course from IMO aims to improve awareness and enhance global implementation of the

garbage regulations, including addressing marine plastic litter from ships, is contained in the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) Annex V.¹

Curriculum

This self-paced course is designed for government officials, maritime educators, seafarers, port reception facility operators, and other maritime stakeholders. It covers:

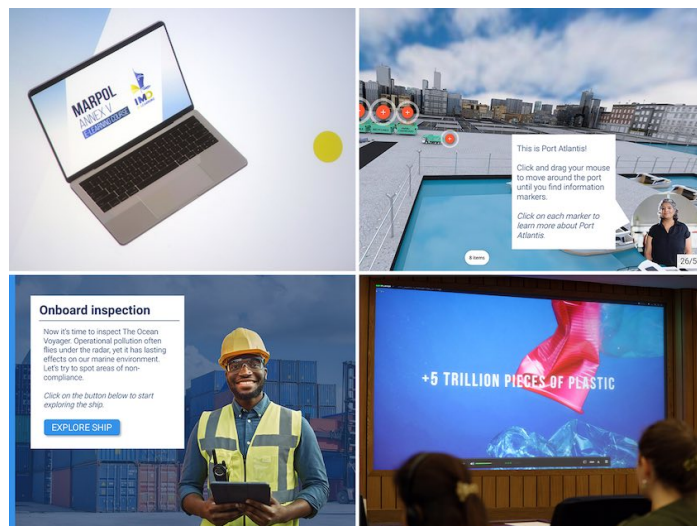
- The main provisions and scope of MARPOL Annex V.
- Restrictions and conditions for the disposal of garbage at sea.
- Responsibilities of shipowners operators, and crew in ensuring compliance.
- The environmental impact of ship-generated waste.
- International enforcement measures under the MARPOL Convention.
- Best practices to prevent, reduce, and control sea-based marine litter.

Availability

The course is freely available on the IMO e-Learning platform to be found here:

<https://lms.imo.org/moodle310/> ²

The course blends animated modules and practical scenario-based questions to offer an effective learning pathway.



By improving awareness and capacity among key actors, the course aims to help reduce the discharge of garbage at sea, including marine plastic litter, to ensure better compliance with international regulations, and support the achievement of the United Nations Sustainable Development goal on the ocean, SDG 14.

WMU contribution

The World Maritime University (WMU) contributed to the design and development of the e-learning course, ensuring that it meets contemporary training requirements in the maritime sector.

Funding

The development of this course was co-funded by IMO and the OceanLitter Programme which currently consists of 3 projects that are implemented in partnership with FAO: the GloLitter Partnerships Project, funded by the government of Norway with contributions from the Governments of Australia and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Regional Litter (RegLitter) Project, funded by the Republic of Korea, and the Plastic Reduction in the Oceans: Sustaining and Enhancing Actions on Sea-based Sources (PRO-SEAS) Project, funded by the Global Environment Facility.

Comment

Mr Jose Matheickal, Director of the Technical Cooperation and Implementation Division at IMO, commented: 'This new course represents another key step in strengthening global efforts to protect the marine environment from plastic litter originating from ships.'

'We hope that this learning tool will support implementation at the national level and further reinforce international cooperation in tackling this pressing challenge.'

French and Spanish to follow

The course is currently available in English, with plans to expand to French and Spanish in the near future, in line with IMO's focus on multilingualism.

The course was launched during the 75th session of the IMO Technical Cooperation Committee (TCC 75), as part of ongoing efforts under the OceanLitter Programme and in line with IMO's increased focus on e-learning to support enhanced education and training outcomes across the global maritime sector.

Video

RReaders are invited to watch the Introduction to IMO e-learning course on MARPOL Annex V (garbage) video here: <https://tinyurl.com/4sez4hwm>

¹ <https://tinyurl.com/nhah9sr5>

² <https://lms.imo.org/moodle310/>

IMO NCSR 12

13-22 May 2025

From 13 to 22 May the Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR) held its twelfth session (NCSR 12) at IMO HQ in London (in-person with hybrid participation).

The meeting was chaired by Mr J Brouwers (Kingdom of the Netherlands), with Mr C Cerda Espejo (Chile) as Vice-Chair.

S-G's remarks

Opening remarks by the Secretary-General are to be found with the link here: <https://tinyurl.com/77ep858d>

Closing remarks are here: <https://tinyurl.com/3n9utuylr>

Integrating VDES into SOLAS – draft amendments finalized

The Sub-Committee agreed to draft amendments to chapter V and the appendix of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) introducing the VHF data exchange system (VDES) as an alternative shipborne navigational equipment and system to comply with the existing requirements of the automatic identification system (AIS). These will be submitted for approval by the Maritime Safety Committee at its upcoming session (MSC 110), with a view to adoption by MSC 111 in 2026 and entry into force on 1 January 2028.

VDES is a radiocommunication system in the VHF maritime mobile band, capable of exchanging digital data between ships, ships and shore authorities and services, with minimal involvement of ships' personnel and higher data transmission rates than AIS by employing wider bandwidths and advanced modulation methods. VDES offers a high level of availability and security, using both terrestrial and satellite components (including AIS).

The Sub-Committee also agreed to draft amendments to associated instruments and draft MSC resolutions on Performance standards for shipborne VDES and on Introduction of VDES, and a draft MSC circular on Guidelines for the operational use of VDES, which are also expected to be approved in conjunction with the aforementioned amendments to SOLAS.

Dissemination of maritime safety information (MSI) – draft amendments to SOLAS finalized

The Sub-Committee agreed on draft amendments to SOLAS regulations IV/5, V/4 and V/5 to clearly state the requirement for dissemination of maritime safety information and SAR-related (search and rescue) information through all operational recognized mobile satellite services.

The draft amendments will be submitted to MSC 110 for approval, with a view to adoption by MSC 111 and entry into force on 1 January 2028.

Alongside the amendments to SOLAS regulations IV/5, V/4 and V/5, the Sub-Committee also agreed to the draft revision of resolution MSC.509(105)/Rev.1 on Provision of Radio Services for the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS), adding additional criteria for the provision of an international enhanced group call service in the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS).

Ship routing measures and ship reporting systems

The Sub-Committee agreed on the following draft measures, with a view to adoption by MSC 111:

- A new area to be avoided (ATBA) 'off the coast of Réunion' in the Mascarene Basin, aiming at reducing the risk of maritime accidents, improving the safety of navigation and protecting the marine

environment.

- Revision of the existing mandatory ship reporting system '*In the Adriatic Sea*' (ADRIREP), expanding the existing system to improve maritime safety in the region and facilitating ship reporting requirements by using electronic means.
- Amendments to existing mandatory ship reporting systems '*In the Sound between Denmark and Sweden*' (SOUNDREP) and '*In the Storebælt (Great Belt) traffic area*' (BELTREP), adding new reporting requirements to provide evidence of existence of insurance for maritime claims, as well as civil liability certificates.

Matters related to ITU-R Study Groups and ITU World Radiocommunication Conference

IMO works closely with the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) on issues that concern maritime radiocommunication services. This long-term collaboration is supported by the Joint IMO/ITU Experts Group on Maritime Radiocommunication Matters which meets inter-sessionally on an annual basis. IMO submits a position paper for the ITU World Radiocommunication Conferences (WRC) on matters concerning maritime services. In preparation for ITU WRC 27, the Sub-Committee finalized the draft IMO position on relevant WRC 27 agenda items, for approval by MSC 111.

Guidelines on carriage and use of electronic nautical publications (ENP) system finalized

The Sub-Committee finalized the draft MSC circular on Guidelines on carriage and use of electronic nautical publications (ENP) system, for approval by MSC 111. The new guidelines aim to promote the effective use of electronic nautical publications, covering aspects such as the general requirements for carriage and operation of ENP on board a vessel, adequate backup arrangements and power supply.

Performance standards for BeiDou Satellite Navigation System revised

The Sub-Committee agreed to the draft revised Performance standards for shipborne BeiDou Satellite Navigation System (BDS) receiver equipment (resolution MSC.379(93)), to be submitted with a view to adoption by MSC 111 in 2026.

BDS is a satellite navigation system, independently developed and operated by China, that was recognized by IMO as a component of the World-Wide Radionavigation System (WWRNS) to assist in the navigation of ships in ocean waters. The revised performance standards enable maritime users to utilize improved services and would apply to BDS receiver equipment installed on or after 31 July 2028.

Procedures and requirements for augmentation systems used in the Worldwide Radionavigation System – amendments developed

The Sub-Committee agreed to draft amendments to the Worldwide radionavigation system (resolution

A.1046(27)), introducing procedures and requirements for augmentation systems. Augmentation systems provide corrections or additional data to GNSS signals, supporting safe and precise navigation, especially in congested or sensitive areas like harbours and coastal waters.

The draft MSC resolution on Amendments to Worldwide radionavigation system revises the annex to resolution A.1046(27) and will be submitted with a view to adoption by MSC 111.

Draft guidelines for software maintenance of shipboard computer-based navigation and communication equipment and systems finalized

The Sub-Committee finalized new guidelines for software maintenance of shipboard computer-based navigation and communication equipment and systems. The guidelines aim to improve the efficiency, effectiveness, safety and security of shipboard software maintenance events by introducing a standardized, controlled and transparent process.

The draft MSC circular containing the guidelines will be submitted with a view to approval by MSC 111.

Progress on digital navigation data system (NAVDAT)

The Sub-Committee progressed its work towards introducing NAVDAT – a digital broadcasting system operating on selected medium and high frequency (MF and HF) bands – into the IMO regulatory framework. NAVDAT can communicate texts, images, graphs and data to compatible receiving equipment on ships, at speeds much higher than NAVTEX.

Guidance for updating information on the Global SAR Plan finalized

The Sub-Committee approved a COMSAR circular on Guidance for entering and updating information on search and rescue services into the Global SAR Plan and on how to get access to the information for operational use.



SOLAS Contracting Governments are required to provide the IMO with details of their search and rescue (SAR) services and the delimitations of their SAR regions. The Global SAR Plan module in GISIS

(Global Integrated Shipping Information System) allows Member States to submit and update this information using an authorized IMO account. The guidance explains how to update SAR data in GISIS and access it for operational use.

Progress on the development of an IP-based S-100 data distribution framework

The Sub-Committee progressed the development of guidance for establishing a framework for data distribution and global IP-based connectivity for shore-based facilities and ships supporting ECDIS S-100 products.

S-100 is a new standard for digital marine data developed by the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) and used in systems like ECDIS (Electronic Chart Display and Information System) to help ships navigate safely. It supports e-navigation by combining different types of information like depth, currents, and weather in one system, helping seafarers make better decisions and improving safety at sea.

The Sub-Committee established a correspondence group to continue to progress the work inter-sessionally and report back to NCSR 13.

Model training course validated

The Sub-Committee validated Model Course 3.14 on SAR Mission Coordinator (IAMSAR Manual Volume II). The course provides specific training for those who may be designated to perform the duties and responsibilities of a search and rescue mission coordinator.

The Sub-Committee established a review group on the revision of Model Course 3.15 on SAR On-scene Coordinator (IAMSAR Manual Volume III), with a view to validation at NCSR 14.

Pakistan first SENSREC workshop

Hazardous waste in ship recycling

Over one hundred representatives from government agencies, academia and the private sector took part in a workshop in Karachi from 20-22 May to enhance their knowledge and skills in hazardous waste management in Pakistan's ship recycling industry.

