IIMS News Bulletin



MAY 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 Industry Professionals

Recently I attended the annual UK Maritime & Coastguard Agency's (MCA) Certifying Authority BCC meeting in Southampton, which drew about 40 attendees. All the UK Certifying Authorities and the Recognised Organisations were represented and present. We were joined by senior and key MCA personnel and others from the Jersey and Cayman Islands registries. For the large part, it was business as usual as the regulator announced new initiatives, interpretations and to give a general news update on a series of policies and ongoing work behind the scenes. But mid-way through the meeting, a comment was made by the Code Lead in his presentation about the Workboat Edition 3 Code in relation to a recently circulated urgent **MCA press release**. I could not let this go unchallenged. The Code, which was first introduced in December 2023, becomes mandatory in December 2026, meaning all under 24 metre workboats must be compliant with the new regulations to continue operating. Apparently, a number of vessel owners/operators have yet to transition to meet the new Code requirements - hence why the press release was issued. I directly asked two of the Certifying Authorities present, who are responsible for a large number of workboats between them, just how serious the issue was. Both responded by saying that somewhere in the order of 80% have yet to do what is required to meet the requirements of the code. Yes, a staggering 80%, and there are only eight months left to the deadline.



It already seems clear that Certifying Authorities do not have the surveyor capacity and administrative manpower to get all vessel owners/operators where they need to be to meet the deadline. So, the message to surveyors who look after commercially coded workboats

and vessel owners/operators is act now - and even if you do, it may already be almost too late!

All of this presents a conundrum for the MCA. On the face of it, there is no grace period and no extension possible at this time. But if that renders hundreds of commercial vessels suspended and unable to operate, the results could be catastrophic. Let's see what develops.

This scenario leads me onto a related matter going forward which needs mentioning and thinking about now. The MCA's Sport or Pleasure Vessel Code, launched in December 2025, also has a three-year 'window of opportunity' for under 24 metre vessels to meet the new regulations by December 2028. But unlike the workboat fleet, the number of sport and pleasure vessels is considerably bigger. So, the best advice is plan now and get ahead of the curve or prepare for the likely similar consequences further down the track!

Rarely is IIMS invited to make a competitive pitch for a commercial contract, but it happened recently. The Royal National Lifeboat Institution (RNLI) fleet is to be coded for the first time in their 200-year history. As a consequence, IIMS was invited to submit a bid for the 5-year contract. The timeline was short and I believe our bid was of the highest order, not only commercially viable, but also meeting the stringent technical requirements that were asked for as part of the submission. I'd like to publicly recognise the significant work carried out by Fraser Noble, our Certifying Authority Chair, who went above and beyond with his time and document preparation to assist me. Sadly, on this occasion, we were not chosen and I understand the contract has been awarded to another organisation.

Let me talk numbers with you for a moment. Numbers and statistics reveal lots. They can be used to explain the success of an activity, or conversely, the severity of a crisis perhaps. Where would we be without numbers? So, I was particularly interested to read a report about the number of global port state control inspections conducted in 2025 and the resulting deficiencies and detentions. I am not quite sure what number I was expecting to see, but I was shocked!

The report revealed that in 2025, Port State Control (PSC) inspections showed a rising trend, with approximately 75,168 inspections conducted worldwide, leading to 177,741 deficiencies in total and 2,569 detentions. I have no historical data to compare these figures against, but the volume of deficiencies seems vast. Anyone not related with or invested in the maritime industry would surely be shocked and concerned at these statistics. So, what are the most common offending issues?

It seems the main issues have not altered; they just keep being repeated.

- Fire safety systems (SOLAS II-2) are a big one and accounted for 17% of all deficiencies. Inspections found faulty alarms, inoperative fire pumps and missing maintenance records.

- Life-saving appliances (SOLAS III) - 10% of findings. Typical deficiencies included damaged lifeboats, expired pyrotechnics and untested launching systems.

- And that old chestnut, the ISM Code implementation (SOLAS IX), which revealed recurring non-conformities in drills, SMS execution, and crew familiarisation.

On that sombre note, and before I leave you, I would like to send my personal congratulations to IIMS President, Capt. Ruchin Dayal, who was recently recognised for his contribution to maritime excellence when he was presented with a special award at the 63rd National Maritime Day Celebration. See elsewhere in this bulletin for more details.

