

IIMS News Bulletin



APRIL 2026

Welcome

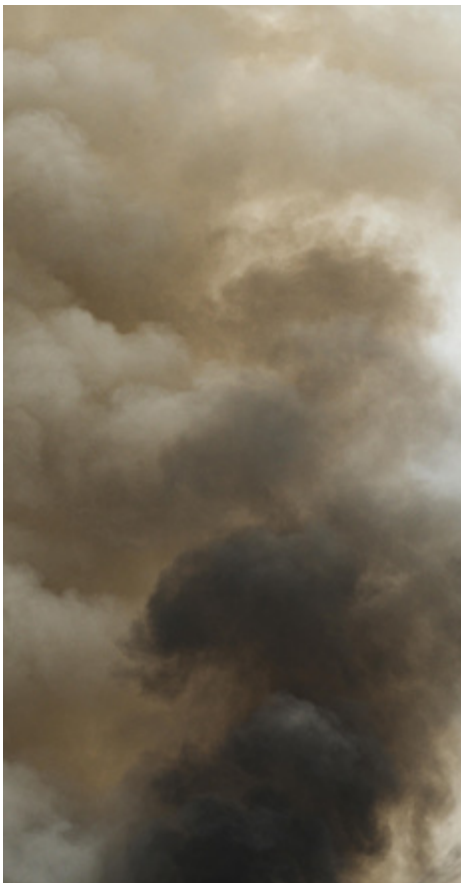
to this month's news bulletin compiled by IIMS, the leading worldwide professional body for professional marine surveyors. Back editions of the news bulletins are available in PDF and eReader format at <https://bit.ly/3LQdDOW>.

This monthly publication aims to keep members, non-members, and those who touch the surveying profession up to date with relevant industry news, the latest marine innovations and essential information for surveyors. For more information about the Institute, visit: www.iims.org.uk to discover a mine of valuable information - it is the most comprehensive online resource of its kind.

BROADCAST FROM THE BOW

- celebrating 35 years of excellence in marine surveying -

Dear Member and Fellow Marine Professionals



It troubles me once again that I feel the need to start this month's column by raising the topic of lithium-ion battery fires, especially as the story I want to share with you is a land-based one that happened recently, and not a maritime disaster. You may know of my keen interest in this technology and the challenges surrounding it. The incident I want to speak about, and share with you, is a massive fire in the Scottish city of Glasgow. A major fire broke out in a vape shop adjacent to the city's main railway station. Over the coming hours, the fire devastated an iconic 130 year old Victorian building, leading to its eventual collapse, so intense was the conflagration. The images are truly shocking and resemble something one might expect to see in a war zone.

As the fire started, a passer-by good Samaritan, used his own initiative and tried to tackle the flames. He said to the press, "I ran into the shop, and I saw a small fire under the counter. There was an adapter charging system - full of chargers - and that's where the fire was."

The man rushed next door to the neighbouring shop to get help. He came back with a fire extinguisher, entered the burning store and tried to fight the fire. But two explosions inside the vape shop meant he had to turn around, exit and shout at passers-by to "get back". Whilst the man's intentions were remarkable and heroic, it should have been an immediate red flag. My advice to anyone faced with a similar situation would be never try and tackle a lithium-ion battery fire with a portable fire extinguisher; just move away to safety and call the emergency services.

And here's my real issue. Many people remain unaware of the potential dangers that lithium-ion powered devices present. Yes, we all have them, lots of them, and the majority are safe, but when one blows, it causes mayhem. Therefore, being aware of the risks is vitally important. The maritime sector has seen its fair share of significant fires in recent months, with yachts being destroyed, more likely than not caused by lithium-ion powered devices - (not yet substantiated or proven in some cases). That's the suspicion at least and in some cases, we just simply will never know because the destruction is total. Following the start of a thermal runaway event, if it results in an ensuing fire, it is the speed with which the flames spread, the intensity and the heat that are the concerns. And it is now well documented that the toxic gases released once thermal runaway activity starts, if inhaled, could be fatal.

Fortunately, there were no casualties in the Glasgow accident. Compare that to the situation if a lithium-ion battery fire took hold on board a vessel at sea. The chances of survival could be minimal, depending on how fast a liferaft or lifesaving device could be deployed.

I don't choose to write about this topic to deliberately shock anyone, but the reality is we must all obtain a better understanding of this technology, understand the basics of what can happen and ensure we have mitigation strategies in place should the worst happen. So, I will do all I can within my power to help people gain knowledge. It almost feels like my colleagues and I are engaging in a public service duty to the maritime industry, which, I might add, we are happy to do!

Recently I was contacted by the media group that publishes Maritime Journal and organises the Seawork show with an invitation to write an article. The result was '***Toys and lithium-ion powered devices can cause devastating marine fires***', which co-incidentally was published on the very same day as the Glasgow catastrophe. If you would like to read it, just follow this link <https://bit.ly/4s5jeVV>.

In other news, IIMS is delighted to announce three essential training events taking place in the coming months. You can find more detailed information about all of them in this news bulletin, but in brief they are:

- Western Mediterranean Yacht & Small Craft Working Group Palma, Mallorca on 30 April and 1 May being held around the Palma International Boat Show.
- Practical tonnage measurement training on 19 May being held at Itchenor Sailing Club on the UK south coast. For many years, IIMS has run an MCA approved remote tonnage training initiative, but this event gives delegates the chance under the tutelage of experienced surveyors to measure and record data from a series of boats.
- '*Rigs, Mast and Sails: What surveyors need to know*' is scheduled for 23 June. The morning session will give in-person attendees a rare opportunity to see inside the Seldén Mast production facility at Gosport. This will be followed in the afternoon by a masterclass on this subject delivered by Kim Skov-Nielsen, which will also be open for online attendees to join.

And finally, this is a reminder to anyone involved in the UK based workboat sector who needs to become compliant with the Workboat Edition 3 Code by early December 2026. So concerned it seems is the MCA about the number of vessel owners and operators who have yet to bring their vessel(s) into compliance that they have issued a warning to the sector. You can read this press release in the bulletin, but certifying authorities are concerned about their capacity to process a flood of surveys/examinations in time to ensure vessels are not laid up, given there is no grace period beyond 13 December 2026. So act now is the advice.

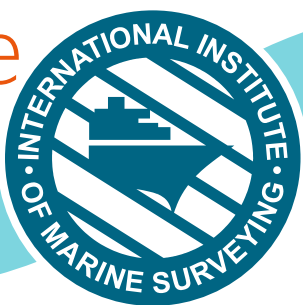
Survey well,



Mike Schwarz
Chief Executive Officer



Thirty-five 1991 2026 years!



IIMS celebrates 35 years since its foundation

Happy birthday IIMS. Yes, this month the Institute celebrates thirty-five years since its foundation in 1991. As part of our celebrations, and as a bit of fun, we have mined our extensive photograph collection and have posted upwards of 400 images taken at various IIMS events and training sessions to showcase our work over the past years. Many of these images have never seen the light of day before! Perhaps you will see photos of people you know, or you might even find yourself featuring in one of the galleries! To view the photograph galleries on the IIMS website go to <https://bit.ly/4cKMSec>.

Also read the article 'IIMS turns 35 years old' from The Report, Issue 15, pages 19 to 23: <https://bit.ly/4rzwEsX>

IIMS turns 35 years old

Introduction

by Mike Schwarz, IIMS Chief Executive Officer

In April 2026, the International Institute of Marine Surveying (IIMS) will celebrate its 35th birthday. Consequently, I decided to invite surviving Presidents of the Institute, past and present, to write a few words to recognise and acknowledge this achievement.

I must say how humbled I am to read some of the kind comments that have been made about me personally. It is gratifying. Leading and developing the IIMS team has given me huge pleasure. I am backed by an exceptional team of talented individuals and between us we have made IIMS what it has become today. I could not have been successful without their dedication and commitment.

I have now been in post for 12 years and my passion for the surveying profession and wanting to do what we can to raise the standards of surveying around the world burns ever brighter. I continue to look for new opportunities, incorporating innovation and believe the next period is very positive indeed as IIMS continues to strive to make a difference in the surveying sector.

As I look back over my time with the business, I am proud of what we have achieved.

Happy 35th birthday IIMS and a big thank you to all our members, supporters, suppliers and others who have helped make this possible.

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Reflections by Capt William MacDonald HonFIMS, the first President of IIMS from 1991-1993

As I reflect on the 35 year journey of the International Institute of Marine Surveying (IIMS), I am filled with pride and optimism. Our challenges have been many, but our commitment to growth and success, serving a global community, has been unwavering.

IIMS has been at the forefront of progressing excellence in marine surveying, and its members in 2026 will be confident. The Institute has a strong track record, with technological advancements and operational excellence supporting the industry. IIMS has adapted, embracing change and ensuring its members are at the forefront of the surveying world.

I had the pleasure of contributing to the IIMS vision, and in the hands of the future, I am confident and in the hands of the future, I am confident and in the hands of the future, I am confident.

The Institute's commitment to training and developing the next generation of marine surveyors is commendable. Through its education programme, IIMS is nurturing a new generation of professionals who will shape the future of the industry.

Over the past 35 years, IIMS has made significant strides in promoting excellence and ensuring the highest standards in marine surveying. The Institute's growth and recognition are a testament to the industry's success. As the industry evolves, IIMS remains committed to providing the highest quality services, ensuring the future of the industry is bright.

I am proud to be part of the IIMS community and look forward to seeing the Institute continue to thrive and grow. I am proud to be part of the IIMS community and look forward to seeing the Institute continue to thrive and grow.

Capt Bill MacDonald HonFIMS

Reflections on 35 Years of IIMS from our current President, Capt Ruchin Dayal, FIMS

When I look back at my journey with the International Institute of Marine Surveying (IIMS), I realize that it began with a vision and a mission. IIMS was founded in 1991, and since then, it has grown into a global organization that is recognized as a leading authority in the marine surveying industry.

In 2014, I was appointed as the President of IIMS. It was a great honor and a great responsibility. I have been privileged to work with some of the most talented and dedicated professionals in the industry, and I have been able to lead the Institute through a period of significant growth and success.

Over the years, IIMS has achieved many milestones, and I am proud to be part of this journey. IIMS has been able to establish a strong presence in the industry, and I am confident that it will continue to grow and thrive in the future.

IIMS has been able to establish a strong presence in the industry, and I am confident that it will continue to grow and thrive in the future.

Capt Ruchin Dayal, FIMS

IIMS through the ages: 1990 - 2026

- 1990 The first International Marine Surveying Conference organized by IIMS and The Institute of Marine Surveyors (IMS) was held.
- 1991 IIMS was founded.
- 1992 Capt Bill MacDonald elected as first President.
- 1997 The first issue of The Report magazine published.
- 1998 IIMS was named as a certifying authority by the MCA.
- 2000 Professional qualification examination for marine surveyors.
- 2003 April - Change of name from 'Surveyors' to 'IIMS'.
- 2004 January - John Lawrence appointed CEO.
- 2007 March - New Zealand branch established.
- 2008 February - First IIMS Australian conference held.
- 2010 March - Registered office address changed from Glasgow to Northampton.
- 2011 December - John Lawrence stepped down as CEO.
- 2014 January - Mike Schwarz appointed as CEO.
- 2015 Registered Marine Coasting Inspector and ACMO.
- 2016 September - First IIMS branch guide published.
- 2016 IIMS presents Jeffery 'Cairn' Wood with a Lifetime Achievement Award.
- 2016 IIMS celebrates 25 years of IIMS and holds a Gala Dinner in London and presents Ruchin Dayal with a Lifetime Achievement Award.
- 2017 February - IIMS celebrates 30 years of IIMS.
- 2017 September - IIMS Golden Jubilee Conference awarded 100th Anniversary Award to IIMS.
- 2018 IIMS celebrates 30 years of IIMS.
- 2019 February - IIMS celebrates 30 years of IIMS.
- 2020 IIMS celebrates 30 years of IIMS.
- 2021 January - IIMS celebrates 30 years of IIMS.
- 2021 September - IIMS celebrates 30 years of IIMS.
- 2023 IIMS presents Paul Farmer with a Lifetime Achievement Award.
- 2024 IIMS is 35 years old, we're looking forward to where we go next.