IMO ILO event

Organized under the joint IMO-ILO SENSREC¹ Decent Work project, the workshop aimed to strengthen compliance with major international conventions – the Hong Kong Convention (HKC)², the Basel Convention³ and relevant ILO conventions – and promote the environmentally sound management, treatment and disposal of hazardous waste.

Aligning ship recycling practices with global standards

Opening the workshop, key officials including Ms Alia Shahid, Director General Ports and Shipping, Mr John

Alonso, Programme Manager for SENSREC and Mr Asif Khan, Secretary General of the Pakistan Ship Breakers' Association called for aligning the country's ship recycling practices with global standards, to protect workers, the environment and the sector's long-term sustainability.



Technical sessions covered identification, handling, treatment and disposal of hazardous materials, as well as compliance with international frameworks. Experts emphasized the need for strengthened capacity, effective social dialogue and stakeholder cooperation to meet the sector's complex challenges.

Site visit

A site visit to ship recycling yards in Gadani, Balochistan, allowed participants to observe firsthand the procedures and challenges involved in hazardous waste management. The visit highlighted the real-world application of the challenges in implementing international best practices, as well as areas for further improvement.

Participants and organizers commended the workshop as a vital step towards modernizing Pakistan's ship recycling sector, in line with upcoming global regulatory requirements.

About SENSREC

SENSREC is a capacity building project implemented by IMO to support developing countries in implementing the Hong Kong Convention on safe and environmentally sound ship recycling.

Launched in September 2023, the SENSREC-DW component focuses on improving Pakistan's ship recycling standards, governance and stakeholder capacities while promoting decent work and sustainable practices.

¹ <https://sensrec.imo.org/>

² <https://tinyurl.com/5amy7csv>

³ <https://tinyurl.com/373f4t6k>

Ship noise and ocean pollution

South Africa and Costa Rica tackle

It was reported on 11 June that South Africa and Costa Rica were taking practical steps to reduce the environmental impact of shipping on marine ecosystems, with support from the IMO.

During a joint side event at the UN Ocean Conference in Nice¹ held from 9-13 June, country officials presented their experiences in tackling ship noise and marine plastic pollution, sharing lessons learned with others facing similar challenges.

The event was co-hosted by IMO, France, Costa Rica, South Africa, FAO and UNDP, and opened by IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez and FAO Director-General Qu Dongyu.

South Africa confronts underwater noise

Ms Mbalenhle Simphiwe Golding, Acting CEO of the South African Maritime Safety Authority (SAMSA), highlighted how growing maritime traffic is threatening marine biodiversity in South Africa.



She commented: *'The increase of shipping traffic has been strongly correlated with a 70% decline in the population of the African penguins. It has also affected our commercial fish such as yellowfin tuna and hake. When our commercial fish is affected, it affects our food security and our ability to thrive as a nation.'*

Underwater radiated noise (URN) from ships disrupts vital behaviours in marine life, including communication, navigation, foraging and reproduction. South Africa recently hosted the first-ever regional workshop on URN, supported by IMO's GloNoise Partnership², bringing together representatives from 21 countries.

The country launched its first environmental impact assessment focused on ship noise in Algoa Bay, with plans to expand nationally to gather baseline data for policy development. Additionally, South Africa has introduced draft regulations for the environmental management of offshore bunkering, identified as a

major contributor to underwater noise. Shipowners that want to adopt low-noise technologies but are hindered by the cost will be able to explore financing options.

Ms Golding added: *'The capacity building support that has come through the GloNoise Partnership has been quite instrumental. It has enabled us to transition from just awareness and to move towards structured action.'*

Costa Rica leads region on ocean plastic action

In Costa Rica, efforts to combat marine plastic pollution are being advanced through IMO's OceanLitter Programme³, which is jointly implemented by IMO and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO).

The country aims to establish a fishing gear reception facility along its South Pacific coastline for discarded fishing gear and marine litter. The partnership involves the National Coast Guard to collect the discarded fishing gear, as well as a private recycling company to transform the discarded plastic into reusable material such as benches and tables.

Ms Paola Acuña Chacón, Legal Advisor, Costa Rica Ministry of Public Works and Transport, commented: *'We are really eager to raise awareness with the fishers, tour operators, coastal communities about IMO conventions such as MARPOL as well as FAO's voluntary guidance on the marking of fishing gear.'*

Globally, an estimated 640,000 tonnes of fishing gear is lost or abandoned annually, accounting for roughly 10% of ocean plastic. Costa Rica is leading the development of a Regional Action Plan covering five Central American countries to address marine plastic litter. Activities include the establishment of a circular economy project that generates income for women in coastal areas through recycling and other efforts to promote a healthy ocean.

Ms. Acuña added *'By implementing respective IMO conventions, the IMO Action Plan on Marine Plastics and FAO voluntary guidance, we will have a strong legal framework to fight marine plastic pollution across Central America.'*

IMO and global commitment

IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez reaffirmed the organization's commitment to environmental protection through global regulations, standards and capacity-building. He reflected: *'This event showcases the importance of IMO's decades-long regulatory framework in protecting the marine environment.'*

France's Minister for the Ecological Transition, Biodiversity, Forestry, Maritime Affairs and Fisheries, Ms Agnès Pannier-Runacher, welcomed the initiatives:

'I am reassured to see how IMO and its partners are addressing these issues. It is essential that we

maintain a high level of ambition, that matches the scale of the environmental issues at stake.'

¹ <https://tinyurl.com/4dp6sdxp>

² <https://tinyurl.com/3r39r5yy>

³ <https://tinyurl.com/3kbym5mj>

UN Ocean Conference

IMO action on invasive species

The IMO is stepping up efforts to combat the threat of invasive species introduced into new marine environments by ships.

The accumulation of various aquatic organisms on ships' hulls - known as 'biofouling'¹ – poses a serious threat to ocean health and biodiversity. Marine species carried in ballast water or on hulls can become invasive, outcompete native species and spread rapidly.

Ongoing efforts

At a side event during the UN Ocean Conference in Nice held from 9-13 June, co-hosted by Norway, Fiji and the IMO, delegates outlined the ongoing efforts to curb this threat, including moves towards global mandatory regulations.



Norway's Minister of Climate and Environment Andreas Mr Bjelland Eriksen while opening the event said: 'I am encouraged by the commitment of Member States to find concrete solutions for safe and environmentally friendly shipping.'

Norwegian assistance

Norway has supported technical assistance projects such as GloFouling and TEST² Biofouling, which help countries implement IMO's 64-page guidelines on the control and management of biofouling³, through policy reform, capacity-building, and the adoption of new technologies.

Comment

IMO Secretary-General Mr Arsenio Dominguez commented: *'It is projects like these that are leading*

the way in demonstrating that we put action behind the statements and commitments we make.'

Ms Chanel Mafi Mavoa, Legal Officer at the Maritime Safety Authority of Fiji, shared how the GloFouling Partnership helped address legal gaps, improve data collection, and overcome limited technical capacity in Fiji.

She, noting that Fiji co-sponsored the proposal for an IMO legally binding framework, enabling small island states to better manage this global issue, reflected: *'Fiji's attention and priority given to biofouling has definitely been enhanced by this project.'*

Technical perspectives

The event also featured a range of technical perspectives:

Mr Sveinung Oftedal, Norway's Chief Negotiator for Green Shipping, outlined regulatory developments.

Ms Gyorgyi Gurban, IMO Head of Project Implementation, presented *Silent Invaders*, a short film examining biofouling impacts in the Mediterranean;

Prof Vigdis Vandvik of the University of Bergen emphasized the human role in both the problem and the solution.

Ms Bente Pretlove, Vice President and Programme Director – Ocean Space at DNV, gave an overview of emerging technologies for biofouling control, including anti-fouling coatings and in-water cleaning techniques.

The event was part of the IMO's wider effort at the UN Ocean Conference to spotlight its work in safeguarding the marine environment.

¹ <https://tinyurl.com/5n8y9djt>

² <https://tinyurl.com/48yu622t>

³ <https://tinyurl.com/2u37p327>

Decarbonisation

ASEAN regional workshop

Members of the [ASEAN](#) group of Southeast Asian nations* are stepping up to move from ambition to action in maritime decarbonisation.

To support this process, a regional workshop on Maritime GHG Emissions Data and National Action Plans was held from 9 -11 June) in Bangkok, providing practical tools and guidance to overcome persistent challenges in emissions data systems in the region, national policy planning, and green financing.

The regional inception workshop was co-organized by IMO and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (UN ESCAP) under the SMART-C GHG Project with funding from the Republic of Korea.

Thirty participants from ASEAN countries (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) benefited from hands-on discussions on the IMO Data Collection System, seafarer training strategies, and policy frameworks for the development of national action plans (NAPs). The workshop featured contributions from technical experts from IMO, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), the World Maritime University (WMU), the Maritime Technology Cooperation Centre in Asia (MTCC Asia), and multilateral development banks.

Comment

Mr Weimin Ren, Director of ESCAP's Transport Division, emphasised the urgency of maritime decarbonisation for sustainable regional development: *'At ESCAP, we view sustainable and resilient maritime connectivity as a cornerstone of regional economic cooperation and integration. This workshop plays a critical role in equipping countries with the tools and knowledge needed to reduce maritime emissions while enhancing operational reliability. Promoting low- and zero-emissions green shipping in Asia and the Pacific is not only an environmental necessity, but a strategic opportunity to future-proof maritime transport systems across the region.'*



Mr Roel Hoenders, Head of Climate Action and Clean Air at IMO, acknowledged: *'This workshop is a timely step towards turning the 2023 IMO GHG Strategy into practical national action. Robust data systems are critical for monitoring emissions and shaping effective policies, while capacity building ensures countries can adopt low- and zero-carbon technologies safely and efficiently. IMO remains committed to supporting its Member States through technical assistance and collaboration under initiatives like SMART-C, to drive an inclusive transition to greener shipping.'*

Country presentations highlighted real-world progress and challenges in national policies including data system development. A case study from Singapore offered a replicable example of long-term national decarbonisation strategy. A final panel explored how multilateral development banks can help unlock financing for green maritime infrastructure and capacity development in the region.

The workshop concluded with practical recommendations for national and regional follow-up, including continued peer-to-peer learning, enhanced donor coordination, and alignment of financial resources with national climate goals. These outcomes will feed directly into SMART-C's ongoing technical assistance and guide countries on their path toward a low-carbon maritime future.

Countries that participated in the event include: Brunei Darussalam, Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand and Viet Nam.

SMART-C GHG Project

The SMART-C GHG Project is an initiative led by IMO, aimed at supporting the Governments of the Philippines and Viet Nam in formulating and implementing maritime GHG reduction policies and National Action Plans (NAPs).

Other [ASEAN](#) Member States can benefit from the project's regional activities. These efforts include capacity-building on emissions data collection and analysis, policy formulation, and the upskilling of seafarers, all in alignment with the [2023 IMO Revised GHG Strategy](#) to be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/y73rty6r>

*www.asean.org

IMO symposium: MASS

Autonomous maritime technology

The latest developments in autonomous shipping were explored at a symposium co-hosted by IMO and the Government of Norway entitled *Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships as a reality: the need for the IMO MASS Code*.