I bid you farewell until next month.



Survey well,



Mike Schwarz
Chief Executive Officer

IIMS President recognised for maritime excellence

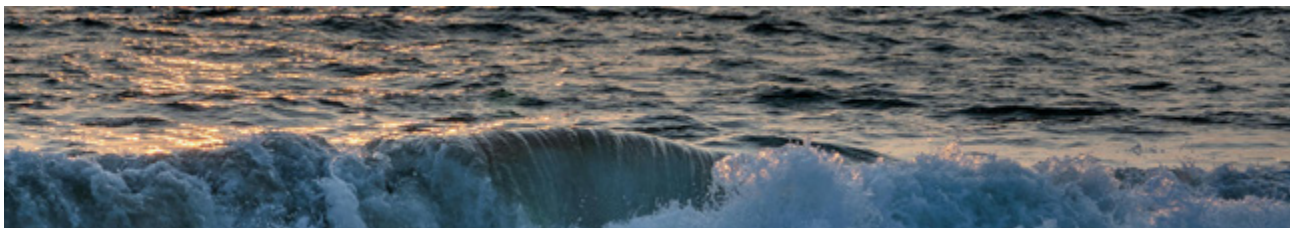


IIMS is delighted to hear that the Governor of Goa, Shri. Pusapati Ashok Gajapathi Raju, presented this prestigious recognition to our current President, Capt. Ruchin C Dayal, at the 63rd National Maritime Day Celebration.

Ruchin was recognised for his outstanding service and enduring contribution to the maritime sector. This award stands as a testament to his passion, resilience, and lasting impact on the industry.

On behalf of members and colleagues, IIMS would like to congratulate Ruchin.

Capt. Ruchin C Dayal (pictured left)





Peter Broad HonFIIMS installed as a Freeman of The Worshipful Company of Shipwrights'

IIMS is pleased to announce that Peter Broad HonFIIMS, Past President of the Institute, has been installed as a Freeman of the Worshipful Company of Shipwrights' at a ceremony on the 9th of April 2026 presided over by the Prime Warden Mr. Andreas Bisbas. The ceremony was held at Ironmongers Hall in the City of London.

The Worshipful Company of Shipwrights' is one of the City of London's 113 livery companies with its origins dating from before 1199. Recognised as a Company 'incorporated by prescription', the earliest surviving written reference to this old and Worshipful Company occurs in the records of the City of London in the reign of King Richard II in 1387.

The original purpose of the Company 700 years ago was to safeguard the quality of shipbuilding in London. This continues today via the provision of support to marine apprenticeships, boat building courses and naval and marine engineering students at university, plus the presentation of annual awards of excellence. The Shipwrights' Company has a strong philanthropic purpose and donates annually to maritime related causes, individuals, charities and companies.

Speaking about his recognition, Peter said, "It is a huge honour to be asked to join such a prestigious livery company that has its origins dating back 700 years. To attend the installation court at Ironmongers Hall was a very special event and to meet the Prime Warden, Wardens and Liverymen of the Worshipful Company of Shipwrights' was such a memorable and prestigious occasion.

I look forward to contributing to the good work of the 'Company' and their historical goals supporting organisations, charities, educational institutions and individuals associated with the Company's role as a City of London Livery Company and its origins and trade."

Obituary: Captain J.C Ananad HonMIIMS 1922 to 2026



The death has been reported of Captain J.C. Anand at the age of 104. He was made an Honorary Member of the IIMS in 2010.

The Indian Register of Shipping (IRS) has paid a heartfelt tribute following the announcement of his passing. Remembered as a visionary leader, Capt Anand played a defining role in steering IRS in its formative years into a globally recognised institution.

He played a key role in IRS gaining full member status at IACS - a milestone that elevated Indian shipping's standing on the world stage. He convened India's first-ever Shipping and Shipbuilding Conference in 1961, inaugurated by President Dr. S. Radhakrishnan. And he was the first CEO of a liner shipping company to usher containerisation into India, recognising before most that the future of global trade would be built in boxes.

The industry recognised what he built. The Varuna Award, Indian Maritime's highest honour, as well as lifetime achievement awards from Lloyd's List and Seatrade. There was also a Business Excellence Award, The Hall of Fame and an Alumni Achievement Award. But What Capt. Anand leaves behind is something no award can capture - generations of maritime professionals shaped by his mentorship, his standards, and his quiet, unshakeable conviction that Indian shipping belonged among the best in the world.