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Upcoming IIMS events

We have a number of training events coming up in the next few months, including:

Western Mediterranean Large Yacht & Small Craft Working Group Palma 2026 30 April–01 May | Escuela de Mar, Palma, Mallorca

Your delegate fee includes a free VIP pass to the Palma International Boat Show. This year's presentations cover several topics from 'Machinery Inspections' or 'Things you see on survey that you can't make up' to 'Lithium-ion battery fires. What we know so far. A non-technical presentation.'

You can attend this two-day event either in person or online for £195 (approximately €225). Book a ticket: <https://bit.ly/4lpmrNw>

IIMS Tonnage Measurement Training 19 May | Itchenor Sailing Club, Chichester, UK

IIMS has been authorised and approved for many years by the UK Maritime & Coastguard Agency (MCA) to conduct the training and subsequent approval of tonnage measurers.

Part I – online theory

This course, available through the IIMS On-Demand Training Portal, provides a thorough explanation of UK tonnage measurement theory, including the background to tonnage and detailing the specific requirements and measurements, plus associated documentation necessary to successfully complete a tonnage measurement.

Cost: £150 | Buy now: <https://bit.ly/47pD2uG>

Part II – remote practical assessment

If you want to become an IIMS approved tonnage surveyor and that can formally process tonnages through the Institute, you will need to also complete Part II, the practical evidence-based assessment leading to formal authorisation. You will measure and calculate tonnage on several vessels under the guidance of experienced surveyors. Your paperwork will be scrutinised, and approval granted on successful completion.

Cost: £185 | Find out more and book now: <https://bit.ly/3NkBrPX>

Rigs, Masts and Sails: What surveyors need to know 23 June | Seldén Mast, Gosport, UK

You are invited to join IIMS for a day of knowledge sharing on the subject of rigs, masts and sails. Seldén Mast is the UK subsidiary of the world's largest manufacturer of mast and rigging systems, specializing in aluminium and carbon fibre spars for dinghies, keelboats, and yachts up to 82ft. As a major facility, it produces, designs, and distributes, holding a strong reputation for high-performance, custom rigs used by Olympic sailors and leading boat brands. You will be given a rare tour of the production facility and a presentation from technical members of the Seldén Mast team.

Space is limited as we only have space for a maximum of 20 in person delegates for the morning session. Cost: £210 (in person)/£125 (afternoon online session)

Book today: <https://bit.ly/4rsezw3>

Why not check out our other upcoming events and courses: www.iims.org.uk/events



Workboat Code Edition 3 deadline - check the code, prepare the vessel, book the survey

Workboat owners and operators with vessels requiring a survey by December 2026 are being urged to act now to avoid missing the deadline for transition to the updated code of safety standards.



*Kerrie Forster,
CEO Workboat
Association*



*Ben Wheatley,
Marine Superintendent at
Marine Plant Hire (UK)*

The message is being issued jointly by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) and the Workboat Association to those affected by transitional arrangements to the Workboat Code Edition 3 ending on 13 December 2026.

The aim is to avoid demand for surveys at the end of the year causing a shortage of slots, and the potential for vessels having to be tied up while they wait to be seen by certifying authorities.

Affected vessels will be among those currently holding five-year certification under previous codes, including the Brown Code, its equivalent standard published in MGN 280(M), or Workboat Code Edition 2, Amendment 1.

Transition to Workboat Code Edition 3 permitted vessels to meet requirements by the vessel's next renewal examination or three years after the date of entry into force of the Code, on 13 December 2023, whichever is later.

It means that 13 December 2026 is when the first cohort of vessels not to have transitioned to the new code must have secured the correct certification to remain active.

The advice from the MCA and Workboat Association is: check the code, prepare the vessel, book the survey.

Rob Taylor, MCA Code Vessel Lead, said: "The UK's fleet of workboats delivers a vital service for a wide range of maritime industries. To ensure business keeps flowing, we want to help make sure everyone is ready.

"The Workboat Code Edition 3 was created to help the industry stay safe and support developing technology. It's a clearer code but there are changes, so we want everyone to be prepared without a last-minute rush.

"The MCA and the Workboat Association are speaking with one voice to encourage owners and operators to do three things: check the code, prepare the vessel, book the survey."

Kerrie Forster, Chief Executive Officer of the Workboat Association, said: "With the first transition deadline fast approaching, I urge all operators of previous Workboat Code editions to ensure their vessels, crew and documentation are fully aligned.

"This is not just a regulatory milestone – it's an important opportunity for industry to demonstrate its commitment to safety, consistency, and professionalism.

"Do not allow yourself to be caught out by the 13 December 2026 deadline."

An operator who is securing safety certification under the Workboat Code Edition 3 is Ben Wheatley, Marine Superintendent at Marine Plant Hire (UK) Ltd.

Ben, whose background is a certified Master, believes embracing the Code is an "investment" that, with forward planning, has strengthened clients' confidence in Marine Plant Hire (UK) Ltd's capabilities and fuelled its expansion.

Ben said: "Essentially, it makes you more commercially resilient – clients are seeing the value in the Code."



Image courtesy of Calum Gray (MarineTraffic.com)

Uncontrollable engine room flood sank trawler Opportune, says MAIB

Stern trawler Opportune sank in 2024 due to “rapid and uncontrolled engine room flood” said the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) in a final report.

The skipper’s decision-making skills and the crew’s training meant all of Opportune’s eight crew were rescued uninjured from the vessel’s liferafts by coastguard helicopters. Unfortunately, the vessel was not recovered.

Alongside the investigation report, the MAIB released a safety flyer to the fishing industry highlighting that on average, over seven fishing vessels are lost every year due to flooding. It also urged fishing vessel owners to have a maintenance plan for their vessel’s seawater pipework to ensure that it is routinely inspected and, if necessary, tested. The saltwater environment is very corrosive, and hot dipped galvanised pipework has a limited life, so replacement should be expected over a 20-year vessel operational life.

What happened

At about 0530 on 24 March 2024, the 23.95m UK registered stern trawler Opportune foundered 36 miles east of Lerwick, Scotland. Opportune’s eight crew were later rescued uninjured from the vessel’s liferafts by coastguard helicopters.

Around 45 minutes before Opportune foundered, the mate had gone to the engine room to investigate a bilge alarm and found water ingress that had reached the level of the vessel’s gearbox. The mate immediately informed the skipper and they went together to the engine room a few minutes later, but decided it was unsafe to enter the space as it was filled with white odourless vapour. Opportune’s crew abandoned ship into the liferafts and the vessel foundered shortly afterwards.

The investigation determined that Opportune foundered due to an uncontrolled engine room flood. The source of the flood could not be definitively established but the most likely cause was failure of the vessel’s seawater pipework, some of which could have been in place since the 26-year-old vessel was built.

There was no opportunity for the flood to be contained or controlled once the engine room became unsafe to enter because Opportune’s sea inlet valves and electric bilge pumps could not be operated from outside the space. Faced with a rapidly sinking vessel, Opportune’s skipper raised the alarm and the crew abandoned ship in good time.

Safety issues

- The vessel foundered due to a rapid and uncontrolled engine room flood.
- The source of the flood could not be established. The most likely cause was a failure of the vessel’s seawater pipework, parts of which were ferrous, over 20 years old and difficult to inspect. Corrosion might have gone unnoticed.
- The crew were unable to control the flood because seawater inlet valves were not easily accessible and electric bilge pumps could not be operated from outside the space.
- Faced with a rapidly sinking vessel, the skipper raised the alarm, and the crew abandoned ship in good time.

Recommendations

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) has been recommended to update its guidance to its surveyors, fishing vessel owners and crew on the management of seawater pipework in existing vessels.

Opportune’s owner has been recommended to ensure that its crews understand the seawater pipework system and regularly drill their response to a flood.

Download the full report and flyer: <https://bit.ly/4raNHkX>

Black Sea MoU publishes preliminary results of the CIC on ballast water management

The Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control in the Black Sea Region has released the preliminary results of a Concentrated Inspection Campaign (CIC) which focused on Ballast Water Management.

The campaign, carried out from 1 September to 30 November 2025, involved the member Authorities of the BS MoU that have ratified the International Convention for the Control and Management of Ships' Ballast Water and Sediments, 2004 (BWM Convention).

This CIC was conducted under the campaign coordination of the Maritime Administration of Türkiye. It was conducted in conjunction with the Paris and Tokyo Memoranda, utilizing their joint Guidelines and Questionnaires. The campaign shows the following preliminary results.

Over the course of the CIC period, a total of 775 inspections were carried out. Of these inspections, 624 inspections were performed using the CIC questionnaire and a ship was subjected to only one CIC inspection during the campaign period.

According to data from the Black Sea Information System (BSIS), 76 ships were detained in total. Of which, 52 detentions were the result of inspections with CIC questionnaires and 16 of them were detained as a direct result of the CIC concerning deficiencies related to Ballast Water Management, resulting in a CIC topic related detention rate of 2.56%.

The initial analysis indicates that non-conformities identified during the CIC were largely focused on a limited number of areas, with approximately 89.3% of all recorded non-compliances relating to three specific questionnaire items:

- the operational condition of Ballast Water Management Systems (BWMS)
- the proper completion of the Ballast Water Record Book (BWRB)
- crew familiarization with the Ballast Water Management Plan (BWMP)

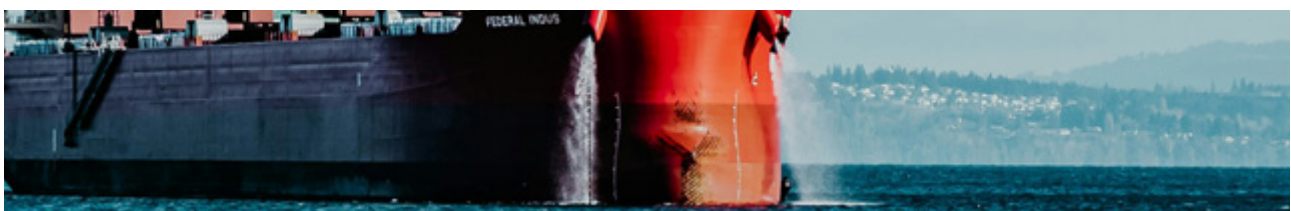
Among these, BWMS operability emerged as the most significant area of concern, accounting for the highest number of non-conformities and the largest share of CIC related detentions.

During the campaign, vessels registered under the flags of 46 different States were inspected under the CIC scope. The greatest number of inspections were carried out on ships flying the flags of Panama with 117 inspections (18.8%), Liberia with 97 inspections (15.5%) and the Marshall Islands with 43 inspections (6.9%).

CIC related detentions involved ships flying the flags of Barbados (3), Belize (1), Liberia (2), Palau (1), Panama (3), Saint Kitts and Nevis (4), Tanzania (1), and Vanuatu (1).

According to type of ship, the highest number of CIC were conducted on bulk carriers with 214 inspections (34.3%), followed by general cargo/multi-purpose ships with 213 inspections (34.1%), oil/chemical tankers with 74 inspections (11.9%) and oil tankers with 68 inspections (10.9%), which comprised 569 total CIC inspections with a rate of 91.2%.