Experiences from MASS projects

Held at IMO HQ on 17 June the event focused on real-life experiences from existing small- and large-scale MASS projects and the latest developments in legislation, national standards and class notations stemming from ongoing advancements in the field.

The event was intended to set the tone for the MASS discussions at the 110th session of the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC110)¹, to begin the following day.

Comment

IMO Secretary-General, Mr Arsenio Dominguez, opened the Symposium, and noted the importance of real-world experiences in the development of the non-mandatory MASS Code, stating: *'These insights are vital as IMO works with Member States and international organizations to develop an efficient, safe, secure, environment-friendly, balanced and inclusive regulatory framework.'*



The Director General of the Norwegian Maritime Authority, Alf Tore Sørheim, also acknowledged the close relationship between experience and regulatory development, commenting: *'To fully realize its potential, technology and regulation must evolve in parallel. Innovation moves fast, and our regulatory frameworks must keep pace to ensure both progress and safety.'*

Regulations, innovation, solutions

The day's programme was composed of five sessions spanning regulatory developments, active projects and forward-looking advances in autonomous shipping. Presentations from regulators, pioneers, operators and researchers highlighted that autonomous shipping is happening now, albeit on a relatively limited scale.

Key themes

Throughout the sessions, two key themes emerged:

- The vast potential held in the synergetic action of humans and machines/technology in improving the safety and sustainability of shipping across various dimensions of autonomy.
- The importance of the ongoing development of the non-mandatory MASS Code at IMO for the expansion of the safe and sustainable use of MASS from the regional to the international scale.

MASS Code clarity needed

Several speakers emphasized the need for coordination and clarity as the MASS Code continues to evolve. They stressed that autonomous technologies offer clear benefits, but their success depends on rigorous testing, effective regulation, and systems designed around human capabilities.

The Chair of the Maritime Safety Committee, Ms Mayte Medina, closed the Symposium by recognizing the many achievements along the road to the development of the non-mandatory MASS Code so far, while recalling that the matter of autonomous ships was discussed at IMO as far back as 1964.

Real-life experience versus regulatory work

She also emphasized the repetitious relationship between real-life experience and the regulatory work ahead at MSC 110 by saying: *'What we have seen today, the concrete experience from the industry, administrations and recognized organizations provides the always necessary background, context and motivation for the work being undertaken in the development of the MASS Code... The current exercise will result in a non-mandatory instrument which primary objective is to set the framework for gaining further experience.'*

More information, including the presentations (to be uploaded in due course), can be found by using the link here: <https://tinyurl.com/55ccazbu>

¹ <https://tinyurl.com/mr2kfpzs>

IMO and Adriatic Oil Spill Plan

Adriatic countries are bolstering their defences against marine pollution by harmonizing efforts across the region to prevent, prepare for and respond to major oil spills.



Country representatives met in Koper, Slovenia from 17 to 19 June to focus on implementing the Adriatic Oil Spill Plan – the blueprint for coordinated regional action, based on IMO regulations and best practices. It is supported by IMO and the UN Environment Programme's Mediterranean Action Plan¹.

Key IMO Conventions considered

Maritime officials and policymakers from Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Cyprus, Greece, Italy, Montenegro and Slovenia along with observers from Morocco and Spain covered critical legal and technical aspects of key IMO Conventions related to oil pollution and liability and compensation (OPRC 1990², CLC, FUND 1992³, as well as the Bunkers Convention⁴), including:

- Liability and compensation, including practical guidance on compiling and supporting claims.
- Compliance with international standards.

- The concept of 'reasonableness' in claims submission.

As officers responsible for implementing and incorporating IMO conventions into national law, participants shared best practices and discussed practical steps needed to establish national systems to support ratification and full implementation of these instruments.

Lectures and practical exercises were jointly delivered by the IOPC Funds⁵, the International Group of P&I Associations⁶ and ITOPE.

Experts from the IOPC Funds and P&I Clubs explained their key role in the compensation process, and how claims are assessed and paid. A site visit was organized to the National Maritime Control and Safety Centre in the Port of Koper.

IMO's ITCP

The workshop was organized and delivered by the Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Response Centre for the Mediterranean Sea (REMPEC⁷) through IMO's Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP⁸).

¹ <https://tinyurl.com/58jjra8f>

² <https://tinyurl.com/2icsxzd>

³ <https://tinyurl.com/4bf8ejce>

⁴ <https://tinyurl.com/ycxr3fr5>

⁵ <https://iopcfunds.org/>

⁶ <https://www.igpandi.org/>

⁷ <https://www.rempec.org/en>

⁸ <https://tinyurl.com/5n8acu9w>

Day of the Seafarer 2025

Statement by IMO Secretary-General

On 25 June in a video message, Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez said:

'Seafarers form a remarkable global workforce that calls ships their place of work. It is a unique, exciting and demanding environment – one that must be free from violence and harassment.'

As Secretary-General, steering the IMO ship, I know that leadership is vital to creating a safe, inclusive and respectful working environment for all.

It is about humility, patience, listening, positivity, respect and professionalism, while also holding people accountable, supporting them whilst demanding their best and having the difficult conversations when necessary.

This year's Day of the Seafarer will launch the "My Harassment-Free Ship Campaign" which aims to shine a light on what we can all do to foster a culture of zero tolerance.

We will highlight seafarers who have successfully cultivated cultures of respect and accountability on board. We will also amplify the voices of those who have dealt with harassment, learning from their stories and ensuring they are heard.

IMO is also doing its part. We have taken a decisive step to amend the Standards of Training, Certification and Watchkeeping for Seafarers Code, mandating training for all seafarers on preventing and addressing violence and harassment. We are developing interactive platforms to connect seafarers with best practices and support networks from around the globe. No one should feel alone in their struggle.

I invite you all to join me in supporting the "My Harassment-Free Ship" campaign, foster a culture of zero tolerance on ships where respect, safety, and inclusivity are the standard, and where every individual working at sea can do so with dignity and security.'

A video of the Secretary-General's address is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/m3aektru>

New era for ship recycling

Hong Kong Convention enters into force

From 26 June, ships at the end of their operational lives must be recycled in a safe and environmentally sustainable way.



The Hong Kong International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships enters into force on 26 June 2025, establishing mandatory regulations to govern the way ships are recycled.

The Hong Kong Convention, developed under the auspices of the IMO covers the following:

- Design, construction, operation and preparation of ships to support safe and environmentally sound recycling.
- Operation of ship recycling facilities.
- Appropriate enforcement mechanisms, including survey, authorization, certification, inspection and reporting requirements.

IMO Secretary-General, Mr. Arsenio Dominguez said: *'The entry into force of the Hong Kong Convention this year marks a watershed moment in our shared objective to promote sustainable and safe ship recycling practices globally. This achievement reflects years of dedicated work and will renew our drive to*

safeguard human health and the environment in this critical industry.'

Addressing hazardous materials and working conditions

Most ships are recycled when they are taken out of operation, with almost all materials and equipment from the ship being re-used or recycled.

The Hong Kong Convention addresses key environmental, occupational health, and safety risks involved in the recycling of ships, while distributing responsibilities and obligations across relevant stakeholders - shipowners, ship building yards, ship recycling facilities, flag States, port States and recycling States.

Among other measures, the Convention:

- Prohibits or restricts the installation or use of hazardous materials on ships, such as asbestos, polychlorinated biphenyls, ozone-depleting substances, and anti-fouling compounds and systems containing organotin compounds or cybutryne.
- Details inventories of hazardous materials.
- Outlines requirements for ship recycling facility operations, including working conditions at ship recycling yards.
- Sets out robust mechanisms for certification, compliance and enforcement.

Supporting Member States with implementation – SENSREC Project ¹

To support developing countries, IMO has organized various workshops on ship recycling to raise awareness of the Convention internationally. In addition, IMO has been actively working with countries to help build their capacity and establish the conditions that will enable them to ratify and effectively implement the Convention.

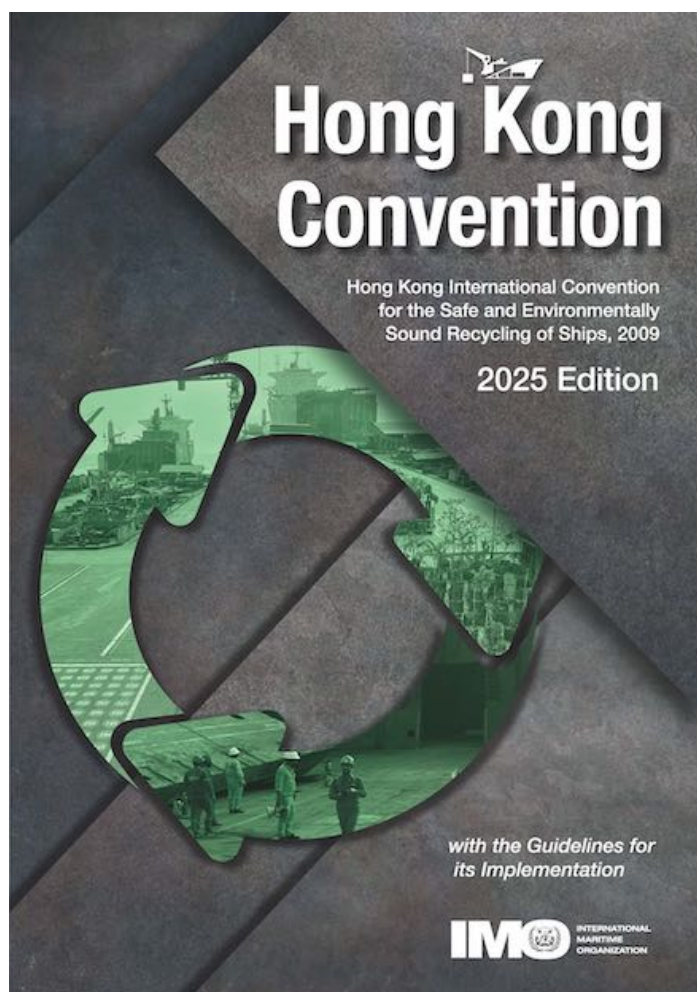
This includes the ongoing project on Safe and Environmentally Sound Ship Recycling (SENSREC Project), established with financial support from the Government of Norway. The project provides comprehensive support to countries, ranging from policy alignment, creation of institutional mechanisms and governance systems, to capacity development related to sustainable technical, social and environmental practices.

SENSREC is currently active in Bangladesh and Pakistan.

About the Hong Kong Convention

The Hong Kong International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships was adopted at a Diplomatic Conference held in Hong Kong, China, in May 2009. The requirements for its entry-into-force were reached in 2023, with the

Convention taking effect 24 months later, on 26 June 2025. Several ship recycling nations have already been implementing the Convention's technical standards on a voluntary basis.



Currently, there are 24 Parties to the Convention, including major flag states such as Japan, Liberia, the Marshall Islands and Panama, as well as four major ship recycling countries: Bangladesh, India, Pakistan and Türkiye. Altogether they cover 57.15% of the world's shipping by tonnage.

The Convention was developed under the auspices of IMO, with input from intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, and in co-operation with the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Parties to the Basel Convention on the Control of Transboundary Movements of Hazardous Wastes and their Disposal.