New IIMS handy guide

What a Marine Surveyor Needs to Know About Becoming an Expert Witness *By Peter Broad FIIMS*

Available in paperback and eReader formats.

Becoming an expert witness can be a daunting prospect but lucrative activity. Standing up in a packed courtroom to give your evidence, even if you are confident that you know your subject inside out, is still a challenge, especially the first time, and in what can be intense surroundings in the court.

Being prepared for every eventuality is essential, and that is the aim of What a Marine Surveyor Needs to Know About Becoming an Expert Witness. Author Peter Broad is experienced in giving expert witness in court and is a seasoned veteran, making him perfectly placed to write this handy guide.

This handy guide focuses on the unique legal responsibilities of marine surveyors and consultants acting as expert witnesses. It covers the full process from initial engagement and evidence assessment to courtroom testimony, preparing consultants to deliver clear, credible and independent technical opinions that meet legal standards.

The areas covered in this handy guide will provide you with an introduction to:

- What is the role of the expert witness?
- The legal obligations and procedural guidelines for experts.
- Writing structured and defensible expert reports.
- The different communication techniques required for court and arbitration appearances.
- The ethical standards relevant to impartiality, independence and conflicts of interest.

Important note: The information contained in this handy guide, whilst predominantly related to English Law and legal concepts, still provides invaluable advice for those operating globally in different jurisdictions as an expert witness. The principles of giving expert witness are similar.

For more information go to **https://bit.ly/4cgj1sd**

IIMS President at Asia Pacific Maritime

IIMS President, Capt Ruchin Dayal, joined by members of his team, recently exhibited his business at Asia Pacific Maritime in Singapore.

Asia Pacific Maritime (APM) is Asia's premier exhibition and conference for cutting-edge innovation in Shipbuilding & Marine, Workboat, Offshore, Port Technology, and Electric & Hybrid Marine. Bringing together visionaries, tech trailblazers, and sector leaders and the maritime ecosystem, APM drives the advancement of the future of vessels, and solutions for tomorrow.

Into its 19th edition, APM has cemented its place as a cornerstone of the global maritime trade calendar and the pre-eminent event for Asia. It is the region's trusted platform for driving impactful connections and strategic collaboration.

Ruchin and some of his team are pictured below on their stand.





Latest regulation news and updates from the UK MCA



MIN 724 (M) The sport or pleasure vessel code – standards and guidelines for best practice

Updated 6 March 2026

This MIN is intended to supplement The Sport or Pleasure Vessel Code and provides a summary of standards referenced therein and guidelines considered as best practice for Small Commercial Vessels.

Go to **https://bit.ly/4bE4Dep**

MGN 715 (M+F) - Recommended Best Practice for Respectful and Safe Operation

9 March 2026

This sets out recommended best practice to encourage respectful operation between different water users.

Go to **https://bit.ly/4d35xlH**

SI 2026 No. 0234 - The Merchant Shipping (Light Dues) (Amendment) Regulations 2026

10 March 2026

This instrument amends the Merchant Shipping (Light Dues) Regulations 2025 (SI 2025/278) to increase charges for vessels that pay light dues on a per-voyage basis, changes how charges are calculated for tugs and fishing vessels by introducing a definition of 'registered length', amending the categories of vessels in Schedule 1 which are exempt from light dues.

Go to **https://bit.ly/4rPd23e**

SI 2026 No. 0244 - The Seafarers' Wages (Amendment) Regulations 2026

19 March 2026

These Regulations amend regulation 14(1) of the Seafarers' Wages Regulations 2024 to increase the hourly rates specified for the purposes of the national minimum wage equivalent.

Go to **https://bit.ly/47gMRv1**

MIN 732 (M+F) - Guidance for Shipowners, Fishing Vessel Owners, Seafarers and Fishers Affected by the Conflict in the Middle East

13 March 2026

This notice outlines information on Maritime Labour Convention and Work in Fishing Convention requirements for seafarers and fishers affected by the conflict in the Middle East.

Go to **https://bit.ly/3PsLNOI**

MIN 733 (M+F) - Conflict in the Middle-East - MCA Approach to Survey and Certification of UK Vessels

19 March 2026

This MIN sets out the MCA's policy with respect to UK Vessels which were prevented from arranging the surveys, audits and verifications required for compliance with the relevant Statutory Instruments due to the ongoing conflict in the Middle-East.