The initial findings further indicate that vessels aged between 15 and 25 years accounted for the majority of CIC related detentions. In addition, ships classified as High Risk Ships recorded substantially higher nonconformity rates than Standard and Low Risk Ships. These results confirm the effectiveness of the Black Sea MoU Ship Risk Profile System in identifying sub-standard vessels and support the continued application of a risk-based inspection approach.





Kohzan Maru VII (in the background) alongside Eika Maru (foreground). Source: MOL

Japan completes first ever ship-to-ship methanol bunkering in anchorage

Mitsui O.S.K. Lines announced Japan's first ship-to-ship bunkering of methanol vessel fuel at anchorage.

The company teamed up with the City of Yokohama, Kokuka Sangyo Co, Idemitsu Kosan Co, and Mitsubishi Gas Chemical Company - collectively known as the "Five Parties" – to successfully complete the endeavour.

Methanol fuel was transferred from the Eika Maru to the Kohzan Maru VII in the Yokohama District of Keihin Port. The Eika Maru is a coastal methanol transport vessel operated by Kokuka Sangyo and the Kohzan Maru VII is a dual-fuel, ocean-going, methanol-transport vessel operated by MOL, and both are chartered by MGC.

This operation also used domestically produced bio-methanol from MGC's Niigata Plant, which is scheduled to be used as fuel for the future operation of the Kohzan Maru VII.

Methanol, a basic chemical, is used in a wide range of applications. It is also recognized as a clean-burning fuel, emitting low levels of CO₂, sulphur oxides (SO_x), nitrogen oxides (NO_x), and particulate matter (PM). In the shipping industry, adopting alternative fuels to replace heavy fuel oil is one strategy for reducing GHG emissions. Methanol is gaining attention as a promising alternative fuel due to its ease of handling within existing infrastructure, leading to an increase in orders for methanol-fueled vessels. Methanol produced from non-fossil sources-such as CO₂, waste plastics, and biobased feedstocks-enables carbon-neutral marine transport across its entire lifecycle.

The bunkering operation at this anchorage was made possible based on findings from a methanol bunkering simulation conducted in Yokohama Port in September 2024 and other insights related to the domestic transport of chemicals, including methanol. Those insights were brought by multiple stakeholders, including the operators (the Five Parties). Stakeholders and MLIT, along with the Japan Coast Guard discussed procedures and safety measures for implementation, which contributed to the successful execution of this operation.

This project marks Japan's first ship-to-ship methanol bunkering operation at anchorage for methanol-fueled vessels in service, representing a significant milestone in promoting methanol bunkering within Japan. Moving forward, stakeholders will systematically organize and visualize insights gained through post-operation verification of this project. The Five Parties expect that these findings will be applied to methanol bunkering operations involving other vessel types or in other regions of Japan.

Building on this project as a starting point, MOL will continue advancing initiatives to further develop and promote methanol bunkering throughout Japan. Since commencing operations of the world's first methanol dual-fuel vessel in 2016, MOL has deployed eight such carriers, operating one of the world's largest fleets of dedicated methanol carriers.

Boating fuels €13bn and 168,000 jobs in the Italian industry

Italian marine industry association Confindustria Nautica presented its annual market report, offering an analysis of the sector's performance and future trends.

According to La Nautica in Cifre Monitor – Trend 2025/2026 (Boating in Figures Monitor – Market Trends 2025/2026), produced by Confindustria Nautica's Research Department in collaboration with Fondazione Edison, the industry generated over €13 billion in added value in 2024 and employed approximately 168,000 people, reflecting a 5.6% increase in employment.

La Nautica in Cifre Monitor – Trend 2025/2026 serves as the sector's primary statistical reference, providing insights into market trends, production dynamics, and the international positioning of Italian boating. During the event, Beatrice Biagetti, secretary general of Fondazione Edison, opened the proceedings, followed by remarks from Piero Formenti, president of Confindustria Nautica.

"Today's event sets in motion a year of initiatives through which Confindustria Nautica intends to offer our sector dedicated analyses and strategic guidance," said Formenti. "Operating within a global context marked by significant economic and geopolitical change, the Italian recreational boating industry continues to demonstrate solidity, adaptability and strategic vision. The dynamics differ between segments: large boats are following an upward trend, the mid-range is holding steady, while small boats are more affected by consumer confidence, currently dampened by complex economic conditions. The data published by our Research Department are an essential tool that allows companies and institutions to interpret such developments and guide the sector's strategies."

Stefano Pagani Isnardi, head of the Confindustria Nautica Research Department, presented key economic indicators and growth prospects, reaffirming Italy's leadership in high-end boat building and the resilience of its supply chain.





Caked areas are often hot and can contain visible mould (white growth at centre). Source: Britannia P&I Club

Loss prevention guidance on bulk soya bean cargo

Britannia P&I Club has collaborated with CWA Singapore, Food & Agricultural Commodities department, to provide loss prevention guidance on transporting bulk soya bean cargo within the maritime sector.

In recent decades, the demand for both soya bean oil and soya bean meal has grown rapidly, driven by an increase in livestock cultivation in Asia.

The largest producers and exporters of soya beans are Brazil, the United States, and Argentina.

The route between Brazil and China is associated with a high volume of cargo claims, this reflects both the scale of the trade and the challenges presented by the voyage. The journey from Brazil to China is notably longer, often exceeding 30-40 days. The cargo is also exposed to a wide variation in temperature as vessels transit through equatorial and tropical climates. While vessels from the United States also pass through such regions, the longer voyage duration from Brazil increases the time the cargo spends in transit. It is during this time which any instability may result in cargo deterioration. While the high number of claims is in part due to the large quantity of beans carried on this route and the extended voyage time, the inherent biological characteristics of soya beans have also contributed to a rise in claims.

The differences between the national quality standards further contribute to this rise. Brazilian soya beans are assessed and certified at loading according to Brazilian soya bean standards, these differ in several key parameters from the Chinese standards. There are variations in the permitted moisture limit (14 % in Brazil and 13 % in China) and the classification of heat damaged beans.

Effective loss prevention for soya bean cargoes relies on a combination of preparation, monitoring, and consistent documentation throughout the stages of the voyage.

Britannia P&I Club has also included guidance on preventative measures for each stage of a voyage that reflect industry best practices and draw on the lessons from recent claims, particularly on the Brazil to China trade route.

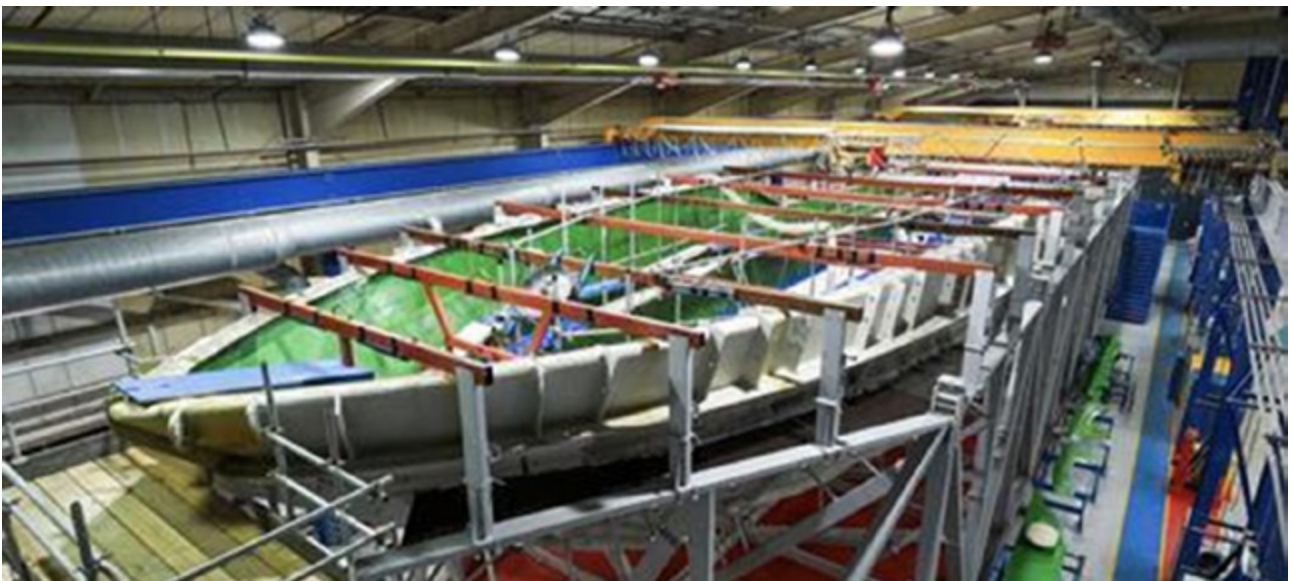
Read the full report: <https://bit.ly/4rETNtC>

Hull No 1 of the new 134 Sunseeker superyacht celebrates first lamination

UK boat builder Sunseeker has recently celebrated a defining milestone in the company's history as the first lamination of Hull No 1 of the new 134 Superyacht commenced at its dedicated superyacht facility in Poole, Dorset. The first lamination represents the skill and commitment from hundreds of colleagues across the business. The build process will use in excess of 100 qualified boat builders.

It is reported that Hull No 1 of the 134 Superyacht will come off the line for testing in April 2027 and eventually make her way to her owner on the west coast of the US.

Ewen Foster, chief design officer of Sunseeker International, said: "This is a very proud moment for our Design and Engineering team. From bow to stern, the 134 Superyacht external design and internal layout have been developed with the sole intent of elevating the very nature of life at sea. With an iconic profile, an effortless flow between internal and external spaces, and very generous volume, every experience aboard will feel intuitive and beautifully resolved. She will be an incredibly strong statement at sea. A legacy for her owner, and for us."



Historic EU Industrial Maritime Strategy backs Europe's leadership in recreational boating

European Boating Industry (EBI) says it welcomes the launch of the first-ever EU Industrial Maritime Strategy, a landmark initiative by the EU Commission to strengthen Europe's maritime industries, support innovation and sustainability, and reinforce the competitiveness of Europe's recreational boat and yacht sector from builders to propulsion and equipment manufacturers and the refit sector.

The strategy highlights the strategic importance of maritime manufacturing and confirms Europe's strong position in technologically advanced maritime manufacturing segments, highlighting recreational craft and yachts, clean propulsion and refit where European industry holds global leadership.

The Commission notes that Europe "is still a global leader in some of the most technologically sophisticated ship types, including yachts and recreational craft, clean propulsion systems and advanced equipment", underlining the sector's role as a key contributor to Europe's maritime industrial base and innovation ecosystem. It also noted that "subsegments, such as nautical tourism, have an important innovation potential to enhance their sustainability."

In addition, the Commission confirms that the evaluation of the Recreational Craft Directive will assess the regulatory framework for novel propulsion systems and innovative watercraft, helping ensure that EU legislation supports innovation and the transition to more sustainable boating.

West P&I Club insight on soot pollution from inert gas systems and open-loop scrubbers

The maritime industry is confronting an increasingly serious environmental challenge - soot pollution arising from inert gas (IG) systems and open-loop exhaust gas scrubber operations.

What were once considered isolated or incidental events have now evolved into a systemic issue, exposing shipowners and operators worldwide to potential significant operational disruption, financial loss, and regulatory scrutiny, says West of England P&I Club.

To date, the Club has recorded over 60 documented incidents, although the true scale of the problem is believed to be substantially greater.

These events are no longer regarded as minor environmental infractions. Instead, they frequently carry severe legal and financial consequences, including vessel detentions, delays, clean-up obligations, and substantial fines. As environmental enforcement intensifies across multiple jurisdictions, ship operators are facing heightened scrutiny and increasingly punitive responses from port and coastal State authorities.