For more information

To learn more readers are invited to use the link here: <https://tinyurl.com/5amy7csv>

¹ <https://sensrec.imo.org/>

Updates on IMO net-zero regulations

The IMO is on track to adopt new mandatory regulations later this year to decarbonise shipping, the UN June Climate Meeting in Bonn was told.

UNFCCC SBSTA

The IMO Secretariat informed the UNFCCC Subsidiary Body for Scientific and Technological Advice (SBSTA) in Bonn, Germany in week ending 21 June of continuing regulatory action in the maritime sector to address climate change.

MEPC

IMO's submission highlighted that in April this year, the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) finalized and approved the 'IMO Net-Zero Framework', including draft regulations that will translate global climate commitments into mandatory requirements for all ships engaged in international navigation.



The legal text for the IMO Net-Zero Framework will be considered for final adoption when IMO's Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) meets in London from 13 to 17 October. Once adopted, the regulations are expected to enter into force sixteen months later (i.e. in March 2027), at which point governments will be responsible for enforcing them.

A two-pronged approach

The IMO Net-Zero Framework consists of two complementary elements:

- A global fuel standard, requiring ships to reduce, over time, their annual GHG fuel intensity, i.e. how much GHG is emitted for each unit of energy used, calculated on a 'well-to-wake' basis.
- A global economic measure that sets prices on ship emissions, to encourage the industry to lower emissions.

Ships emitting above certain thresholds must balance the deficit by paying into the IMO Net-Zero Fund. This revenue will be allocated to reward ships using zero and near-zero fuels, and support initiatives that target innovation and research, infrastructure, technology transfer and ensuring just transition, taking into account the needs of developing countries, particularly Least Developed Countries and Small Island Developing States.

Other key issues

The IMO Net-Zero Framework also introduces provisions for the certification of sustainable marine fuels; the establishment of a central Registry; and actions to address negative impacts on food security.

In parallel, work progresses on various issues, such as:

- Sustainability and life cycle assessment of marine fuels.
- Further development of energy efficiency regulations.
- The use of Onboard Carbon Capture and Storage.
- Development of safety regulations for ships and seafarers using new technologies and fuels.

Finally, technical cooperation and capacity-building initiatives dedicated to climate action in the shipping sector will be enhanced, in close collaboration with ports, renewable energy producers and maritime education institutions.

For more information

To read the IMO Statement to SBSTA 62 readers are invited to use the link here:

<https://tinyurl.com/2abxje83>

Improving casualty reporting and investigation

Trainers trained

A regional train-the-trainer course organised in Limassol from 26-30 May provided participants from eight countries with new skills for marine casualty investigation.

The Regional Train-The-Trainers Course on Casualty Investigation Code* and Reporting, for eight countries, covered the main and key elements of the role of marine casualty investigator, complemented with input designed for trainers/facilitators.

Preparing to lead

Seventeen participants represented Jordan, Montenegro, Lebanon, Kazakhstan, Egypt, Cyprus, Kuwait and Saudi Arabia. They are preparing to lead training in maritime casualty investigation and developed their knowledge and skills as trainers.

The course was organized by IMO, in cooperation with the Marine Accident Investigation Committee of the Republic of Cyprus.

MAIIF and WMU partners

This comprehensive course has been developed in partnership with the Marine Accident Investigation International Forum (MAIIF) and the World Maritime University (WMU), taking into consideration the outcome of IMO Member States Audit Scheme.



The course aims at increasing the casualty investigation capacity in the region with a view to improving the rate of investigation and reporting into marine casualties and incidents as well as highlighting importance of cooperation at regional level.

IMO's commitment

IMO is committed to self-sustainability by supporting Member States in training their own investigator(s).

Flag State obligations

Under the provisions of IMO instruments, a flag State has an obligation to investigate a very serious marine casualty and others, as defined by the relevant conventions, occurring to any of its ships and to report its findings to IMO through the GISIS** database.

The objective of such an investigation is to assist in determining what changes in the present regulations may be desirable and what remedial actions should be taken to enhance the safety of seafarers and passengers and the protection of the marine environment.

* <https://tinyurl.com/3akv2b78>

** <https://tinyurl.com/ffsuj5nv>

Berg Propulsion and bio-methanol for feeder ships

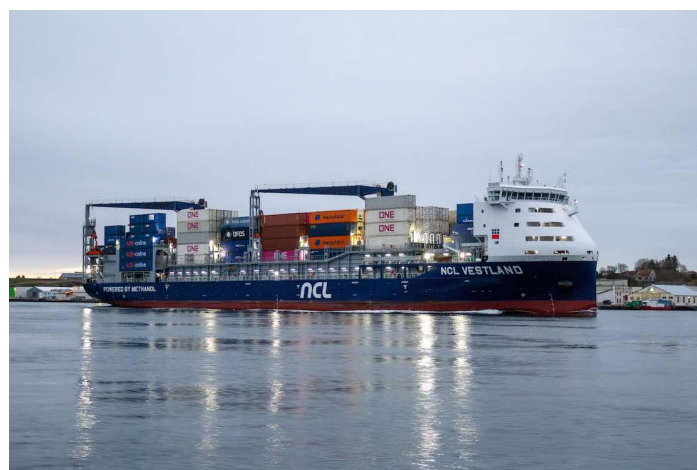
Early in June it was announced that *NCL Nordland*, the second of two bio-methanol-fuelled container vessels had entered service weeks after sistership *Vestland* verified that its Berg Propulsion package had delivered efficiency regardless of energy source.

Owned by MPC Container Ships, these dual-fuel 1300 TEU vessels can be operated on methanol and/or MGO, under a 15-year charter to North Sea Container

Line (NSCC) in services connecting Norway and Rotterdam.

To quote Constantin Baack, CEO of MPCC: '*Nordland and Vestland establish MPCC as an early mover in competitive green fuel strategies to deliver long-term shareholder value for shipping's low carbon future. The project also shows how we meet ambitious goals by working with like-minded partners.*'

It is reported that efficient use of space and the high-performance propulsion systems built into these ships cut energy consumption per TEU by 63% per nautical mile compared to their predecessors. NCL has also signed a deal with Equinor to bunker bio-methanol – initially running on a 5% blend, but increasing bio-methanol content over time to support carbon neutral operations as the supply chain matures.



NCL Vestland.

With each ship there has been installation of an integrated Berg energy management system with accompanying total propulsion system consolidating the electrical part of the propulsion train to make best use of the two-stroke main engine's performance, this combined with Berg's MPP 1410 Controllable Pitch Propeller and MTT bow and stern thrusters.

Berg's tailored solution also included improved propeller design, as well as its power and control electronics to maximize operational flexibility, it is understood.

Comment

Christian Rychly, Chief Operating Officer, MPCC, commented: '*Berg Propulsion and partners managed to develop, build and integrate complex systems and applied high-end technological philosophies into fully functional machinery on board both vessels despite challenges that can occur during newbuilding projects, and we would like to thank them for their cooperation and support.*'

'We worked as a co-designer for the integrated main propulsion solution, configuring the compact Engine Room layout to enable optimized aft ship design and performance,' said Mattias Hansson, Senior Global Sales Manager, Berg. "We are delighted that the teamwork between all parties in this collaborative

newbuilding program has resulted in truly exceptional ship fuel efficiency.'

Bente Hetland, Managing Director, NCL added: *'Nordland joins a service which is already proving itself on efficiency. This is an extraordinary example of stakeholders collaborating to overcome decarbonization challenges cost-effectively so that green freight is the customer's preferred choice.'*

Mattias Dombrowe, Business Manager Electric System Integration, Berg, commented further: *'This is next level energy management which mixes and matches the energy sources to the best advantage of ship performance.'*

'The hybridized set up optimizes energy use from gensets, the shaft alternator, and 250 kWh battery for load balancing during thruster or other peak loads, also accommodating the shore connector for zero emissions when the vessels are in port.'

Samskip launches Blyth - Rotterdam service

At the beginning of June Samskip announced the launch of a new shortsea container service calling at the Port of Blyth, enhancing multimodal connections between the UK and key European trade hubs.

This strategic expansion strengthens its presence in NE England, offering shippers a reliable, cost-efficient and sustainable transport alternative that connects seamlessly to Samskip's wider European network.

The Blyth service brings added value to Samskip's UK customers by introducing:

- Direct weekly sailings between Blyth and Rotterdam.
- Fast transshipment to European markets via Samskip's hub network.
- Seamless road and rail connections for inland distribution.
- High-frequency departures and reliable transit schedules.
- A more sustainable alternative to traditional trucking routes.

Samskip Manager Sales & Operations, Scott Montgomery, indicated: *'Expanding to Blyth supports our mission to be closer to our customers and provide agile, multimodal solutions tailored to their evolving needs.'*

'This new service opens up exciting opportunities for regional shippers seeking dependable and environmentally conscious logistics.'

A new era for Samskip UK trade

This launch marks more than just a new service — it signals Samskip's renewed focus and commitment to revitalizing its UK trade. With the addition of Blyth, the company is not only expanding port options for greater

efficiency and flexibility, but also taking decisive steps to strengthen service reliability, reach new customers, and support its UK client base with improved access to European markets.

As it invests in this new chapter, Samskip is inviting new and returning customers to rediscover what it can offer — with local care, smarter routing, and the backing of one of Europe's largest multimodal networks.

Blyth's strategic location

The Port of Blyth was selected for its strategic location, modern infrastructure, and growing importance as a regional logistics hub. Its proximity to key industrial zones and ports of entry makes it a vital part of Samskip's UK strategy moving forward.



Port of Blyth, Northumberland.

Photo: David Lee Photography Ltd.

Alasdair Kerr, Commercial Director at Port of Blyth, commented: *'We are delighted to welcome Samskip to the Port of Blyth and to support the launch of this new strategic service which will provide great links into The Netherlands and broader European markets.'*

'Together with our logistics arm, Transped, we are providing a full suite of value-added services including cross-docking, storage, and export packing, to ensure a seamless and efficient supply chain for our customers.'

Strengthening European supply chains

This new development reflects Samskip's broader commitment to strengthening European supply chains through smart, sustainable investments offering businesses of all sizes the benefits of flexibility, reliability, and a true partner in logistics.

Shore power

ABB and Port of Toulon

Commissioning of France's largest-ever shore power solution for ships at the Port of Toulon has been completed.

Operational since mid-February the installation is currently in its final acceptance period. The

consortium responsible for delivering the installation was led by ABB, comprising also construction company Eiffage Construction and electrical installation company, Fauché, responsible for building and civil engineering services.

It is understood that the facility now offers connections at 11kV and 6.6 KV voltage levels and frequencies of 50Hz or 60Hz, supporting both cruise and ferry formats. This is said to allow supporting port calls by three ferries simultaneously, or one cruise ship.

In addition, the port is equipped with the necessary technology to connect a 1MW hydrogen fuel cell system.

Digitalized smart grid network

This is the only power provision in France capable of simultaneously supplying multiple vessels – ferries and cruise ships alike – from a single conversion station, thanks to a digitalized smart grid network architecture.

Supporting IMO targets

The shore connection system, developed and led by the Métropole and implemented by ABB, allows ships to turn off their diesel generators in port, supporting the IMO targets for shipping to achieve net-zero emissions by or around 2050.

As of the beginning of May, the Mediterranean has become the fifth IMO Emission Control Area for sulphur oxides and particulate matter, which means that ships operating in the area will be required to use marine fuel with reduced sulphur content.