Go to **https://bit.ly/4bH63Dw**



IIMS makes the MCA's Marine Guidance Notices searchable



Marine Guidance Notes (MGNs) are free publications from the UK Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) providing essential guidance, safety recommendations, and best practices for complying with merchant shipping regulations. Unlike Mandatory Merchant Shipping Notices (MSNs), MGNs offer non-mandatory guidance on interpreting safety regulations, though they are crucial for safety compliance. And there are dozens of them
About MGNs:

Purpose: They provide detailed advice on how to comply with statutory requirements.

Audience: They are intended for ship owners, managers, masters, and crew of both merchant ships (M) and fishing vessels (F), as well as marine surveyors and other interested parties.

Topics: They cover topics such as safety management, navigation procedures, fire protection, stability matters and employment regulations.

Lifespan: They remain active until formally cancelled or replaced.

Structure: They are categorized with an (M) for merchant vessels, (F) for fishing vessels, or (M+F) for both.

Recently, a senior member informed IIMS of his frustration at not being able to search for an MCA document on the UK government's website. He explained that all the Marine Guidance Notices (MGNs) are displayed there, but he had to trawl through dozens to find the one he was looking for. He challenged IIMS to come up with a solution and the Institute has done so. All the MGNs are now listed on the IIMS website and there is a free text search box, meaning users can drill down quickly to find the document they need.

Try a search now on the IIMS website at **https://bit.ly/4tzIjIW**

Consultation: Review of UK Maritime Spectrum Licences

This consultation sets out Ofcom's proposals to update some of their rules on spectrum use by the maritime sector to implement international decisions and simplify some of our licences.

The primary purpose of maritime radiocommunications is to ensure safety at sea. It enables vessels to share their position, identify other vessels, navigate and coordinate operations. It also supports the reporting of weather conditions, distress alerts, emergency situations and other communications. Ofcom manages spectrum to prevent harmful interference, including to safeguard the reliability of maritime radiocommunications on board UK registered vessels and within UK waters and territorial seas.

The proposals in this consultation aim to ensure that the UK maritime spectrum authorisation framework remains fit for purpose, supports technological developments, and continues to promote the safe, efficient use of radio communications at sea.

We are also seeking input from stakeholders on the future spectrum needs for maritime radiocommunications, including for VHF Data Exchange Systems (VDES) and autonomous vessels – to ensure our work programme continues to support growth and innovation in the maritime sector.

The consultation is open until 3 June 2026. To have your say go to **https://bit.ly/4vzPvXp**





The Bahamas introduce a suite of Merchant Shipping Regulations under the Merchant Shipping Act 2021

Captain Dwain Hutchinson, Managing Director and CEO of The BMA

The Bahamas has introduced a comprehensive suite of Merchant Shipping Regulations under the Merchant Shipping Act 2021, scheduled to come into force on 1 April 2026, marking a significant milestone in the modernisation of its regulatory framework.

The updated regulations consolidate and enhance the country's legislative structure for shipping, including registration, fees, marine safety investigations, inspections, seafarer standards, and yachts. Together, they are designed to reflect the needs of a modern, global shipping industry while maintaining full alignment with international conventions and best practice.

A central feature of the new framework is a more flexible and responsive legislative structure, enabling the Bahamas Maritime Authority (BMA) to adapt more efficiently to regulatory developments and evolving industry requirements, without the need for extensive legislative reform.

The regulations also introduce greater clarity and transparency for shipowners and operators. This includes, for the first time, the consolidation of fees into a single statutory instrument, alongside clearer processes across registration, inspections, and certification. As part of this update, the BMA has undertaken its first comprehensive review of fees in 15 years. The revised structure is designed to ensure fees remain fair, transparent, and aligned with the level of service provided, while supporting continued investment in service delivery and digital capabilities.

The updated regulations further strengthen The Bahamas' commitment to safety and compliance, including enhanced marine safety investigation provisions aligned with IMO standards, as well as clearer inspection and enforcement mechanisms.

Capt. Dwain Hutchinson, Managing Director & CEO of the BMA, said: "This is an important step forward in ensuring our regulatory framework remains fit for purpose in a rapidly evolving industry. These updates are focused on providing greater clarity, improving efficiency, and ensuring we continue to deliver a high-quality, customer-focused service to our clients worldwide.