Escalating Enforcement and Penalties

Growing environmental awareness has led many ports and coastal States to prohibit open-loop scrubber operations entirely. Elsewhere, inspections have become more intrusive and penalties more severe. Jurisdictions such as Turkey and the UAE are notable for their strict and highly visible enforcement approaches.

Depending on the jurisdiction the fines can be in the range of a few thousand dollars to millions of dollars. The Club has experience where vessels have been subject to fines exceeding USD 1 million for serious pollution incidents.

The absence of uniform international standards - particularly for Inert Gas Systems (IGS) discharges - further complicates compliance and exposes ship operators to regulatory uncertainty, financial risk, and reputational damage.

Preventive Measures and Best Practices

Most soot pollution incidents are entirely preventable through disciplined operations, effective training, and proactive maintenance. Shipowners and operators are strongly encouraged to adopt the following best practices:

1. **Strict Adherence to Manufacturer's Guidance.** Follow manufacturer-recommended operating procedures and maintenance instructions for IG systems and scrubber systems without deviation.
2. **Comprehensive Pre-Operation Inspections.** Conduct thorough system checks before activation, ensuring all critical components and alarms are fully functional.
3. **Crew Training and Competency Development.** Ensure crew members are adequately trained in normal operation, fault recognition, troubleshooting, and emergency response.
4. **Adoption of Cleaner Technologies.** Consider transitioning to hybrid or closed-loop scrubber systems, particularly when trading in regions with strict environmental controls.
5. **Robust Record-Keeping.** Maintain detailed logs of system operation, maintenance activities, sensor readings, and visual observations to demonstrate compliance and support incident investigation.
6. **Enhanced Preventive Maintenance Regimes.** Implement maintenance programmes that exceed minimum regulatory requirements, including scheduled inspections and timely replacement of critical components. A vessel-specific operational checklist is strongly recommended.
7. **Real-Time Monitoring and Early Detection.** Utilise continuous monitoring systems to identify deviations in performance at an early stage, allowing corrective action before a discharge occurs.

The Club also shared details on understanding the sources: inert gas systems and scrubber systems, as well as information on regulatory standards and gaps.

Download the PDF: <https://bit.ly/4ddZMS2>

Image Credit: Transport Malta

Transport Malta concludes investigation into death of bulker cargo surveyor



The Marine Safety Investigation Unit of Transport Malta has published a report into the death of a bulker/cargo surveyor after they were trapped during the hatch cover closing process.

What happened

On 24 January 2025, Ocean Century was preparing to load steel Hapo products General at Wharf, Gwangyang, South Korea. The vessel had arrived during the previous evening. Cargo holds were cleaned, and residual cargo collected in drums.

On the morning of the accident, the deck crew opened the hatch covers and removed the stored drums. Meanwhile, the bunker/cargo surveyor left the ship's office, after meeting with the chief engineer, the master, and the P&I representative.

Shortly after, one of the crew members proceeded to the cargo hold no. 2 hatch cover control station, to close the hatch cover. At approximately 0840, the electro-technical officer discovered the surveyor, fatally trapped between the aft part of cargo hold hatch cover no. 2 and the hatch coaming.

The safety determined investigation that all probability, the cause of the in accident was the surveyor's becoming trapped during the hatch cover closing process.

The MSIU has taken into consideration the safety actions taken by the Company and no recommendations have been made.

The autopsy report confirmed that the bunker / cargo surveyor suffered from severe head injuries as a result of being trapped between the closing cargo hold no. 2 folding hatch cover and the cargo hold hatch coaming. In view of the absence of witnesses, the safety investigation could not determine why the bunker / cargo surveyor had positioned himself in the area.

Safety lessons

This accident highlights the risk posed by moving hatch covers when operations rely solely on a single operator with restricted visibility. Although hatch cover systems may function exactly as designed, they can nonetheless present a fatal hazard. Where operators cannot maintain a clear line of sight to all danger zones, the absence of a dedicated lookout, positive confirmation of a clear deck, or enforced communication protocols creates a latent condition for potentially fatal injuries.

The fatality further demonstrates the limitations of symbolic safety barrier systems when not reinforced by effective procedural controls. Warning signs, while necessary, are insufficient on their own in high-risk tasks. Visiting personnel, including surveyors and contractors, may be unaware of vessel-specific hazards unless actively briefed and integrated into shipboard safety systems. Robust incorporeal barrier systems, such as ship-specific checklists, mandatory deck clearance verification, assigned oversight roles, and clear control of third-party movements, are essential to prevent individuals from unknowingly entering danger zones during hatch cover operations.

Read the full report: <https://bit.ly/3Pvnscsd>

African Boating Conference to return to Cape Town in October 2026

The second African Boating Conference is scheduled to take place in Cape Town on 20 and 21 October following the successful inaugural edition in October 2025, which reached full capacity.

The two-day conference is focused on Africa's boating, marina and blue economy sectors and is structured as a platform for industry participants to examine market conditions, regulatory frameworks and development opportunities across the continent.

The 2026 edition will again be hosted in Cape Town. Delegates are expected to include industry executives, policymakers, investors, developers, manufacturers and service providers from Southern Africa and other regions. The programme will cover marina development, superyacht readiness, policy, skills development, manufacturing and investment. Sessions are expected to include panel discussions and presentations from regional and international speakers, alongside networking sessions and trade displays.

"The response from last year's delegates, speakers, and sponsors confirmed what we believed from the outset — Africa needs its own platform to discuss its boating industry on its own terms, at a global standard," says conference organiser Veda Pretorius. "Just as importantly, the conference has proven to be a valuable forum for government stakeholders to engage directly with industry, better understand its realities, and work collaboratively towards solutions."

Indian National Shipowners' Association joins the International Chamber of Shipping

The International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) has announced the joining of Indian National Shipowners' Association (INSA) as a full Member.

INSA represents the interests of Indian shipping companies and plays a central role in advancing India's maritime sector, including fleet development, maritime education, and engagement with national and international regulatory bodies.

Its membership brings valuable regional perspective and adds to the industry expertise with ICS as it continues to advocate for practical, global solutions on essential matters across shipping including seafarer welfare, digitalisation, and sustainability issues such as decarbonisation and ship recycling.

Welcoming the announcement, Thomas A. Kazakos, ICS Secretary General, said, "We are delighted to welcome the Indian National Shipowners' Association into the International Chamber of Shipping.

"India plays an increasingly important role in global shipping, not only through its shipping companies and growing maritime industry, but also through its strong maritime education sector and its wider contribution to the global economy.

"The country's strategic importance to international trade and shipping makes INSA's participation especially valuable as we work together to address the challenges and opportunities facing our industry worldwide. I look forward to INSA's valuable insights at ICS Committees and Panels."

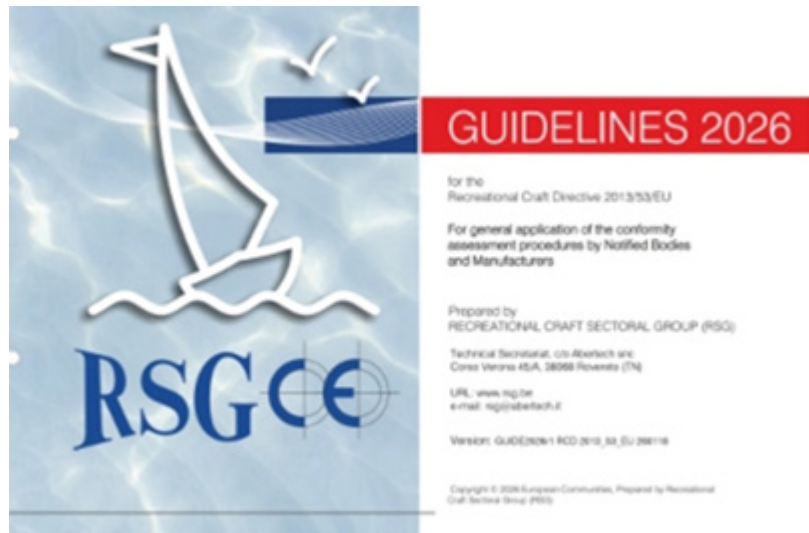
Anil Devli, Indian National Shipowners' Association CEO, said, "Joining the International Chamber of Shipping marks an important step for INSA and for the Indian shipping community.

"As global shipping evolves and global politics continues to churn, it is essential that Indian shipping companies are heard as they endeavour to actively contribute to international discussions and policymaking.

"We look forward to working closely with ICS members to support a safe, sustainable and efficient global shipping industry while ensuring the perspectives of Indian shipping are effectively represented at the global level, particularly at the International Maritime Organization (IMO)."

New 2026 RSG guidelines published

These Recreational Craft Sectoral Group (RSG) Guidelines are primarily intended for use by the Notified Bodies, manufacturers of boats and equipment and Market Surveillance authorities and provide critical support in terms of compliance to the EU's Recreational Craft Directive and the UK's Recreational Craft Regulations essential requirements.



Given the scope of the RCD and the variety of different types of watercraft, PWC, and components, the RSG Guidelines make an assessment of the relevant harmonised standards which can be applied, identify where there are potential 'gaps' and provides support where no standards are available to ensure that compliance with the RCD essential requirements (which are mandatory) are met.

The RSG Guidelines are organised into six parts:

- Part I: RCD Articles
- Part II: Essential Requirements including:
 - o Annex I of RCD: Essential requirements
 - o Annex II of RCD: Components of watercraft
 - o Annex III of RCD: Declaration by the manufacturer or the importer of the partly completed watercraft
 - o Annex IV of RCD: EU Declaration of Conformity
 - o Annex VI of RCD: Supplementary requirements when internal production control plus supervised production tests set out in Module A1 is used
 - o Annex VII of RCD: Conformity of production assessment for exhaust and noise emissions
 - o Annex VIII Supplementary procedure to be applied under conformity to type based on internal production control (Module C)
 - o Annex IX Technical documentation
- Part III: Conformity Assessment Procedures including:
 - o Annex II of Decision No 768/2008/EC as specified in Article 24 <Supplementary requirements> of RCD II
- Part IV: Post-Construction Assessment (PCA) including:
 - o Annex V of RCD: Equivalent conformity based on post-construction assessment (module PCA)
- Part V: Harmonised Standards with Annexes ZA
- Part VI: Recommendations for Use prepared by RSG

It should be noted that these RSG Guidelines will form part of the RCD evaluation study and review process and remain an important tool for all stakeholders engaged in the recreational marine sector.

Download the guidelines: <https://bit.ly/4bCEOLt>





AET adds first hybrid electric Dynamic Positioning Shuttle Tanker to fleet

Digital rendering of AET's first hybrid electric dynamic positioning shuttle tanker. Credit: Dalian Shipbuilding Industry Co.

AET has signed an agreement with Dalian Shipbuilding Industry Corp for its first hybrid electric Dynamic Positioning Shuttle Tanker (DPST).

The latest newbuild has been designed to be dual-fuel, lower-emissions-ready and secured on long-term charter.

A global leader in shuttle tankers, AET operates one of the world's largest DPST fleets, with 17 vessels deployed across Brazil and Norway, and further growth planned. With dual-fuel capability across all tanker segments, the addition of hybrid electric propulsion further broadens lower-emissions optionality for customers whilst enhancing competitiveness.

The agreement was inked with Dalian Shipbuilding Industry Corp. for the construction of a 154,000-deadweight-tonne Suezmax DPST equipped with an Electric Energy Storage (EES) system and designed to be dual-fuel ethanol-ready, with projected delivery in 2028.