1500 vessel a year

The Port of Toulon handles around 1,500 calls from ferries, cruise vessels, and cargo vessels annually. With shore power available, the city will be able to significantly reduce carbon, SOx and NOx emissions and noise at berth. In addition, ship owners will save on fuel costs. The Toulon project is a key part of regional 'Zero-smoke stopovers' plans for Provence-Alpes-Côte d'Azur (Région Sud PACA) which also include shore power for Marseille and Nice.*

Comment

In the words of Jean-Pierre Giran, President of the Toulon Provence Méditerranée Metropolis: *'The delivery of this project is an important milestone for Toulon Provence Méditerranée Metropolis as a leading Mediterranean port to provide shore power across all of its docks.'*

'Located in the heart of the city, the port plays a central role in the business community and in the lives of our residents. With the support of our co-funders and partners – the European Union, the French State, the Sud PACA Region, the Departmental Council, and ADEME – we are eliminating over 80 percent of polluting emissions, saving 9,000 hours of diesel operation per year, and significantly reducing noise

and vibrations. The reduction in sulphur emissions alone will be equivalent to those produced by 50,000 cars annually.'

Frédéric Mestivier, designer and Technical Director of the electrification project for the Métropole Toulon Provence Méditerranée, added: *'Technically innovative, this project introduces a new smart grid network architecture using digital technology to manage energy flows from multiple interconnected sources. The infrastructure maximizes overall energy efficiency while minimizing the carbon footprint.'*



Port of Toulon celebrates milestone installation in France with ABB shore power technology.

Image credit Adobe Stock.

Marcus Martelin, Service Line Manager for Decarbonization Services, ABB Marine & Ports reflected: *'It has been an honour to contribute to Port of Toulon's success in leading this innovative installation. This can be regarded as a milestone and a model example for all ports in the Mediterranean and globally. ABB's shore power solution has established itself as one of the key technologies that continue to drive decarbonization in shipping.'*

The innovative system designed by Toulon Provence Méditerranée Metropolis integrates ABB equipment that can store energy ashore, helping to smooth out peak energy demand from vessels and balancing loads dynamically. This allows the system to work seamlessly with emerging renewable energy sources, with solar power and batteries already integrated, and helps to optimize the cost of energy delivered from the 20kV Enedis grid line.

ABB has delivered a comprehensive scope of equipment, including battery energy storage and solar panel integration, as well as full engineering project management. As a leader in electric shipping and smart port technology, ABB offers a wide range of shore power solutions, including infrastructure onshore and onboard vessels. ABB's shore connection technology has already been integrated by over fifty ports worldwide to drive maritime decarbonization.

* <https://tinyurl.com/2ccu6mmh>

(Editorial note: Translation can be arranged on line)

Car-carrier fire

Offshore Adak, Alaska

News was received from USCG 17th District Public Affairs in Kodiak, Alaska, on 4 June that staff were responding to a vessel fire approximately 300 miles south west of Adak, Alaska.

Watchstanders at the 17th District command centre received a distress alert the previous day at approximately 1515 local time reporting a fire aboard the cargo ship *Morning Midas*, a 600-foot Liberia-flagged, UK-managed cargo vessel with 22 crew members on board and reportedly carrying several thousand vehicles.

Coast Guard staff immediately issued an Urgent Marine Information Broadcast requesting assistance from vessels in the vicinity of *Morning Midas*. Three good Samaritan vessels responded to the incident.



Officers also diverted the crew of US Coast Guard Cutter *Munro* to the area, directed the launch of a C-130J Super Hercules aircrew from Coast Guard Air Station Kodiak, and positioned an MH-60T Jayhawk helicopter aircrew in Adak.

It was reported that all 22 crew members aboard *Morning Midas* evacuated the ship aboard a liferaft and were subsequently rescued by the crew of motor vessel *Cosco Hellas*, one of the good Samaritan vessels on scene, with no reported injuries.

Forty-eight hours later smoke continued to rise from the vessel although there were no visual indications that the ship was taking on water or listing, and the extent of the damage at that time was unknown. Zodiac Maritime, the *Morning Midas*'s manager, coordinated a team of salvage specialists to the vessel for further assessment.

On the day of the incident Rear Admiral Megan Dean, commander of the Coast Guard's Seventeenth District, commented: *'As the search and rescue portion of our response concludes, our crews are working closely with the vessel's parent company, Zodiac Maritime, to determine the disposition of the vessel.'*

'We are grateful for the selfless actions of the three nearby vessels who assisted in the response and the crew of motor vessel Cosco Hellas, who helped save 22 lives.'

At the time of the fire *Morning Midas*, on passage from Yantai, PRC, to Lázaro Cárdenas, Mexico, was estimated to have had approximately 350 metric tons of gas fuel and 1,530 metric tons of very low sulphur fuel oil (VLSFO) onboard.



The vessel was also reportedly carrying a total of 3,159 vehicles, with 65 being fully-electric vehicles and 681 being partial-hybrid electric vehicles.

This information was based on reports to the Coast Guard and was subject to change pending the development of any new information.

*Illustrations per USCG 17th District Public Affairs
USCG ©.*

NATO uncrewed vessels

Baltic demonstrations

According to NATO's Maritime Command, Public Affairs Office at MARCOM

in Northwood, NW London, NATO's standing naval forces were conducting a series of capability demonstrations of uncrewed vessels in the Baltic Sea throughout last month, June, to advance the integration of these vessels into Allied maritime operations.

Exercise Dynamic Messenger

These demonstrations are an operational lead-up activity to NATO's Dynamic Messenger innovation exercise scheduled this autumn in Portugal and are also part of NATO's Task Force X innovation initiative. The capability demonstrations are a partnered initiative between NATO's Allied Command Transformation (ACT), Allied Maritime Command (MARCOM), the Centre for Maritime Research and Experimentation (CMRE) and participating Allied nations.

Critical learning and insights

Experimentation activities will occur in various locations throughout the Baltic Sea and are designed to enable critical learning and insights about how these vessels are best employed in critical maritime environments.



In the words of the Royal Navy's Vice Admiral Mike Utley, Commander, Allied Maritime Command (MARCOM) *'We remain focused on testing the Alliance's ability to trial and integrate uncrewed systems into a networked operational environment.'*

'These trials are focused on operational output and enhancing the spiral development of both NATO's innovation teams and the national initiatives of Allies. Our objective is to deliver unmanned systems to NATO's Standing Naval Forces with speed and scale, in the most relevant operational environments, further building on the military advantage of the Alliance.'

Delivering capabilities to include autonomous systems and AI

NATO's experimentation and integration of uncrewed vessels are part of a broader partnership between ACT and MARCOM, aimed at delivering capabilities to include autonomous systems and artificial intelligence, to enhance the Alliance's situational awareness of sea lines of communication and the protection of critical undersea infrastructure.

Delivering innovative technology

Task Force X, with its focus on delivering innovative technology, continues to play an integral role in delivering viable uncrewed vessels for experimentation and integration into NATO's maritime forces.

French Navy Admiral Pierre Vandier, NATO Supreme Allied Commander Transformation, added: *'Task Force X demonstrates NATO's responsiveness and leverage of rapid innovation in support of the safeguarding of critical undersea infrastructure in the Baltic Sea.'*



'Operationalized at unprecedented speed following recent cable disruptions, this initiative directly supports Allied Command Operations by merging Enhanced Vigilance Activities with cutting-edge autonomous systems. By combining cost-effective mass solutions with exquisite capabilities, we not only detect unidentified vessels more effectively but also preserve high-value naval assets for priority missions.'

'It enables nations to immediately field commercially available dual-use technologies alongside advanced AI-driven platforms, creating layered persistent surveillance at a level of cost that will demonstrate resolve and operational edge through federated capabilities.'



'The model's success – already demonstrated in early Baltic operations – will offer nations in its next step to scale up the model to an even wider protective umbrella.'

Surveillance and detection

Task Force X leverages successful campaigns like the US Navy's Task Force 66, employing maritime uncrewed systems to provide persistent surveillance, detect and track potential threats, and enhance situational awareness. The initiative enables nations to contribute their own capabilities, while ensuring integration within the overall NATO framework.

NATO Research Vessel Alliance

The Centre for Maritime Research and Experimentation (CMRE) will also be participating in the demonstrations with the deployment of the NATO Research Vessel Alliance, NATO's only purpose-built scientific-research vessel – a uniquely equipped floating laboratory supporting the Alliance's operational priorities at sea.

NATO Allied Command Transformation leads the strategic warfare development of NATO's military structures, forces, capabilities and doctrines. It aims to innovate and maintain a warfighting edge to improve the military effectiveness of the Alliance.

MARCOM is the central command of all NATO maritime forces, and the MARCOM commander is the primary maritime advisor to the Alliance.

Picture caption

Some examples of USV's (Unmanned Surface Vehicle or Uncrewed Surface Vessel) being tested during NATO operational experimentation exercises.
Photo; NATO MARCOM ©.

Allianz Global Corporate & Specialty (AGCS) report

Risks for shipping

EV fires

A fast-changing geopolitical landscape is creating new risks and challenges for a shipping industry already juggling the energy transition and the legacy of the Covid-19 pandemic, according to Allianz Commercial's Safety and Shipping Review.

A complex operating environment

Industry faces an increasingly volatile and complex operating environment, marked by attacks against shipping, vessel detentions, sanctions, as well as the fall-out from incidents involving damage to critical sub-sea cables. Furthermore, the ripple effect of increasing protectionism and tariffs threatens to remake supply chains and shake up established trade relations.

Given that 90% of international trade is transported across oceans, those developments are concerning, especially as the industry continues to see the potential for large claims from traditional risks such as fires, collisions and groundings, which are still the main drivers for total losses of large vessels. However, there is also good news.

Reduced losses

The shipping industry has made significant improvements when it comes to maritime safety in recent years. During the 1990s the global fleet was losing 200+ vessels a year. This total had halved ten years ago and is now down to a record low of 27 as of the end of 2024 (from 35 in 2023).

Comment

In the words of Captain Rahul Khanna, Global Head of Marine Risk Consulting, Allianz Commercial: *'The relevance of political risk and conflict as a potential cause of maritime loss is increasing with heightened geopolitical tensions. Total losses from traditional causes may have reduced over time, but we could be in a position where this positive trend is potentially offset by war and other political-related exposures. As an industry, we are in a better position with regards to traditional risks, but there is a renewed focus on geopolitical risks.'*

US-China trade conflict

China has been the biggest target of the protectionist measures of the US administration with tariffs reaching 145%, before both countries agreed to reduce them for 90 days.



Developments have significantly impacted global maritime trade with approximately 18% of it subject to tariffs as of mid-April 2025, compared with 4% in early March, and dramatic declines in shipments reported in the immediate aftermath of the 'Liberation Day' announcements. While the future of US trade-focused policies remains uncertain, another phenomenon is posing an increasing challenge for the maritime and insurance industry: the shadow fleet.

The shadow fleet

Since the start of the war in Ukraine, the size of the shadow fleet has grown significantly. Today, around

17% of the world tanker fleet is thought to belong to the shadow fleet: estimates indicate there are close to 600 tankers trading Russian oil alone. Shadow fleet vessels have been involved in tens of incidents around the world including fires, collisions and oil spills.