We have taken the time to get this right, ensuring the framework not only reflects current international standards, but also positions the Bahamas flag to respond effectively to future developments."

The BMA will support the rollout of the new regulations through stakeholder briefings, technical updates, and direct engagement with clients and partners.

Ancasta under new ownership as founder sells majority stake



New Ancasta Group CEO Matthew Shave (left) and chairman Nick Griffith

Ancasta Group, one of Europe's leading yacht brokerage and new boat distribution companies, has announced that founder Nick Griffith has sold a majority shareholding in the business to Ancasta franchise owner Matthew Shave for an undisclosed sum.

Based in Southampton, UK, Ancasta Group employs 103 people and generates an annual turnover exceeding £50m. The group encompasses a portfolio of specialist marine companies, including Ancasta International Boat Sales, Sanlorenzo Yachts UK, PB Europe, Ancasta Yacht Services, Spencer Rigging, and Advanced Rigging & Hydraulics.

With operations spanning 22 offices across Europe, Ancasta is recognised as one of the region's leading yacht brokerage and new boat distribution groups. The company represents globally renowned power and sail brands and offers a comprehensive range of services, including sales, distribution, refit, rigging, and aftersales support. Following the transaction, Matthew Shave will assume the role of CEO, leading the company through its next phase of growth. Nick Griffith will transition to chairman, focusing on strategic oversight and supporting the executive team.



A comparative study of underwater radiated noise from electric and conventional boats

A new, peer-reviewed study conducted by University College London's Department of Mechanical Engineering in collaboration with RAD, a UK-based electric marine propulsion company, examined underwater radiated noise across a range of operating speeds, comparing electric and conventional boats. Their aim? To discover if electric boats really are quieter.

The study, titled 'A comparative study of underwater radiated noise from electric and conventional boats', is published in the Journal of the Acoustical Society of America (JASA). It was conducted by UCL's Department of Mechanical Engineering in collaboration with RAD, a UK-based electric marine propulsion company.

The authors set out to quantify the noise made by electric vessels and scientifically test the commonly held assumption that they are quieter than their combustion counterparts. While their engines are generally quieter to human ears, for example, electric vessels can produce significant underwater noise at higher frequencies, making them increasingly audible to species with good high-frequency hearing capabilities, including porpoises.

Following initial measurements indicating lower electrical system noise across several frequency ranges, a second trial was conducted in a controlled lake environment near Shrewsbury. Two identical boats were tested over several days, one fitted with a RAD 40 and the other with a combustion engine of the same output. Data collection included acoustic measurements from two hydrophones, high-speed underwater video and airborne noise readings. Tests were conducted on the boats at speeds ranging from four to 20 knots. The study reports a reduction of 43 dB at 4 knots when comparing the electric vessel with the combustion engine vessel. Lower broadband noise levels were also recorded for the electric system across the full speed range tested.

The findings attribute differences in noise output to the absence of combustion processes and associated exhaust discharge in electric propulsion systems. The research notes that electric propulsion, therefore, offers advantages for species sensitive to low-frequency noise. For species with stronger high-frequency hearing capabilities, such as odontocete cetaceans and pinnipeds, managing cavitation noise at higher speeds remains an important consideration for both propulsion types.

In a statement, RAD says: "The study provides valuable insights for policymakers, conservationists, and the marine industry, reinforcing the importance of quieter technologies in preserving aquatic ecosystems."

Download the study at **https://bit.ly/4cw7pT4**

Norwegian Maritime Authority shares results of inspections of SMS on smaller vessels

At the beginning of 2025, the Norwegian Maritime Authority announced smaller cargo ships, passenger ships and fishing vessels would face increased supervision of their Safety Management Systems (SMS).

A total of 34 audits were carried out with 154 non-conformities issued – four of them serious.

This group of vessels were chosen to help guide customers to put in place a safety management system that works on board.

The Authority stated the goal is for those on board to be safe and avoid accidents. A safety management system must be easy to use, it should not be too extensive or detailed, and the entire crew must receive training.

Absence of safety management system

Some of the customers that the Norwegian Maritime Authority inspected did not have a safety management system on board at all. Others had created their own system, but it did not meet the requirements of the regulations, while a third example had purchased a system from a supplier, but it was not adapted to the operation.