Nick Potter, President & CEO of AET, said, "AET owns and operates one of the youngest and largest DPST fleets serving Brazil, and the North and Barents seas. Our collective experience in dual-fuel vessels and growth in the DPST segment has been driven by deep partnerships. Our ambition is to continue extending our industry leading position and deliver reliable, safe and sustainable DPST solutions to customers worldwide."

IMO: Barbados explores green shipping corridor

Barbados is setting a pathway to exploring green shipping corridors to reduce emissions from shipping. The first step will be a pre-feasibility study, commissioned by IMO.

An initial meeting with the Government of Barbados and national stakeholders in the framework of the Barbados Green Shipping Corridors: Pre-Feasibility, Policy and Regulatory Pathways study was held online (12 February). Participants from Barbados included the Maritime Transport Administration, the Ministry of Tourism and International Transport, and Barbados Port Inc.

The study is funded through the IMO Integrated Technical Cooperation Programme (ITCP) and builds on earlier work undertaken under the GreenVoyage2050 Programme, including support for countries to develop National Action Plans (NAPs) on maritime decarbonization (watch the video on NAPS [here](#)).

The study will deliver the following key outputs:

- Opportunities for Barbados to Engage in Green Shipping Corridor Partnerships
- Identification of Two Most Promising Candidate Routes for Zero-Emission Shipping Operations
- Roadmap, Policy and Regulatory Pathways to Support Implementation

The study aims to assess Barbados' readiness and potential to participate in scalable zero-emission shipping initiatives, while identifying policy, regulatory and infrastructure considerations at national and regional level. IMO will continue to work closely with the Government of Barbados and relevant stakeholders as the work progresses. The study is supported by Ricardo consultancy group.

Global agreement on fishing vessel safety to enter into force in 2027

Argentina has become the latest country to accede to the 2012 Cape Town Agreement, triggering its entry into force in 12 months.

The Agreement has met the requirements for entry into force and will enter into force in February 2027, closing a longstanding gap in the global maritime safety framework.

It sets out mandatory safety standards for more than 45,000 fishing vessels of 24 metres in length and over, according to FAO data, helping to prevent casualties, improve working conditions for fishers, enhance competitiveness and protect the marine environment.

Welcoming the milestone, IMO Secretary-General Mr. Arsenio Dominguez said, "Thousands of fishers lose their lives every year while working to supply the world's growing appetite for fish and fish products. The 2012 Cape Town Agreement will help protect fishing crews, while safeguarding vessels."



Argentina accedes to the CTA

Argentina's H.E. Ms. Mariana Edith Plaza, Argentina's Ambassador to the United Kingdom, deposited the instrument of accession on 24 February 2026 at IMO Headquarters in London.

This brings the total number of Member State accessions to 28, representing 3,754 vessels of 24 metres or more in length. The Cape Town Agreement enters into force 12 months after at least 22 States, collectively representing 3,600 qualifying fishing vessels - typically ocean-going ships operating on the high seas - consent to being bound by the treaty.

Keeping fishers and ships safe

Once in force, States Parties must incorporate the provisions of the 2012 Cape Town Agreement into national law and enforce it as they would any other legislation.

Flag States must ensure that vessels under their registries comply, while Port States have the right to inspect foreign vessels in their ports to verify compliance with the 2012 Cape Town Agreement requirements. These cover the design, construction, equipment and inspection of fishing vessels, as well as vessel stability and seaworthiness, machinery and electrical installations, life-saving appliances, fire protection and communications equipment.

Beyond safety, the Agreement is also expected to support the reduction of marine plastic pollution from abandoned or lost fishing gear.

Four pillars for fishing vessel safety

The 2012 Cape Town Agreement is the culmination of decades of work by IMO, building on earlier international instruments that did not enter into force, including the 1977 Torremolinos International Convention for the Safety of Fishing Vessels and the 1993 Torremolinos Protocol. The treaty is now set to enter into force in 2027, nearly 15 years after it was adopted in 2012.

The Cape Town Agreement represents the fourth pillar in global fishing vessel safety, alongside the following key instruments, all of which are in force:

- IMO's STCW-F Convention on training and certification of fishers.
- ILO's Work in Fishing Convention, 2007, which sets minimum requirements for work on board, including hours of rest, food, minimum age and repatriation.
- FAO's Agreement on Port State Measures to Prevent, Deter and Eliminate Illegal, Unreported and Unregulated (IUU) Fishing, 2009, which seeks to combat IUU fishing through effective port State measures.

Find out more: <https://bit.ly/3NmWXUa>



Vehicle Carrier Safety Forum Response guidelines

As the global shift toward electric mobility transforms our cargo into high-energy puzzles, the car carriers of the maritime world face a complex new chemistry of risk. The maritime industry has always been defined by its ability to adapt to the cargo it carries, but the rise of Electric Vehicles (EVs) presents a fire-safety challenge that doesn't play by the old rules. Whether it's the stubborn heat of an internal combustion engine fire or the violent "thermal runaway" of a lithium-ion battery, the margins for error on RoRo and PCTC vessels are slimming. These Vehicle Carrier Safety Forum guidelines provide the essential scaffolding for vessel operators to build their own defences, recognizing that while we cannot standardize every ship, we must standardize our readiness for the modern blaze.

The Vehicle Carrier Safety Forum (VCSF) recognises that responding to vehicle fires onboard PCCs, PCTCs, RoRo and Ro-Pax vessels is both dangerous and challenging. These guidelines have been designed to reduce the risk to the safety of crews, passengers, the environment, and the vessel.

Their sole aim is to assist vessel operators and crews to be better prepared to meet the challenges presented by vehicle fires. The Vehicle Carrier Safety Forum guidelines do not provide detailed procedures to vessel operators on how to respond to fires on their vessels. There are too many variables in design, equipment, and trade for that to be realistic.

Instead, they provide a framework for vessel operators to use to inform their own more detailed procedures. The guidelines recognise that response is limited by vessel design, current crew training regimes and equipment available onboard. They do not include use of emerging technical solutions.

The scope of the guidelines includes fire response for internal combustion engine vehicles (ICE) and vehicles fully or partly powered by lithium-ion batteries i.e. Battery Electric Vehicles & PHEVs & HEVs EV has been used throughout this document for ease.

EV should be taken to mean Battery Electric Vehicles & PHEVs & HEVs. There is considerable industry debate around the issue of Lithium Ion Battery (LiB) risks arising from carriage of electric vehicles (EV) or hybrid electric vehicles. Evidence from both shore fire response and recent shipboard incidents suggests that, whether or not fires originate from LiBs, should an early-stage fire involve a LiB in thermal runaway it could be more problematic to control and extinguish onboard than may be the case with an ICE fire. Experience of incidents has shown that fires involving ICE vehicles can also be problematic to extinguish once established.

Download the guidelines: <https://bit.ly/40tIH07>

Liberia Maritime Authority reinforces mandatory engine room fire prevention requirements

The Liberia Maritime Authority has sent out a marine advisory to reinforce the mandatory compliance requirements that govern engine room fire prevention, fire protection readiness, and safe machinery-space operations on Liberian-flagged vessels.

The authority added recent engine room fire incidents indicated that non-compliance with established regulations, marine notices, and safety requirements remained a significant causal factor.

Engine Room Fire Trends

Fires aboard Liberian-flagged vessels during 2025–2026 have been reviewed and the number of incidents in the Engine Room have been identified as follows:

- 46 fires in 2025, of which 21 involved the Engine Room
- 7 fires in 2026 (YTD), of which 4 involved the Engine Room

The pattern continues to show that heat sources combined with fuel/oil spray, incomplete ventilation shutdown, improper system readiness, and inadequate training remain core risks.

Marine Casualty case studies

The Administration has reviewed recent Engine Room fire incidents with similar root causes and a summary of representative, anonymized cases provided below.

1. Engine Room Fire During Navigation Under Pilotage. A fire originated in the vicinity of auxiliary diesel generator machinery. Ventilation flaps, particularly upper-level closures, could not be fully secured, allowing continued oxygen supply and enabling rapid fire growth. Crew members assigned to activate the CO₂ system were not fully familiar with the activation sequence, resulting in incomplete cylinder discharge.
2. Auxiliary Engine Internal Mechanical Failure. A sudden mechanical failure caused fuel and lubricating oil to spray onto hot engine surfaces. Heavy smoke forced the evacuation of the Engine Room. The water mist system did not activate due to a lack of emergency power interconnection, resulting in significant structural and equipment damage.
3. Fuel System Component Failure (Filter Cover Failure). A diesel engine filter cover failed during operation, resulting in lubricating-oil spray onto the lubricating oil and exhaust components. The fire was extinguished, but the surrounding cabling, lights, and machinery sustained heat and smoke damage.
4. Fourth Case – High-Pressure Fuel Pipe Failure (Main Engine). A high-pressure fuel line ruptured, projecting atomized fuel onto the exhaust manifold and causing immediate ignition. Ventilation was secured, and CO₂ was released, extinguishing the fire. Affected main-engine units and Engine Room systems require further engineering assessment and root-cause analysis.

Key Safety Failures Identified in four outlined cases

- Fuel/oil spray contacting uninsulated or inadequately shielded hot surfaces.
- Missing, damaged, oil-soaked, or deteriorated thermal insulation.
- Incomplete closing of Engine Room ventilation flaps and dampers.
- Crew unfamiliarity with CO₂ activation sequence, remote cabinet use, and pilot cylinder initiation.
- Water-mist systems are not fully functional on emergency power.
- Improper torque, workmanship deficiencies, or vibration leading to component failure.
- Emergency response without full PPE and BA sets.
- Inadequate maintenance records or incomplete testing logs.

The notice also included information on Flag Administration Requirements and best practices alongside details of mandatory actions to ensure conformity with Liberian and IMO standards.

Read the full notice: <https://bit.ly/4bikC0d>

ABS delivers new ammonia safety report for EMSA

The European Maritime Safety Agency (EMSA) has published a new report focused on the safety of ammonia as a marine fuel.

The report was developed by an ABS-led consortium that included the National Technical University of Athens (NTUA) and the Fundación Valenciaport.

This final report consolidates the study's findings and recommendations for future regulatory developments. It highlights the importance of using risk and reliability methods for the identification of top risk contributors and lists best practice recommendations in line with current industry standards.

The report also highlights considerations related to the long-term toxicity risks from chronic low-level ammonia exposure, the lack of performance standards for ammonia safety systems, the lack of harmonised guidance for gas dispersion simulations and the lack of technical and performance criteria for the design, integration and maintenance of the ammonia release mitigation system, amongst others.