Comment

Justus Heinrich, Global Product Leader, Marine Hull, Allianz Commercial added: *'Although recent sanctions are making it harder for these vessels to trade, the shadow fleet continues to pose a serious risk to maritime safety and the environment, as many are likely to be older vessels that are poorly maintained and inadequately insured. In case of an oil spill involving a shadow fleet tanker, cleanup costs could be as much as US\$1.6bn, most likely to be paid by taxpayers.'*

Fires and mis-declared cargo remain a concern

Large vessel fires are still a major concern for hull and cargo insurers. There were seven total losses reported across all vessel types during 2024, the same number as a year earlier.

The number of incidents overall was up year-on-year to a decade high of 250, again across all vessel types.

Around 30% of these fire incidents occurred on either container, cargo or roll-on roll-off vessels (ro-ros) (69). More than 100 total losses of vessels have been caused by fires in the past decade.

Mitigating risk

Efforts to mitigate these risks are underway, with regulatory changes and technological advancements aimed at addressing mis-declared cargo, a primary contributor to such fires. **This is critical as the electrification of the global economy poses further challenges given the growing number of lithium-ion batteries and battery energy storage systems being transported.**

Comment

Captain Rahul Khanna, Global Head of Marine Risk Consulting, Allianz Commercial, explained: *'There is little doubt the shipping industry is becoming more resilient against the risks associated with large vessels, although we can by no means say they are under control.'*

'However, only 27 total losses during 2024 underlines the positive trend. To put this into perspective: there are over 100,000 ships (100GT+) in the global fleet. However, uncertainty and multiple risks persist. Cyber-attacks and GPS interferences are increasing.'

'Ceasefires have raised hopes, but the Red Sea security threat and supply chain disruption will likely remain. Meanwhile, the green transition requires much work. The coming years will be decisive and will determine the path of the sector and global trade.'

The report

The Allianz annual report ALLIANZ COMMERCIAL Safety and Shipping Review 2025: An annual review of trends and developments in shipping losses and safety is available with the link here: <https://tinyurl.com/ys6n2d92>

Lithium ion battery risks

Lithium-ion battery risks continue to develop in the electrification age: Electrification of the global economy is spurring lithium-ion battery demand, with the market projected to hit \$322bn by 2030, more than double its value in 2024, driven by electric vehicles and renewable energy transitions. However, such growth poses risks for shipping and supply chains. Recent fires at battery facilities highlight potential industry dangers while maritime concerns are rising, with incidents on vessels at sea and at US and Canadian ports. The significant increase in demand of BESS (battery energy storage systems) and the transportation of such units over sea and land adds another dimension to battery risks. While inherently more stable they still pose a great risk in case of fire, and they are able to store huge amounts of energy.

Companies and their insurers are focused on the risks posed to shipping and related supply chains. There is considerable work in progress to understand them and how they can be mitigated, for example, around fire detection and prevention, and how fires are best tackled, as well as development of risk controls, ensuring corrective action can be taken before reaching a critical state.

Comment

According to Captain Randy Lund, Senior Marine Risk Consultant,

Allianz Commercial: *'The latest car carriers are able to transport as many as*

10,000 electric vehicles. Should something go wrong, that's a lot of value, and risk to the environment and to the safety of seafarers. Now we are also seeing the transportation of battery storage systems by sea.'

'Insurers are aware of the risks of lithium-ion batteries and do not underwrite

these risks lightly; we have developed risk controls and can work with clients to help them improve the risks.'

'As the lead of our lithium-ion battery emerging risks and trends ... work group for the past couple of years, we continue to see tremendous forward movement with the ongoing electrification around the globe and the associated economies.'

Allianz Global Corporate & Specialty's report emphasised that lithium-ion battery fires burn hotter, spread faster, and are more difficult to extinguish than fires involving traditional internal combustion vehicles.

In such incidents, the risk of thermal runaway — a self-propagating chemical reaction within the battery — can lead to prolonged, highly volatile fires requiring massive volumes of water to cool.

AMSA and the Maritime Labour Convention

Annual Report 2024

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) has issued its 2024 Australian Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC) annual report. This document provides a detailed analysis of reported MLC complaints and data in Australian waters.

This year's report highlights 173 complaints received in 2024—a 19.16% decrease compared to the previous year. Of these, 109 complaints were submitted directly by seafarers, reinforcing Australia's reputation on seafarer welfare and investigating each complaint seriously and confidentially.

Key findings from the 2024 report include:

- Bulk carriers provided 62.4% of complaints.
- Wages were prominent in 28.3% of complaints.
- MLC-related deficiencies totalling 934 were identified during Port State Control inspections.
- Nine vessels were detained because of these deficiencies.

AMSA remains committed to upholding the Maritime Labour Convention and ensuring high standards of welfare for seafarers in Australian waters.

This report aims to present findings on key MLC data in Australian waters. It presents an analysis of MLC complaints, compliance and follow-up actions undertaken by AMSA in Australia for 2024.

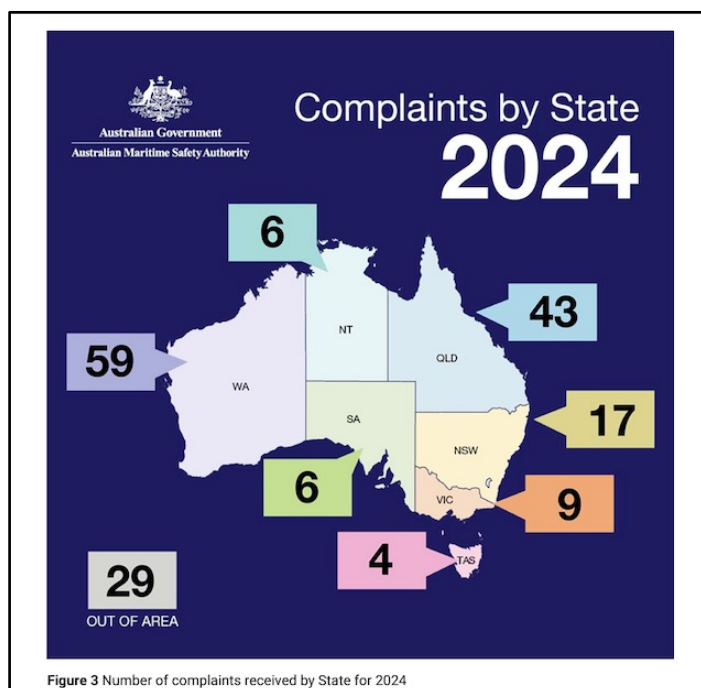


Illustration per AMSA ©.

Information in this report will be used to inform the 2025-2026 National

Compliance Plan. Every year AMSA undertakes a range of planned and responsive activities to keep people safe and to protect the marine environment which is outlined in the National Compliance Plan.

Application of the MLC

The MLC applies to all commercial vessels whether publicly or privately owned. It does not apply to fishing vessels, vessels of traditional build (such as dhows and junks), warships or naval auxiliaries or vessels not ordinarily engaged in commercial activities.

A list of the 108 member states that have ratified the convention after 20 August 2013 is available on the International Labour Organization (ILO) website.

Australia's obligation under the MLC

In Australia, the MLC is implemented primarily through the Navigation Act 2012/3 and delegated legislation such as Marine Order 11 (Living and working conditions on vessels) 2024.

AMSA verifies compliance with the MLC by:

- Responding to MLC complaints received from seafarers engaged on vessels in, or coming into, Australian ports.
- Conducting port State control inspections of vessels coming into Australian ports and flag State inspections of Australian vessels irrespective of their location.
- Requiring regulated Australian vessels to be certified in accordance with the MLC, as given effect by Marine Order 11 (Living and working conditions on vessels) 2024.
- Registering seafarer recruitment and placement services operating in Australia.
- Taking a leading role in supporting seafarer welfare through the Australian Seafarers' Welfare Council.

AMSA continues to do its part to ensure seafarers on vessels visiting Australian ports are being afforded the requirements under the MLC.

The full report

The full report is available with the link here: <https://tinyurl.com/mukkwmjb>

The Australian Seafarers' Welfare Council

The MLC requires signatory countries to establish welfare boards at the port, regional and national level to support seafarer welfare.

In Australia, the Australian Seafarers' Welfare Council (ASWC) was established to ensure there is a continuous national approach in the provision of welfare services for seafarers visiting Australian ports. ASWC consists of members from national

organisations that contribute to the welfare of seafarers.

ASWC works closely with the Port Welfare Committees (PWCs), which serve as the regional bodies dedicated to providing direct, on-the-ground support to seafarers.

PWCs are local state-based organizations that work within specific ports across Australia. They are made up of various stakeholders, including port authorities, shipping companies, unions, welfare organizations, and community groups. By collaborating with the Port Welfare Committees, ASWC helps coordinate efforts to create a network of support to ensure seafarer welfare and safety when visiting Australian ports.

ASWC meets three times a year and AMSA plays a leadership (chair and secretariat) role in the work that ASWC aims to achieve, namely to:

- Provide leadership in the implementation of Australia's obligations to seafarers under the MLC.
- Assist in the establishment of a national network of seafarer support arrangements.
- Promote, encourage, and support the delivery of seafarer welfare services at Australian ports.

Editorial note

Text here based on material kindly made available by AMSA.

The Paris MoU on PSC

The Paris Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control (Paris MoU)

successfully concluded its 58th Committee meeting in Malmö, Sweden, from 26 to 30 May 2025. This was reported in an edition of *Newsclips* from the Master Mariners of Canada in early June.

We learn that the meeting was formally opened by Ms Pernilla Wallin, Deputy Director, Department of Civil Aviation and Maritime Affairs, Swedish Transport Agency, and chaired by Mr Brian Hogan. This event marked significant progress in enhancing maritime safety, environmental protection, and seafarer welfare.

It is understood that a key outcome of the meeting was the review of the Concentrated Inspection Campaign (CIC) on Crew Wages and Seafarers' Employment Agreements under the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006 (MLC, 2006), which was held from 1 September to 30 November 2024.

Newsclips goes on to inform that while overall compliance was deemed good, the Committee emphasised the critical need for the industry to pay greater attention to strict adherence with MLC, 2006 requirements when drafting seafarers' employment agreements.

The Committee reconfirmed the upcoming joint CICs with the Tokyo MoU on Ballast Water Management in 2025 and on Cargo Securing in 2026.



Considerable progress was reported to have been made in enhancing inspection campaign methodologies; during the preceding year, several focused inspection campaigns (including fire doors and EPIRB) were conducted on a trial basis, with their outcomes presented to the Committee.

Based on these findings, the Committee decided to further continue such trials, including an inspection campaign addressing insurance certificates under the International Convention on Civil Liability for Oil Pollution Damage (CLC) for oil tankers, underscoring the Committee's commitment to preventing and mitigating environmental pollution.

Editorial note:

Above text based on Master Mariners of Canada *Newsclips* © of 10 June 2025 and reproduced with thanks.

The Paris MoU on Port State Control press release of 30 May is to be found here:
<https://tinyurl.com/ya9e75sv>

On Port State Control

Regional Port State Control was initiated in 1982 when the maritime Authorities of fourteen European countries agreed to co-ordinate their port State inspection effort under a voluntary agreement known as the Paris Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control (Paris MOU).

Currently 27 maritime Authorities are member of the Paris MOU. The European Commission, although not a signatory to the Paris MOU, is also a member of the Committee.