Which vessels receive supervision is risk-based:

- Accidents and incidents
- Concern messages
- Risk level
- Detention
- Number and scope of orders

After the first year of supervision of this vessel group, the Norwegian Maritime Authority has the following improvement proposals:

- That the crew participates in the preparation of procedures and checklists
- That simple systems are created for those on board
- Avoid extensive and detailed procedures
- Ensure good training in the use of the systems
- Ensure that the system is used as intended

Slight increase in the number of orders

In the same year, 134 unannounced inspections were also carried out on cargo ships under 500 gross tons that do not have ISM requirements.

The number of detained ships in 2025 was 29, compared to 24 in 2024. Of the findings, deficiencies in the safety management system are at the top, closely followed by life-saving equipment and fire prevention measures.



New DNV AI tool RuleAgent makes navigating maritime rules easier



DNV has launched RuleAgent, an AI-powered tool that helps maritime professionals access DNV's rules and standards faster and with greater clarity. Designed to reduce the time customers spend navigating regulatory material, it enables users to ask natural-language questions and receive targeted results. Fully connected to DNV's rules and standards database, this new tool provides complete traceability to DNV's official sources.

Maritime regulations are continuously evolving. Navigating the more than 30,000 pages of DNV's rules across multiple documents, chapters, and editions can be complex and time consuming. By presenting content in real time, RuleAgent enables users to identify the relevant rule paragraphs quickly, reducing the time spent searching across multiple documents.

RuleAgent works by searching directly in DNV's rules and standards database and highlighting relevant paragraphs for the user. It then provides short summaries and links to the official sources so that users can verify the content and apply their professional judgement to the results. When customer vessel information is available, the tool uses the specific vessel's ship type and class notations to narrow the search and present more targeted regulatory guidance.

RuleAgent covers Rules for Ships (RU SHIP), Rules for Offshore Units (RU OU), and reference documents such as Class Guidelines (CG), Class Programs (CP), Statutory Interpretations (SI), Standards (ST), Offshore Standards (OS), and Recommended Practices (RP), with further expansion planned. It has been piloted with selected customers to validate performance and refine the user experience.



New Maritime New Zealand rules take effect

Maritime Rules Amendments 2025 (No 3) have been signed and are now in force. They replace nine expired general exemptions and bring their requirements into the Maritime Rules.

The Maritime New Zealand updates formalise practices already used in the sector, clarify safety and technical expectations, remove outdated radio requirements, and streamline parts of the certification and training pathway.

The changes, made in December last year, address issues created by expired General Exemptions which are more appropriately dealt with under Maritime Rules.

Amendments that came into force this year

28 January 2026

- GE-01-17: Egress or means of escape for passenger accommodation
- GE-02-17: Means of launching the rescue boat on ships operating up to restricted coastal limits
- GE-06-17: Egress or means of escape for passenger accommodation
- GE-07-17: Breathing apparatus set and firefighters' outfit
- GE-13-20: Anchor chain cables and accessories, testing and marking
- GE-20-20: MF/HF radio in respect of Narrow-band Direct Printing

31 March 2026

- GE-05-20: Sea Service and prior certification for Integrated Rating Certificate
- GE-06-20: Training Record Book requirement for a MEC 3 certificate
- GE-08-20: Training requirements – Deck watch rating, Able seafarer deck, Engine room watch rating, Able seafarer engine, and Electro-technical rating

Download the new amendments:
https://bit.ly/4dviJjr

Study raises alarm on marine fiberglass pollution

Simon Fraser University researchers have uncovered concerning fibreglass contamination in a key estuary on Vancouver Island, raising concerns about how an as-yet overlooked contaminant could affect aquatic birds, marine life and coastal communities that rely on shellfish and seafood.

A new SFU study found fibreglass particles buried in the sediment and biofilm layers of the Cowichan Estuary, a 400-hectare intertidal ecosystem used by the Cowichan Tribes First Nations for generations. The areas is an internationally designated important bird area and used for harvesting clams, geoducks, crabs, waterfowl, cod roe, urchins and salmon.

"Fiberglass particles are silica-based glass fibres, often reinforced with plastic, and we are just in the infancy of understanding their potential toxicity for animals and people," says Juan José Alava, marine eco-toxicologist and lead author of the study.