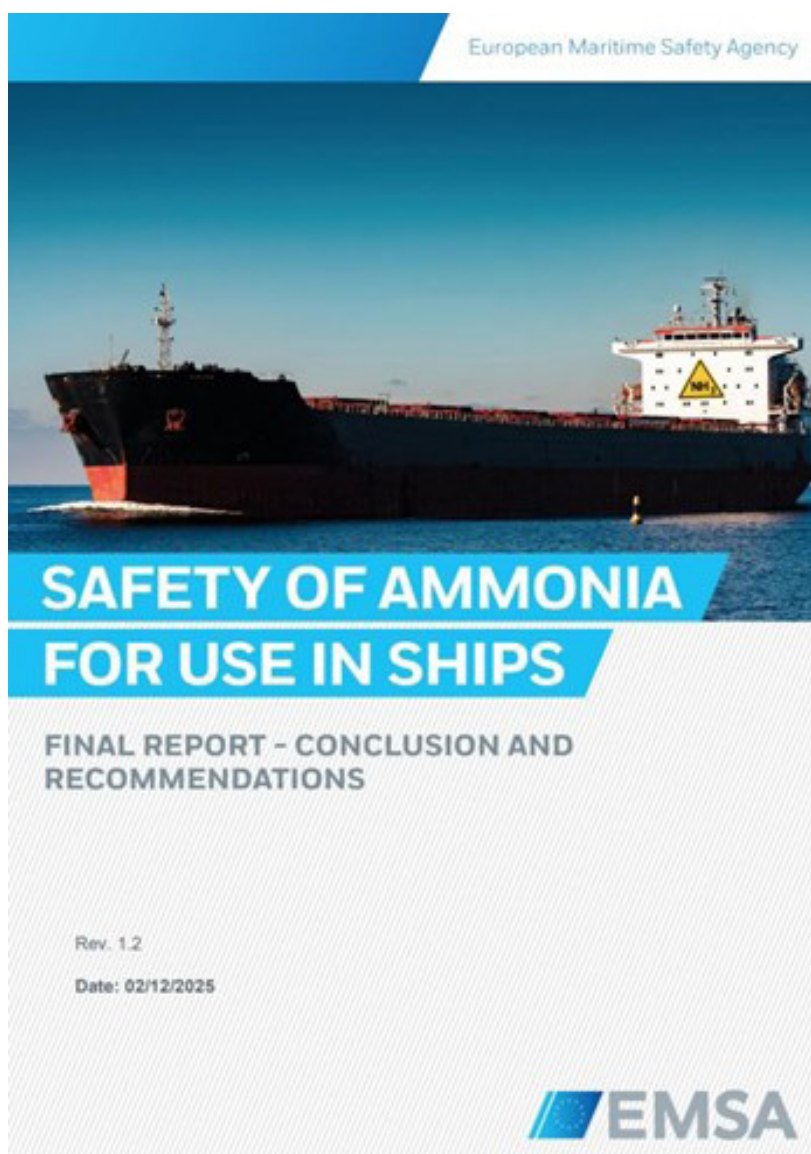
"ABS remains committed to supporting the maritime industry as it navigates future energy options such as ammonia as marine fuel. This latest report for EMSA reflects our close collaboration with industry stakeholders and academia to provide critical information to advance the discussions around low- and zero-carbon operations for the future," said Vassilios Kroustallis, ABS Executive Vice President and Chief Commercial Officer.

Based on the insights gained from the study, the report includes recommendations that expand upon existing interim guidelines from the International Maritime Organization for the safety of ships using ammonia as fuel.

By way of a survey and online workshop, industry stakeholders sent in feedback that emphasized the necessity of a comprehensive understanding of ammonia's properties to effectively mitigate the safety risks associated with its use as a marine fuel.

Professor Nikolaos P. Ventikos of NTUA said: "Exploring pathways toward more environmentally sustainable maritime transport is essential for society, but it must always be pursued with safety as the highest priority. This is why the role of organizations such as EMSA is so important. By funding rigorous research and making its results publicly available, they enable informed decision-making across the entire maritime community. For NTUA, as a university deeply committed to open science, it is particularly meaningful to facilitate and carry out risk assessment studies, such as HAZOP, that are traditionally confidential."

Read the report: <https://bit.ly/4rJZB4R>





Coppercoat launches 100% plant-based resin base

Aquarius Marine Coatings, the manufacturer of Coppercoat antifoul system, is launching a new 100 per cent plant-based epoxy resin base. Their latest innovation replaces the resin base with a bio-based version, thus carbon emissions are reduced by 34 per cent, saving 205gm of CO₂ for every 500gm of Coppercoat resin produced.

When launched over 30 years ago, Coppercoat was the world's first water-based and low-VOC epoxy antifoul. Now the new bio-based version further strengthens Coppercoat's position as 'the most sustainable and environmentally responsible active antifoul available'. According to Coppercoat, independent research shows that over a ten-year period, when compared to a typical traditional ablative antifoul paint, the use of Coppercoat reduces VOC emissions, biocidal release, and microplastics pollution by approximately 90 per cent.

Unlike conventional antifoul paints which commonly rely on ablative or self-polishing mechanisms, Coppercoat uses a semi-permanent two-part water-based epoxy resin and ultra-fine pure copper powder. Once cured, it forms a hardcoating with a very low biocidal leach rate. With pure copper, a naturally occurring element, being the only biocide within the coating, and a leach rate of 10 per cent of that of a typical eroding antifoul paint, Coppercoat is renowned to be the most environmentally responsible choice of active antifoul.

Jayson Kenny, CEO of Aquarius Marine Coatings, says, "Our oceans are responsible for the air we breathe and the food on our plates, yet they are under unprecedented pressure. The future of our seas depends on the decisions we make today. At Coppercoat, we are committed to continuously evolving our products so that protecting hulls and marine structures no longer comes at the expense of the environment. Our vision is simple: cleaner hulls, cleaner seas, healthier coastal ecosystems and a future where protecting vessels and marine structures no longer means unnecessarily polluting the waters we depend upon."





Korean working group to develop safety management and marine discharge standards

The Korean Registry is collaborating with the Korean government, five major Korean shipbuilders and the Korea Testing & Research Institute to launch a working group to develop safety management and marine discharge standards for ammonia effluent.

As the maritime industry accelerates its transition to zero-carbon fuels in line with the International Maritime Organization (IMO)'s 2050 net-zero target, ammonia-fuelled ships are emerging as a promising next-generation solution.

While the IMO has established interim guidelines to facilitate the use of ammonia as a marine fuel, international standards governing the safe treatment and discharge of toxic ammonia effluent generated during vessel operations have yet to be developed.

During the operation of ammonia-fuelled ships, effluent containing toxic ammonia may be generated. Unlike typical aqueous ammonia, this effluent exhibits different physical and chemical characteristics, and the lack of clearly applicable international standards has created uncertainty for ship design, operation, and environmental management.

In response, an international working group was created in June 2025 consisting of:

- KR (Korean Register)
- HD Hyundai Heavy Industries
- HD Hyundai Samho
- Hanwha Ocean
- Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries (MOF)
- HD Korea Shipbuilding & Offshore Engineering
- Samsung Heavy Industries
- The Korea Testing & Research Institute (KTR)

The establishment of this joint working group followed Korea's proposal at the IMO Sub-Committee on Carriage of Cargoes and Containers (CCC) in 2024, which highlighted the need for dedicated ammonia effluent safety standards. The proposal was granted official approval at the 83rd session of the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) in April 2025.

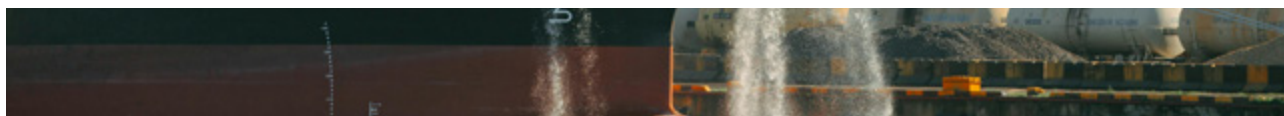
To commence its activities for 2026, the working group convened in February at the HD Hyundai Global R&D Center, reinforcing inter-organizational cooperation on the development of international standards.

Over 2026 and 2027, the group plans to submit draft international standards to the IMO Sub-Committee on Pollution Prevention and Response (PPR), positioning Korea at the forefront of global discussions on ammonia effluent management.

At the 13th session of the IMO PPR, the Korean government delegation will underscore the urgency of establishing guidelines for ammonia effluent management and marine discharge standards and propose the formation of an Expert Group for in-depth technical discussions. KR is leading these international deliberations by providing technical evidence on safe discharge limits, based on its environmental impact assessment of ammonia effluent.

This international standards development initiative presents a significant opportunity to embed Korea's shipbuilding technological capabilities and operational experience into global regulations. From a regulation-driven industrial development perspective, this will strengthen the competitiveness of the Korean maritime industry as the market of ammonia-fuelled ships expands.

KR's Executive Vice President, Kim Kyungbok, stated, "This year's IMO meetings mark the beginning of substantive international discussions on ammonia effluent safety standards. Drawing on KR's technical and regulatory expertise, we will play a leading role alongside the Korean government and industry to ensure that proven domestic technical standards are effectively incorporated into international rulemaking."



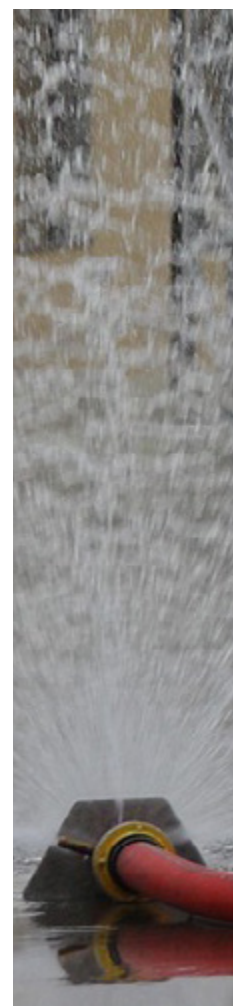
IACS publishes new Unified Requirement on ammonia release mitigation systems

IACS, the International Association of Classification Societies, has released a new Unified Requirement (UR H2) establishing a comprehensive safety framework for ammonia release mitigation systems (ARMS) on ammonia-fuelled ships.

The UR provides harmonised requirements for the design, testing and certification of ARMS intended to manage ammonia releases during normal operations and foreseeable abnormal scenarios.

Key takeaways from the new UR H2 include:

- Enabling the Safe uptake of ammonia as a marine fuel. It aligns with MSC.1/Circ.1687 and provides clarity on how ammonia release mitigation systems should be implemented, assessed, and approved by Classification Societies.
- Facilitating the application of ARMS. Achieved through setting out a clear framework for evaluating ammonia release scenarios and corresponding mitigation measures. This approach supports the development of tailored technical solutions while maintaining a consistent safety objective.
- Recognising multiple technical solutions while ensuring consistent safety outcomes. It covers a range of mitigation concepts—including dissolution tanks, scrubbers, combustion units, and dilution systems—without constraining innovation, provided that defined safety objectives and exposure limits are met.
- Establishing clear expectations for testing, certification, and onboard readiness. The UR defines workshop and onboard testing regimes, certification requirements, and operational readiness criteria to ensure that ARMS remain effective in mitigating the hazards connected with operational ammonia fuel releases.



Britannia P&I updates guidance notes for condition surveys

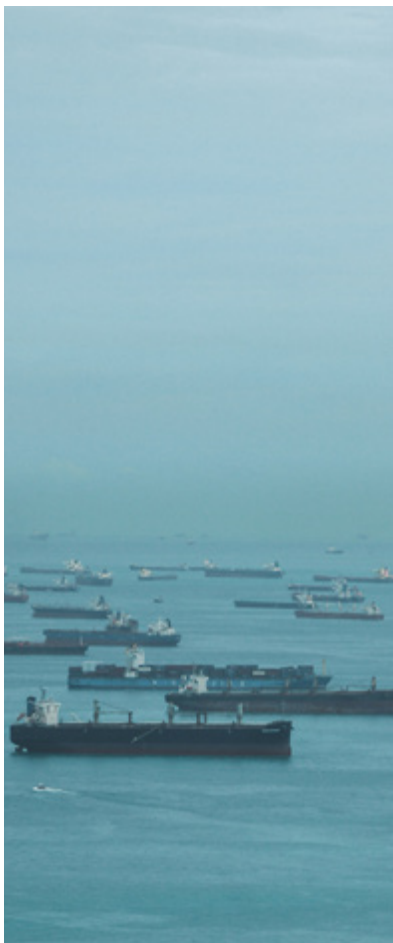
Britannia P&I has released updated guidance notes on the IG Ship Condition Survey Report Forms.