The Paris MoU is supported by a central database THETIS hosted and operated by the European Maritime Safety Agency in Lisbon. Inspection results are available for search and daily updating by MoU Members. Inspection results can be consulted on the Paris MoU public website and are published on the Equasis website.

The Secretariat of the MoU is provided by the Netherlands Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management and located in The Hague.

ICS New Chairman Designate named

New S G takes the helm

Following the conclusion of the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) Annual General Meeting and Board Meeting in Athens, which was opened by The Hon. Vassilis Kikilias, Minister of Maritime Affairs and Insular Policy, Hellenic Republic, the organisation announced several major developments, marking a pivotal moment for global maritime leadership. This was reported on 13 June.

Chairman designate

The Board of ICS unanimously recommended John Denholm as the successor to current Chairman, Emanuele Grimaldi.

Mr Denholm will take up the role following the conclusion of Mr Grimaldi's term at the ICS AGM in June 2026. Mr Denholm currently serves as Board Member for the UK and Vice Chair of ICS. He is also the Chairman of J & J Denholm Limited, a family-owned business with interests spanning shipping, logistics, seafoods, and industrial services.

ICS also confirmed the appointment of three new Vice Chairs, Dr Gaby Bornheim (Germany), Mr Carl-Johan Hagman (Japan) and Mr Claes Berglund (Sweden).

New Secretary General

In a further transition in ICS leadership, Thomas Kazakos has formally succeeded Guy Platten as Secretary General. Former Director General of the Cyprus Shipping Chamber, Mr Kazakos joined ICS in April for a preparatory handover period, ensuring a smooth transition for the Chamber. The President of the Republic of Cyprus, The Hon Mr Nikos Christodoulides joined the AGM for this significant moment, welcoming Mr Kazakos into the role and recognising Mr Platten's seven years of service.

Tribute

Of Guy Platten's service Emanuele Grimaldi, Chairman of the International Chamber of Shipping said: *'... I must thank Guy Platten for all he has done over the past seven years. Guy has led ICS and our industry during a period of significant challenge, whether through COVID, responding to the Ever Given incident or navigating the intricacies of the decarbonisation agenda. Guy has increased the impact of ICS and helped our industry to navigate the challenges that we have faced.'*

Malta

The Board also confirmed the full membership of the Malta International Shipowners' Association. Formerly an Associate Member, Malta now joins as a Full Member of ICS. This advancement reflects Malta's expanding influence in maritime affairs and comes at a time when global trade is undergoing substantial transformation.

Need for clear, unified leadership

Board discussions took place against a backdrop of mounting geopolitical uncertainty. There was a strong emphasis on the need for clear, unified leadership across the shipping industry as it navigates complex and evolving challenges.

Key topics of discussion included the new GHG reduction measures, which are due for formal adoption at the IMO's extraordinary session in October, and which are expected to reshape the structure of the global shipping industry for years to come. While the final agreement is more complex than anticipated, ICS played a central role throughout the IMO negotiations. Also on the agenda were the impact of protectionism, supply chain security and seafarer welfare.

The ICS Board remains committed to advocating for a resilient, inclusive and forward-looking maritime sector, underpinned by collaborative leadership and global representation.

Shipowners' and Managers' survey

The ICS Maritime Barometer Report 2024-2025

At the International Chamber of Shipping the *ICS Maritime Barometer Report 2024-2025* was issued in June prior to the AGM in Athens. This is the latest full-scale annual survey of risks and confidence among maritime leaders.



Now in its fourth year, the *ICS Maritime Barometer* draws on comprehensive survey data to identify the key risk areas shaping the strategic priorities of CEO

and equivalent level leaders, shipowners and operators worldwide.

This year's results highlight an increasingly volatile geopolitical environment, with political instability emerging as the most significant concern across the industry for the third consecutive year since the 2022-2023 report.

High level decision-makers from across the industry, nearly 43% of whom are shipowners and 30% ship managers, provided insight into the key factors influencing their decision-making and the confidence they have in mitigating the impact of challenges they see to their business operations.

The report is divided into four main sections:

Section 1: Risk factors for shipping from political instability to industry reputation, how the higher levels of management view the threats and their capabilities around key issues.

Section 2: Decarbonisation, fuels and emissions: an extensive survey into attitudes towards climate concerns that are dominating industry discussion, from fuel choice to funding.

Section 3: Fuels and technologies, including the perception of the viability of alternative fuels and how this has evolved over the last four years.

Section 4: National Focus on the UK, which showcased the highest number of respondents this year.

ICS Maritime Barometer Report 2024-2025 is available at the ICS website here:
<https://tinyurl.com/msrcwrry>

The *Barometer* survey provided the context for discussions at the ICS AGM.

Risks

Respondents to the survey also flagged the compounding effects of malicious cyber-attacks, physical security threats, and regulatory uncertainty, risks that are not only intensifying, but also further complicate strategic decision-making.

Regulation

Regulations were at the top of the list of the greatest impact factors relating to decarbonisation, fuels, and emissions. While the shipping industry is at the forefront of the green transition, the regulatory landscape continues to evolve at pace, with a crucial meeting of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) at the IMO in October this year.

Trends

The report points to a broader trend: over four years of data, there has been a consistent decline in shipping leaders' confidence to manage geopolitical and

regulatory challenges. This unease is compounded by uncertainty around future fuels and infrastructure, with many respondents expressing a desire for clearer pathways to support decarbonisation goals.

Concern

Cybersecurity has also grown in prominence, now firmly established as a major risk. Industry leaders report increasing concern over vulnerabilities posed by digital integration and emerging technologies, especially in the context of heightened geopolitical tension.

Insight

As the shipping sector navigates this complexity, the *ICS Maritime Barometer Report 2024-2025* offers valuable insight into how maritime leaders are perceiving and preparing for risk. It serves not only as a diagnostic tool but as a call to action for more coordinated responses across the global maritime value chain.

Resilience required

By Michael Grey, IFSMA Honorary Member

"You should," advised my financial adviser the other day, "be sure that you keep plenty of cash available." Not, he explained, in accessible accounts in the bank, where one may not be able to get hold of it should their systems "go down" because of various forms of electronic attack, but in legal currency, despite how unfashionable cash has become. It might offer, he suggests "short-term resilience." And it seems good advice, as hackers range freely around the world, whether state sponsored or merely criminally inspired, with the forces of law and order apparently unable to intervene to protect everything from supermarkets to ships at sea. And on the rare occasions they do manage to catch one of these blighters, they will turn out to have some rare neurological condition that will protect them from the significant sentences they deserve.

"Resilience" is a word which is being employed increasingly in these troubled times, when we are enjoined to equip ourselves with wind-up radios, torches and several days supply of bottled water and tinned goods, just in case. And it is not just malevolent hackers and solar storms we have to be concerned about. In an era where we have become accustomed to smoothly operating logistic chains, with minimum amounts of what the Americans call "inventories" our vulnerability has become multifarious. A notably spectacular illustration of this was the effect upon trans-Pacific trade of the outbreak of the tariff war between the US and China, with one of the world's great flows of goods coming to a screeching halt within days.

Quite what this was going to mean to the average US consumer was graphically spelt out by the CEO of the port of Los Angeles, who looking out at his almost

empty berths, itemised the imminent shortages that people would be soon suffering because of this curious form of diplomacy, the length and breadth of the country. He urged people to get their vehicles in good condition, because in a few days there would be no spares or tyres available, while those contemplating purchases of almost anything from furniture to white goods, mobiles to every other form of device, were advised to hurry to the stores while inventories last, because there would be nothing with which the shelves, once empty, could be re-stocked.

A positive consequence of such a pandemonium as President Trump has unleashed on the world might be that businesses live rather less hand to mouth, although, even if the transPacific dust-up concludes, or as seems more likely, simmers down a bit, there will surely be more chaos to come. It might also be that people realise their present complete dependence on the smooth transit of merchant shipping, although that argument could be rather lost in the nonsensical debate about how maritime America can be made great again by somehow building enormous numbers of US-flag commercial ships to replace those constructed efficiently and economically in Chinese yards, subjected to huge taxes if they stray into US waters.

But the demand for greater resilience in a dangerous world comes in so many different forms, from the fragility of our communications, electronic networks and vulnerable energy supply to the need to build everything to anticipate and mitigate natural disasters. It will take more than a torch and a supply of tinned goods, to properly harden our defences against what realistically might confront us in the short or medium term. It might be suggested, from the briefest of glimpses of the geo-political situation worldwide, that we have been given plenty of plain warnings. Just consider how the abilities of a gang of Yemeni pirates to dislocate trade have demonstrated our vulnerability. Look at the potential damage from a few dragged anchors. And many more historical analogies are readily available, should anyone care to dig a little deeper.

Resilience, if we thought about it rather more, would mean the availability of alternatives, for the possible interruption of services that the public depend upon. It is about being prepared for the worst, forgetting about the weasel words of the number crunchers who point out the cost of mitigation, and who tell us that carrying spares and inventories are an unnecessary luxury. It is more than the availability of cash and having tins on the shelf. Access to a locally stationed small nuclear reactor, adequate defences and proper plans by realistic governments surely makes more sense.

This article was first published in The Maritime Advocate Online No 882 of 16 May 2025 and appears here by kind permission of the author and of the editor.

Michael Grey is former editor of Lloyd's List.

World Marine Aids to Navigation Day 2025

UK report

On 1 July World Marine Aids to Navigation Day (WAtON Day) 2025 was celebrated around the globe.

WAtON Day is led by the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation (IALA) to promote awareness of the importance of marine aids to navigation and the work undertaken by its global membership to improve and harmonise standards worldwide for the efficiency of navigation and protection of the environment.

The Northern Lighthouse Board (NLB) and Trinity House indicated on this day that they were proud to support the principal international event for WAtON Day 2025, on behalf of the UK Government's Department for Transport (DfT), at a three-day commemoration taking place in London and Harwich between 30 June and 2 July.

This year, 2025, is a particularly important one for IALA as it has just become an Inter-Governmental Organization.

The focus of the event—which took place in Trinity House in London—was two panel discussions where invited participants from maritime organizations around the world were able to put questions to a panel of leading technology and maritime experts. The theme for the day's discussions was *The role of physical aids to navigation in a digital future*.

Special guests include HRH The Princess Royal and Mike Kane MP, Minister for Aviation, Maritime and Security. HRH The Princess Royal is the Patron of the Northern Lighthouse Board, and the Master of Trinity House.

As co-hosts, Commodore Mike Bullock, Chief Executive of NLB, and Rear Admiral Iain Lower, Chief Executive of Trinity House, commented on the importance of the day:

'As an island nation, the United Kingdom has depended for centuries upon seagoing trade—import and export—for the prosperity of its people; as such, the Northern Lighthouse Board and Trinity House—along with Irish Lights in Ireland—have long been entrusted with the mission to meet the Government's need for the safe transit of ships and seafarers.'

'The origins of WAtON Day are rooted in a collective desire by IALA's members to champion greater awareness of the need for marine aids to navigation—such as lighthouses and buoys—as a vital means of keeping lives safe at sea and assuring the swift circulation of global shipping.'