"Just knowing these particles are present in an estuary that supports shorebirds and shellfish — and is central to Indigenous food security — is enough to justify preventive, precautionary actions. We don't have to wait until we know every toxic threshold to act."

Key findings

- Fiberglass particles detected at 96% of the sediment testing stations in 2023 (up from 64% in 2020)
- Sediment concentrations were highest near industrial activity and the log transport channel (6-286 particles per kilogram of dry sediment).
- Biofilm concentrations found at sites near the Western Forest Products mill pond, the Westcan Terminal, and a busy marina in Cowichan Bay Village (30–62 particles per kilogram of dry weight).
- Elevated fibreglass levels near the Westcan Terminal suggest industrial activities and uncontrolled runoff contribute to contamination.
- Higher fiberglass concentrations in both biofilm and sediment found at marinas, slipways and boat maintenance areas where sanding, repairs and hull cleaning are common.

Published in Marine Pollution Bulletin, the study is one of the first baseline assessments of coastal fiberglass pollution in Canada, sampling a total of 26 sites in the Cowichan Estuary between 2020 and 2024.

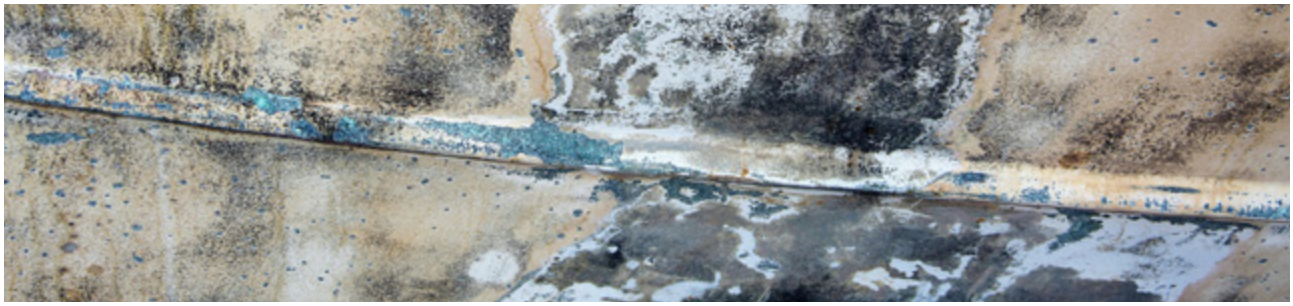
Working with the Cowichan Estuary Restoration and Conservation Association (CERCA), researchers looked at the biofilm (the top three to five millimetres made up of a thin, fatty layer of algae and microorganisms that fuels migratory shorebirds) and the deeper sediment layer where clams, mussels and other sediment-dwelling invertebrates live and feed.

They found fibreglass particles at several of the surface biofilm testing sites and 96 per cent of the sediment testing sites. Researchers say this is because fibreglass is heavier or denser than saltwater, so it tends to settle and build up in those deeper intertidal sediment zone layers.

"We don't yet know what levels of fiberglass exposure cause harm, how readily different species can eliminate the particles, or whether they bioaccumulate through the food web," explains Alava.

"Now that we know it's in the sediments and biofilms of a working estuary, we need to understand how far it goes into wildlife, marine life, and into people, including the local First Nations who rely on shellfish and seafood."

Find out more, including the study's recommendations: **https://bit.ly/4e8Ng6L**



LR survey warns fatigue, inconsistent leadership and reluctance to speak are driving yacht safety risk

Inconsistent leadership and variable safety priorities, along with indications that formal procedures are not always followed, are creating avoidable risks across the yacht sector.

Additionally, current levels of crew engagement mean that opportunities to recognise and respond to both perceived and emerging risks are not being fully realised onboard.

These are findings from Lloyd's Register's (LR) Yacht Safety Culture and Wellbeing Survey, which gathered input from crew and shore-based professionals working across a broad range of yacht sizes (all over 24 metres) and operating models. The survey indicates that although safety critical rules, checklists, and safety meetings are in place, their effectiveness is frequently diminished by financial, operational, and guest driven pressures, as well as by crewing levels and workload demands.

Process and procedures, along with communication, were identified as relative strengths underpinning safety culture onboard. Crew generally understand basic risk principles and say that well-run safety meetings help them work more safely. However, the survey highlights significant variation between yachts in how consistently these practices are applied.