Now available for both surveyors and masters, the revised documents have been developed to provide clearer direction on completing the International Group's ship condition survey report forms, supporting more consistent reporting standards across the fleet.

Condition surveys play a vital role in maintaining ship safety, identifying potential risks, and ensuring compliance with International Group requirements. The updated guidance:

- Clarifies key reporting expectations, helping surveyors and masters understand what information is required and why.
- Improves the consistency and quality of submissions, allowing for more accurate assessments and more efficient processing.
- Supports safer ship operations, by highlighting areas that commonly lead to claims or operational issues.
- Enhances communication between masters, surveyors and Clubs, reducing ambiguity and improving the overall survey experience.

Download the updates: <https://bit.ly/4a6TcLp>



Dual-fuel container ship and vehicle carrier fleet hits 400 ships

The latest update to the World Shipping Council (WSC) Dual-Fuel Fleet Dashboard shows the number of dual-fuel container ships and vehicle carriers on the water has reached 400 as of December 2025 - up from 218 in 2024.

The dashboard tracks the global liner shipping industry's investment in new ships capable of running on renewable and lower-emission fuels, and shows how the fleet is preparing for the energy transition.

The number of dual-fuel ships on order has also continued to grow, reaching 726 vessels, despite a flurry of deliveries shifting from the orderbook onto the water. Across the container ship and vehicle carrier orderbook, 74% of vessels on order are dual-fuel.

In total, 1,126 dual-fuel container ships and vehicle carriers are now delivered or on order – an increase of 28% compared with last year. This represents over \$150 billion of investment by the liner shipping industry in these new vessels.

The expansion of the dual-fuel fleet reflects the scale of investment underway across the liner shipping industry. These vessels are built for the fuel transition, with the capability to switch to renewable and near-zero fuels as they become commercially viable and available at scale.

Find out more at: www.worldshipping.org



The new Axopar Digital Product Passport

Axopar has announced its entry into the Aura Blockchain consortium. This collaboration marks the arrival of the nautical sector in an ecosystem already active in luxury goods and watchmaking. The aim is to create a digital passport for each boat, designed to structure data over the entire lifespan of the craft.

The issue of traceability and reliability of information is becoming central to pleasure boating. Axopar is taking a step forward by joining the Aura Blockchain consortium, with the announced launch of a digital passport for its boats from spring 2026. An initiative that goes beyond customer relations to touch on broader industrial issues.

Aura Blockchain opens up to boating

The Aura Blockchain consortium, already active in the luxury, fashion and watchmaking sectors, welcomes for the first time a player from the boating industry. The arrival of Axopar marks an extension of this data management model to a sector where product life cycles are long and information is often fragmented.

For the marine industry, this rapprochement is a signal. It shows that the issues of traceability, authenticity and asset tracking are now on a par with those of industries that have historically been more structured in these areas.

A digital passport for every Axopar boat

From spring 2026, every Axopar boat will be equipped with a Digital Product Passport. This passport creates a secure digital identity for the unit, bringing together information previously scattered between paper documents, dealer databases and direct exchanges with the shipyard.

Factory specifications, certificates of authenticity, warranty status and ownership documents are integrated into a single environment, accessible via a smartphone. Access is gained by reading an NFC chip embedded in the cockpit.

Blockchain and immutable data: the challenge of trust

The choice of the Aura blockchain anchors this data in a register designed to be tamper-proof. For Axopar, the stakes are twofold. On the one hand, to secure the information for the current owner. On the other, to guarantee its reliability for successive resales.

In a second-hand market that structures the value of boats, the ability to trace the history of a product becomes an important lever. The digital passport enables a formalized transfer of ownership, with verified information, without relying solely on declarations or scattered documents.

A tool that goes beyond simple documentation

In addition to administrative documents, the Digital Product Passport is designed as an evolving interface between the worksite and the owner. Eventually, it should incorporate maintenance recommendations, service histories, care tips and community features.

For professionals, worksites, distribution networks and after-sales services, this type of tool opens the way to more detailed management of unit tracking. It also raises the question of future interoperability with dealers, workshops and insurers.

Sanlorenzo report shows order intake up 16% with €943.1m in 2025

Sanlorenzo has published its 2025 financial report highlighting an order intake of €943.1million—a 16% year-in-year increase.

The Italian shipyard explained the €130 million uplift compared to the previous year was driven by the success of extraordinary new model launches and enduring brand desirability and strengthened distribution in MED, APAC and US.

Its preliminary consolidated results also said the company's group net profit also rose by 4.2% to €107.4 million. Executive Chairman Massimo Perotti, said, "Our 2025 performance reflects the enduring strength of a brand deeply desired by connoisseurs worldwide and a vision being executed with consistency.

"We delivered on our guidance, achieved all financial targets, and recorded a sixth consecutive quarter of growth in Order Intake, continuing into a strong Q4 and providing us with further confidence in the soundness of our business model and strategic vision.

"In a market affected by short-term external unpredictable factors, Sanlorenzo continues to distinguish itself through positioning, innovation and scarcity — anticipating the needs of current and future owners increasingly motivated by wellbeing, longevity and quality-time scarcity value. The strength of our order book reflects the privileged and intimate relationship we nurture with a growing global club of owners who recognise themselves in our philosophy."

The company reported an order backlog €1.96 million of which 88% of orders are secured by final clients.

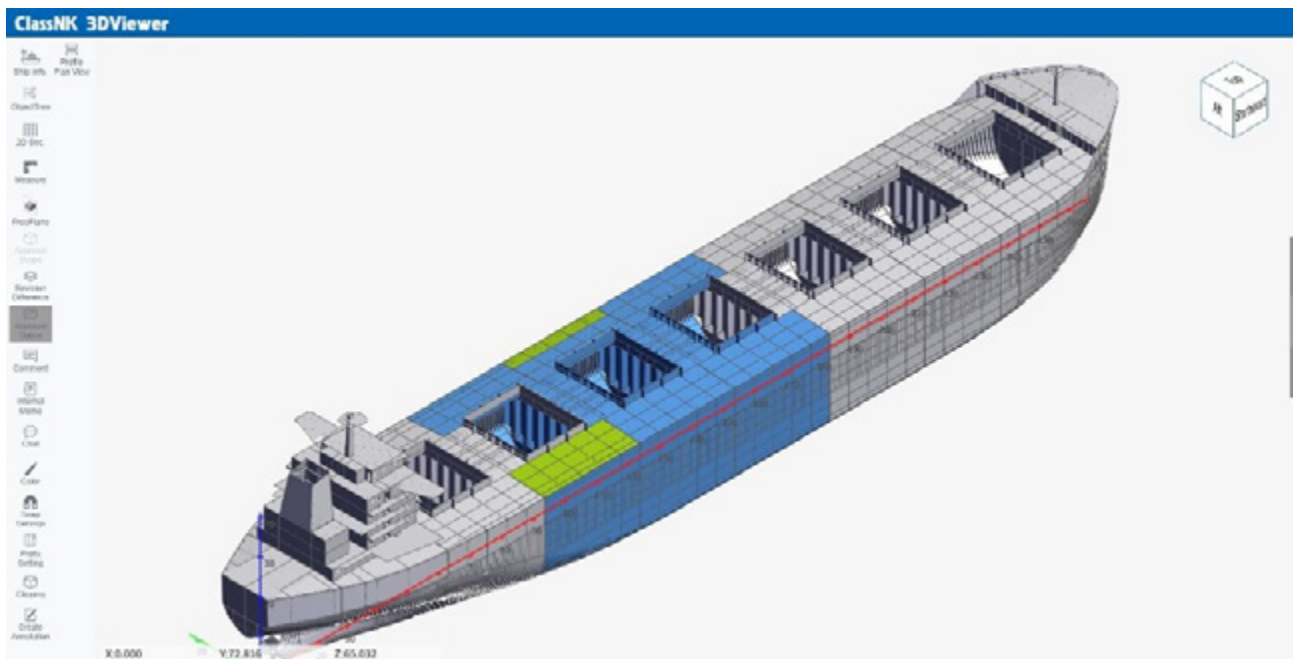
In 2025, Sanlorenzo unveiled the new diesel-electric 58 Steel superyacht, the hybrid-electric propulsion Sanlorenzo Heritage model SHE, and its newest flagship superyacht 74Steel.

Massimo Perotti added, "We enter 2026 with a promising start, guided by our commitment to continuously advance yachting, inspiring and elevating our customer experience. We continue to champion elegance over extravagance, and innovation over novelty.

"We believe growth is the natural consequence of value over volume, discipline in quality and respect for our heritage. On this foundation, our journey continues."

Read the full report: <https://bit.ly/3PuALYW>





3D model display in the ClassNK 3DViewer currently under development. Source: ClassNK

ClassNK launches 3D Model-Based Approval System pilot test

ClassNK has launched a joint pilot test with 10 Japanese companies for its drawing approval system NK-PASS and the ClassNK 3Dviewer.

Both are compatible with 3D Model-Based Approval (3DMBA), scheduled for official release later this spring. 3DMBA is an approach in which approval processes are centered on 3D models instead of conventional 2D drawings, and its adoption is expanding globally. By using 3D models, it is expected to enhance visualization and accuracy for information that was difficult to identify in traditional processes, as well as enable faster detection of design changes and potential errors.

The pilot test will focus on:

- Verification of 3DMBA-compatible functionalities
- Verification of data interoperability using the OCX format
- Verification of practical operations combining 3D models with supplementary 2D drawings as needed during the transition phase

The new systems are being developed to support the transition from the conventional 2D drawing-based approval process to a new workflow centered on 3D models.

They are designed to accommodate the internationally standardized OCX (Open Class 3D Exchange) format, contributing to digital transformation across the shipbuilding industry.

Participating companies include:

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| • Oshima Shipbuilding Co., Ltd. | • Kawasaki Heavy Industries, Ltd. |
| • Shin Kurushima Sanoyas Shipbuilding Co., Ltd. | • Shin Kurushima Dockyard Co., Ltd. |
| • Tsuneishi Solutions Tokyobay Co., Ltd. | • Tsuneishi Shipbuilding Co., Ltd. |
| • Hakodate Dock Co., Ltd. | • Namura Shipbuilding Co., Ltd. |
| • Nippon Shipyard Co., Ltd. | • Mitsubishi Shipbuilding Co., Ltd. |

Through this pilot testing, ClassNK aims to identify operational challenges and advantages of 3DMBA and refine the system in preparation for its official release in spring 2026.

Find out more: <https://bit.ly/4b1Bmda>

Caribbean maritime leaders call for cross-sector action to decarbonize shipping

Caribbean policymakers and financiers have emphasized that decarbonization will not succeed through isolated projects or technologies alone, but through coordinated action across sectors and countries, supported by evidence-based planning and investment-ready pathways.

Senior representatives from Caribbean governments, maritime administrations, ports, energy authorities, development banks and financial institutions met for a regional roundtable convened in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago by IMO's GreenVoyage2050 Programme, in collaboration with Global MTCC Network (GMN Phase II).

The event, under the theme 'Unlocking maritime decarbonization', resulted in key draft policy recommendations for the region, including proposals for:

- enhanced regional coordination to harmonize national policies;
- capacity building; and
- knowledge-sharing;
- investment facilitation.

Participants focused on moving from analysis to implementation by aligning policy, infrastructure planning, energy systems and finance. The participation of multilateral and regional development banks alongside policymakers and industry linked technical ambition with financial realism at an early stage.

Global ambition, national delivery

The first day of discussions connected the 2023 IMO GHG Strategy with delivery through technical cooperation and regional collaboration.