On 2 July participants went to visit the east coast operational base of Trinity House in the port town of Harwich for a technical and operational tour. Here it

was possible to showcase the importance of marine aids to navigation and the work involved to support the General Lighthouse Authorities' joint mission to provide reliable, efficient and cost-effective aids to navigation for the benefit and safety of all mariners and protection of the environment.

About IALA

The International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation's (IALA) mission is to harmonise marine aids to navigation worldwide and ensure that the movement of vessels is safe expeditious and cost-effective while protecting the marine environment. In August 2024 IALA changed its status from a non-governmental to an inter-governmental organisation. IALA has its HQ in St Germain-en-Laye, 78100, France.

For more see: www.iala.int

About the UK Department for Transport

The Department creates the strategic framework for transport services in the UK which are delivered through a wide range of public and private sector bodies including its own executive agencies, such as the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, and arms-length bodies which include Trinity House and the Northern Lighthouse Board. It supports the transport network that helps the UK's businesses and enables people and goods travelling around the country efficiently and safely by planning and investing in transport infrastructure to keep the UK on the move. The Department represents the UK at IALA.

See also: <https://tinyurl.com/2mabb5w3>

About the Northern Lighthouse Board

The Northern Lighthouse Board has provided a vital safety service to mariners since 1786 and is the General Lighthouse Authority responsible for the superintendence and management of all lights, buoys and beacons within Scottish and Isle of Man waters. Its service makes a significant contribution to the prevention of accidents and incidents around the coastline, safeguarding not only lives and property, but also protecting the precious marine environment.

See also: www.nlb.org.uk

About Trinity House

Trinity House is a charity dedicated to safeguarding shipping and seafarers, providing education, support and welfare to the seafaring community with a statutory duty as a General Lighthouse Authority for England, Wales the Channel Islands and Gibraltar to deliver a reliable, efficient and cost-effective aids to navigation service for the benefit and safety of all mariners.

See also: www.trinityhouse.co.uk

Damen launches electric-ready ferry

BC Ferries

At the end of May Damen's Galati yard in Romania launched the latest Island Class ferry – a Damen Road Ferry 8117 E3 – for BC Ferries of Canada.

Part of an order of four

It is understood that the ferry is the first of an order of four battery-equipped diesel-hybrid vessels. The ferries are prepared to sail fully-electrically once charging infrastructure is installed.



This vessel, a Damen RoRo 8117 E3, will become the seventh Damen vessel to sail in the Canadian organisation's fleet.

Such ferries will connect four coastal communities in British Columbia, operating between Nanaimo and Gabriola Island and Campbell River and Quadra Island, respectively.

Recharging during port calls

The vessels will each transport up to 47 vehicles and 390 passengers, recharging during passenger (dis)embarkation using renewable energy.

Late May saw other activity at the yard. Executive Director Global Sales Leo Postma commented: 'As well as the launch of the seventh vessel the yard also carried out the keel laying for the ninth Island Class vessel, and cut steel for the tenth.'

BC Ferries' Executive Director of Shipbuilding Ed Hooper, joined the on-site team to weld a coin during the keel-laying and take part in celebrations for the steel cutting and launch milestones.

Critical renewal and modernisation

He reflected: 'I am thrilled to celebrate these milestones with the team at Damen Shipyards Galati. The Island Class is now our largest single class of vessels, and they are a critical part of our larger effort to renew and modernise our entire fleet to meet the needs of the people in British Columbia who rely on BC Ferries every single day.'

As well as these vessels Damen is also supplying onshore charging equipment to BC Ferries. Following the vessels' delivery in 2027, Damen will continue to provide support for the ferries from its Canadian Service Hub in Victoria, British Columbia (BC).

Early in June Prysmian and VARD, a subsidiary in the Fincantieri Group, announced that the cable laying vessel *Prysmian Monna Lisa* had been awarded the prestigious Ship of the year 2025 by the Norwegian trade magazine *Skipsrevyen*.

Since 1997, *Skipsrevyen* has annually honoured world-class Norwegian shipbuilding and design and has given this prestigious recognition to *Prysmian Monna Lisa* on the grounds that she is the most advanced vessel in her class.

Highest cable loading capacity

Prysmian Monna Lisa can perform deep water installation with the capacity to install cables at depths of more than 3,000 metres and has the highest cable loading capacity on the market (two carousels of 7,000 tons and 10,000 tons) it is reported.

In addition, the Prysmian vessel has an enhanced energy storage system, doubling the capacity of its predecessor *Prysmian Leonardo da Vinci*, which was also designed and built by VARD for Prysmian. In addition, the vessel is equipped with a High Voltage Shore Connection, that connects the vessel to a land-based electrical infrastructure allowing shut down of the diesel generators and for the vessel to run solely on shore power at port/loading facility, leading to no CO₂ emissions.

Enhanced environmental performance

These innovations, together with the possibility of operating using biodiesel, contributes directly to operational efficiency and enhanced environmental performance – two of the core goals of this newly-built vessel – and one of the reasons for the Ship of the year 2025 award.

Prysmian Monna Lisa stands as a symbol of advanced offshore cable-laying capabilities, tailored design, and exceptional execution, delivered as planned from the Fincantieri owned Vard Group.

Raul Gil, EVP Transmission BU of Prysmian, said: *'Prysmian Monna Lisa is part of our unrivalled fleet of eight proprietary cable-laying vessels and has been purpose-built for submarine cable installation. This vessel reflects our ongoing commitment to innovation and sustainability. Prysmian plays a key and undisputed role in the submarine cable industry, with proven capabilities that make us a reliable and dedicated leader in executing complex, turn-key projects. As a global leader, we are fully committed to technological innovation, and we are proud to partner with world-class shipbuilders such as Fincantieri and Vard to further enhance our installation capabilities.'*

Collaborative effort

The collaborative effort between Prysmian and VARD has ensured a fully integrated vessel, where design, outfitting, and systems work seamlessly together.

From initial concept to final delivery, the VARD team and Prysmian team have operated as one – ensuring effective problem-solving and streamlined decision-making where insight, innovation, and integration has come together to meet highly specific operational goals.

Alberto Maestrini, Chairman of VARD, added: *'Prysmian Monna Lisa highlights what can be achieved through true partnership. This vessel is a testament to our team's expertise, agility, and ability to align with Prysmian's ambitions. Together, our collaborative approach is setting new standards for offshore cable installation.'*

The success of *Prysmian Monna Lisa* builds on the foundation laid with *Prysmian Leonardo da Vinci* – and continues with a third vessel now under construction.

Features

- High-voltage shore connection to reduce emissions during port operations.
- An enhanced energy storage system, doubling the capacity of its predecessor.
- An upgraded A-frame and towing system, tailored for demanding simultaneous lay & burial and deep-water operations.

Prysmian Monna Lisa is based on the VARD 9 04 design, developed by Vard Design in Ålesund, Norway. The design focuses is well-suited to pride for complex cable-laying projects worldwide.

High bollard pull capacity

With a length overall of approximately 171 metres and a beam of 34 metres, the vessel is equipped with advanced cable installation equipment, including large-capacity carousels designed for high-volume cable transport and deployment. It features DP3 positioning and seakeeping systems, ensuring superior stability and accuracy during operations. The vessel also boasts a high bollard pull capacity, enabling demanding offshore tasks, and is equipped with battery hybrid solutions, enhancing energy efficiency and sustainability.

Hull Romania-built

The hull was built at Vard Shipyards Romania – Tulcea, while outfitting, topside installation, and finalization took place at Vard Søviknes in Norway with contributions from VARD subsidiaries Vard Interiors and Vard Electro.

Prysmian Monna Lisa is part of Prysmian's growing fleet of next-generation cable-laying vessels, designed to meet the increasing global demand for reliable and efficient subsea power connections. This is the second cable-laying vessel VARD has built for Prysmian, with the third vessel already under construction.

News CSOVs *Grampian Kestrel* and *Purus Chinook*

Two of the world's first on performance and comfort

Purus Chinook for Purus is the world's first Commissioning Service Operation Vessel (CSOV) to receive a COMF C2 V1 class notation for climate, noise and vibration.

Grampian Kestrel for North Star has received Lloyd's Register highest notation for noise and vibration, CAC1. This sets a new global benchmark for offshore working conditions.

The strictest comfort class notations reflect VARD's, North Star's and Purus' dedication to health, safety, and well-being at sea. It ensures optimal onboard temperature regulation, reduced noise and vibration throughout the vessels, directly supporting crew welfare and long-term performance.

On 2 June VARD reported the delivery of two of the world's first vessels with cyber notation according to the new mandatory regulations applicable from 1 July 2024.

Both the CSOV *Grampian Kestrel* to North Star and the CSOV *Purus Chinook* for Purus were delivered in accordance with the new mandatory cybersecurity requirements and class notation.

Cybersecurity readiness

Cybersecurity notations provide demonstrated cybersecurity readiness where cyber resilience is integrated into every stage of VARD's shipbuilding process, from concept to delivery. Enhancing the vessels' capability to withstand cyberattacks, to operate while under attack and the ability to recover from an attack.

According to James Bradford, Chief Technology Officer, North Star: *'At North Star, digital resilience is as critical as operational reliability. The Grampian Kestrel reflects our commitment to pioneering secure, future-ready vessels that protect both our people and our operations. Working closely with VARD and Lloyd's Register, we've ensured that cyber security is not an afterthought but a core element of the ship's DNA; designed, integrated, and tested from the outset. This milestone underscores our dedication to safety, innovation, and setting new standards for the offshore industry.'*

Dedication and strength

Both cybersecurity notations are aligned with the unified requirements UR E26 and E27 issued by the International Association of Class Societies (IACS), which became mandatory for newbuilds contracted after 1. July 2024.

These two vessels were contracted in 2023, before the cybersecurity notations became mandatory. This

shows the dedication and strength in the work done by Fincantieri subsidiary VARD, Purus and North Star.

Comment: VARD

CEO in VARD, Cathrine Kristiseter Marti, added: *The delivery of the two vessels represents an historical milestone for the maritime industry and for VARD and our owner Fincantieri, enhancing the group's leading position for the technological transition in maritime operations.*

'The maritime industry is undergoing a significant transformation based on the increased use of digitally connected systems. These notations are essential for establishing baseline requirements and best practices to protect maritime operations from evolving and dynamic cyber threats. The delivery of these vessels shows VARD's and Fincantieri's commitment and willingness to set new standards and explore new ways of building cyber resilient platforms which allow our customers to manage cyber threats to the vessels.'



SVP Business Development & Group Innovation in VARD, Amrit Bhullar, concluded by saying: *'Cyber resilience underpins much of our vessel focus today. We took a position early to discuss this topic with customers, ahead of the regulations coming into effect. During these two deliveries, we have developed a competency across the VARD value chain and worked together with the supply chain to create a ship-wide mindset on cyber resilience. Collectively, this gives North Star and Purus a platform that can improve their ability to manage cyber risk.'*

Comment LR

Duncan Duffy, Global Head of Digitalisation, Technical Directorate, Lloyd's Register added: *'Cyber security maturity will become essential to shipping as the maritime value chain continues its digitalisation journey. VARD and North Star recognised the need for cyber resilience long before IACS UR E26 and UR E27 were formalised and had already set clear ambitions to protect ships from evolving threats.'*

'The successful implementation of LR's Cyber Resilience Rules for the first time reflects the high-level collaboration between North Star, Vard and Lloyd's Register.'