Findings from the Jamaica Maritime Alternative Fuels Study, supported by the GreenVoyage2050 Programme, were shared to ground the regional dialogue in a concrete country example. The study illustrated how Caribbean States can assess future fuel demand, supply pathways, infrastructure needs and policy implications to inform investment and planning decisions.

Building on this evidence, participants discussed credible fuel pathways for the region, barriers to adoption and where regional coordination could accelerate progress. Interactive mapping exercises captured existing initiatives, infrastructure gaps and opportunities for collaboration across the Caribbean, while practical examples demonstrated how policy intent is already translating into action through green port development, fleet initiatives and pilot projects.

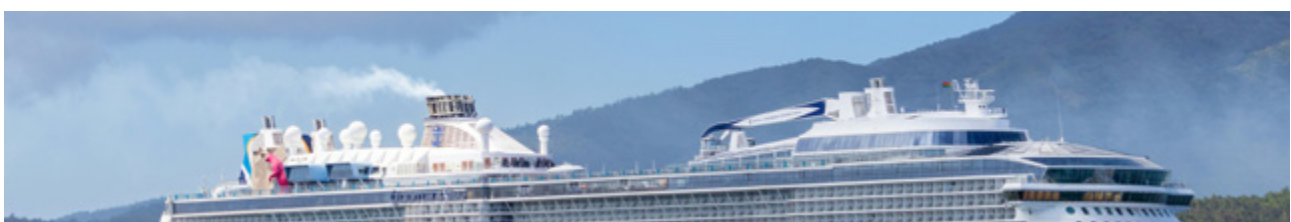
Unlocking investments for the green transition

The second day of the roundtable focused on unlocking investment, with development banks and financial institutions outlining what is needed to improve project bankability and mobilize public and private finance.

Discussions explored financial instruments, risk-sharing approaches and policy signals required to support investment in ports, clean fuels and maritime infrastructure, reinforcing the importance of aligning national priorities with financier expectations.

Ms Thandi McAllister, Director – Legal Services, Maritime Administration Department, Guyana, said: "This Regional Roundtable provided a vital platform for States and other maritime stakeholders to gain valuable insights into the impact and opportunities that are optimizable by Caribbean SIDs and LDCs in their pursuit of decarbonisation goals."

Finally, the participants visited the ammonia-fuelled ship Fortescue Green Pioneer for a first-hand look at alternative fuel technology in use onboard.



IMO launches global campaign to put maritime “policy into practice”

IMO Secretary-General calls for global application of safety and environmental standards under 2026-2027 World Maritime Day theme.

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) has launched a two-year global initiative to promote the World Maritime Day theme for 2026-2027: ‘From Policy to Practice: Powering Maritime Excellence’.

In a video message marking the launch, IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez stressed that the global regulatory framework developed by IMO must not merely be adopted in principle but translated into concrete actions and real-world results that deliver tangible benefits for all.

“When we talk about ‘practice’, we are talking about people. The seafarers on the ship; the people in the port; those managing ship operations, ship recycling workers, port State control officers and flag State administrators,” Secretary-General Dominguez said.

“To make the maritime industry truly sustainable, we must ensure these high standards are felt in every port and on every deck - not selectively, not unevenly, but globally. IMO is committed to powering this transition through technical cooperation and direct support,” he added.

For more information: <https://bit.ly/46g82wF>



New Chief Inspector of Marine Accidents for MAIB

The Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) has appointed Rob Loder as its new chief inspector. Rob replaces Andrew Moll OBE, who retired last month after 21 years’ service at the MAIB.

Rob brings a wealth of experience to the role, having worked as an engineer officer on board oil tankers, cable ships, ferries and superyachts before moving into fleet management, ship repair and project management.

Rob said: “I am honoured to take on the role of chief inspector. Andrew Moll leaves behind a remarkable legacy, and I am determined to build on the MAIB’s globally recognised reputation for rigorous, independent investigation.

“Working alongside the rest of the outstanding team at the MAIB, I am committed to ensuring our work continues to drive meaningful improvements in safety across the maritime sector.”

After training in heavy engineering ashore, Rob joined the merchant navy and served as an able seaman and motorman while completing a rating to officer conversion course. Upon qualifying Rob was promoted to engineer officer and served on a variety of vessels including oil tankers, cable ships, ferries and superyachts; and attained the rank of chief engineer.

Rob moved into fleet management and then into ship repair, ship build supervision and project management. After a period of consultancy to the marine industry Rob joined the MAIB in 2020 as an inspector, progressing to principal inspector and then deputy chief inspector before taking up his current role.

Rob is a chartered engineer, marine engineer, and a fellow of the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (IMarEST).



Sunseeker secures new ownership, appoints permanent CEO and new Chairman

Sunseeker has confirmed it has secured new owners.

A debt purchase from the existing lenders by a consortium led by KCP, in partnership with Lionheart Capital, was completed earlier this year, with the KCP group also shortly entering into an agreement to purchase 100% of the shares in Sunseeker.

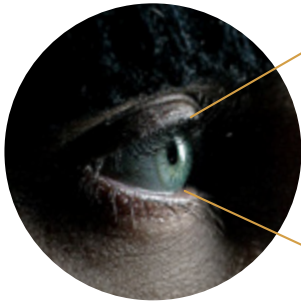
This is a significant milestone - one that provides the financial stability and long-term commitment the business needs to deliver on its ambitions. It follows a series of recent capital investments in the business as Sunseeker prepares for its next chapter of growth.

KCP was established in 1952 and has teams in New York, London, Singapore, and Washington, D.C. It has deep investment experience and is making a long-term commitment to investing in Sunseeker's future. KCP is fully supportive of Sunseeker's existing business plan, which includes investment in next-generation product development, the reintroduction of a Superyacht offering, and transformation of the operating model. KCP is committed to further investment across Sunseeker's brand, operations, products, customer experience, and people with the goal to make it the best producer of yachts in the world.

As part of this transition, Scott Millar is stepping down as Interim CEO and Andrés Rubio will become permanent CEO. Andrés has a 30-year track record in commercial leadership and business transformation across the US, Europe and Asia. He was most recently the CEO of Intrum AB, a publicly listed pan-European credit management business and prior to that served as a Senior Partner at Apollo Management International.

Antony Sheriff will become Non-Executive Chairman. Antony has been a Board Member of Sunseeker since November 2024. He has deep luxury yachting and automotive industry experience and was formerly the Executive Chairman of Princess Yachts and prior to that, the CEO of McLaren Automotive.

Andrés Rubio CEO of Sunseeker said, "I have long admired Sunseeker as the pinnacle of luxury yacht building and its heritage genuinely sets it apart. It is an honour to be leading the business at such an exciting time and with a clear path to transformative growth. I am also privileged to be joining a highly experienced leadership team and a dedicated workforce who are the heart and soul of the Sunseeker brand. We now have committed owners, an established leadership team, an industry-leading Chairman, and a clear plan. With the backing of KCP and Lionheart and an accelerated focus on delivering our ambitions, I look forward to the opportunities ahead."



What
caught
my eye...

*Mike Schwarz casts
his eye back over last
month's eye-catching and
eventful marine news*

Community mural brings a splash of colour to Doncaster Lock



Photo credit: Canal & River Trust

The UK canal network has provided me with inspiration once again, and not for the first time. Doncaster is a medium size city in the north of the UK. Volunteers have completed a vibrant mural at Doncaster Lock to celebrate the city's heritage and encourage more boaters to experience this part of the waterway network. Created by local artist, Kate Rhodes, with assistance from volunteer lock keeper and ex-boater Jan Miller, the mural – measuring more than 10 metres long – was jointly unveiled by the Canal & River Trust and Doncaster Council.

Kate, who volunteered over several weeks to create it, said, "I really wanted to give something back to the area, and having been a boater for more than 20 years, I wanted to do something to celebrate the waterways, brighten up Doncaster Lock, and hopefully put it on the map."

Glyn Jones, deputy mayor and cabinet member for the environment, housing and safer communities at City of Doncaster Council, said, "This tremendous piece of art is a fitting tribute to Doncaster's storied history and its exciting present, capturing everything that makes it such a vibrant place."

Well done Kate - great and inspiring work.



Legends of maritime heritage came together for the 2026 Auckland Wooden Boat Festival

By the time you read this article, bad luck, the 2026 Auckland Wooden Boat Festival has been and gone last month. But I wanted to pick out and highlight the importance of this event. In the UK wooden boats are few and far between, as indeed are marine surveyors prepared to undertake surveys on these craft - equally rare.

But it is heart-warming to see that in some parts of the world, wood is still attractive as a material, and any event capable of persuading 10k visitors plus to visit is surely worthy of note.

More than 100 of New Zealand's best examples of maritime history were on display at the Auckland Wooden Boat Festival. This year's theme celebrated the story of timber – kauri in particular – and how its strength and resilience have lent themselves to the story of New Zealand's classic boat fleet, believed to be the largest fleet of original boats still sailing in the world.

In partnership with the New Zealand Maritime Museum, the festival also featured a programme of short films, talks and seminars, offering insight to the stories, skills and innovation behind wooden boats.

Let the event's co-director, Michelle Khan-Stevenson, have the final word. She said, "The Auckland Wooden Boat Festival is a living showcase of all things maritime that reflects the city's story."

Records are made to be broken

Thomas Coville and the crew of Sodebo Ultim 3 have set a new benchmark in offshore sailing, becoming the fastest team ever to sail non-stop around the world. The French skipper and his six-man crew completed their circumnavigation in just 40 days, 10 hours, 45 minutes and 50 seconds, ending a record that had survived for nine years and thirteen unsuccessful attempts.



The successful attempt followed several years of perseverance in the pursuit of the Jules Verne Trophy. The team had launched four record attempts over the past six years, including two aborted runs in 2024. Despite those setbacks, the same core crew chose to return for another challenge, determined to complete their shared journey. Despite completing the course faster than any crew before them, conditions proved far less favourable than those faced by their predecessor, IDEC Sport, which set the previous record. Rather than benefiting from a smooth weather pattern, Sodebo Ultim 3 was forced to adapt repeatedly to complex and unstable systems.

A large flotilla of boats and hundreds of spectators welcomed the team back to shore, where emotional reunions with family, friends, and Sodebo colleagues followed. Champagne corks were popped, and the celebrations began for Coville and his "magic seven" crewmates.



Dr Frederik De Boever and Dr Puja Kumari. Photo credit: Scottish Association for Marine Science

Scientists develop new tank-based method for growing red seaweed

Well, here's a quirky story for you, but one that would appear to have importance.

Do you ever wonder what other people do for a job? I do occasionally. But growing *Palmaria palmata* in tanks for a living is one that passed me by I have to admit!

Yes, it seems that Dr Frederik De Boever and Dr Puja Kumari are growing *Palmaria palmata*, also known as dulse, in tanks at the Scottish Association for Marine Science's facility in Oban.

Researchers at the Scottish Association for Marine Science (SAMS) said they have developed a successful tank-based method for growing the red seaweed variety *Palmaria palmata*, commonly known as dulse. This seaweed is consumed as a high-end food product. SAMS said it is 40 times more valuable per tonne than kelp and can be used in food, feed, dyes, cosmetics, and pharmaceuticals. However, the species is difficult to grow.

The cultivation method developed at SAMS has sought to overcome challenges in how *Palmaria palmata* grows. Researchers identified a bottleneck at the hatchery phase, as the species has a short reproductive window and the sexual maturity period of males and females is different, posing challenges for growers to control its life cycle.

The demand for red seaweed is increasing but this industry primarily relies on a few seaweed species, mainly cultivated in Asian countries, that are facing threats from increasing incidences of diseases.

*More stories
next month.
Mike Schwarz*



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