Engagement emerged as a critical area requiring attention to strengthen reporting culture, trust, and safety performance. Respondents conveyed low confidence in reporting, challenging decisions, and speaking up without fear of negative consequences. Engagement is notably lower on yachts under 500 GT and among long tenured crew, who report declining trust in follow through related to safety observations and improvement suggestions. On smaller yachts in particular, unclear roles and responsibility were seen to weaken accountability and make it harder for crew to raise concerns.

Owner and management company priorities and instructions and onboard leadership behaviours were found to be a decisive factor. While some captains and senior crew demonstrated and encouraged engagement, others were perceived as prioritising schedules, guest experience or commercial demands.

Fatigue and workload pressures featured heavily throughout the survey. Long hours, reliance on overtime and limited recovery time were repeatedly cited, especially during busy seasons. Engineers and senior officers recorded the lowest wellbeing scores, reflecting sustained responsibility and operational strain. The findings show that when fatigue becomes accepted as normal, risk increases.

The survey also identified missed opportunities in learning from incidents. Based on engagement results, better reporting practices are needed. Although investigations take place, respondents described inconsistent follow-up and limited sharing of lessons learned. Some crew said that excessive reporting of minor issues diluted meaningful learning and reduced confidence in reporting systems.

Positive wellbeing was linked to better focus and safer behaviours. Good food, good connectivity and regular contact with home were consistent wellbeing boosts, but support for stress, fatigue and mental health onboard varied widely. Many crew were hesitant to raise wellbeing concerns due to inconsistent follow through and low trust in reporting processes. Overall, the findings show that wellbeing systems exist but are inconsistently implemented.

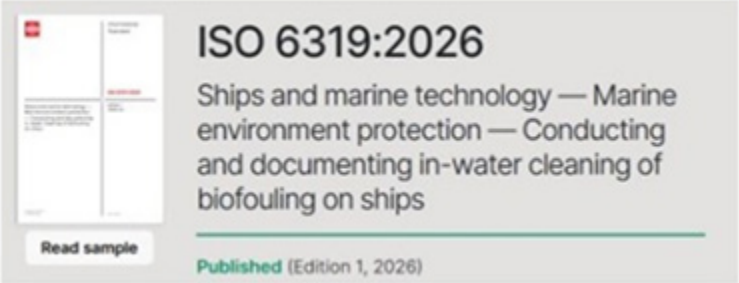
Stephanie McLay, Human Factors Team Lead for LR Advisory, said: "The survey shows strong procedural and communication foundations across the yacht industry, with improved risk awareness offering real potential to enhance safety and engagement. But it also reveals the need for more consistent practice to improve safety culture, and everyday life for crew. People are the industry's greatest asset, and supporting their wellbeing is the most powerful safety intervention we can make."

Engel-Jan de Boer, LR's Global Yacht Segment Director, added: "The findings underline the need for stronger leadership behaviours, more effective fatigue management and a reporting culture that encourages early intervention. Without action, the industry risks higher underlying safety exposure and the loss of experienced crew."



Download the report: **https://bit.ly/3Nxh9CX**

New ISO standard for in-water hull cleaning published



A new standard on in-water cleaning of vessel hulls has been launched.

Preventing and removing biofouling on hulls of ships limits the introduction and spread of invasive aquatic species (IAS). This in turn threatens coastal environments by disrupting ecological systems, which can also negatively affect fisheries, aquaculture and tourism. Biofouling is also estimated to increase a ship's fuel consumption by on average 9 % - this added fuel consumption costs the shipping industry billions of USD. Therefore, improving biofouling management across the global shipping fleet will have considerable benefits, both from an environmental and economic standpoint.

ISO 6319 provides requirements and best practices for planning, conducting and documenting in-water cleaning operations safely, efficiently and in an environmentally sound manner. It provides requirements and best practices for reporting on the effectiveness of IWC operations.

The standard addresses all forms of in-water cleaning of external submerged surfaces, which are hull and niche areas, all types and levels of biofouling, which means biofilms, microfouling and macrofouling, conducted both with or without capture. However, it does not address internal piping.

The document has been established to inform ports, regulatory agencies, ship biofouling IWC service providers, inspection service providers, IWC equipment manufacturers, coating manufacturers, shipowners, ship managers, ship operators and other relevant stakeholders.

In the making since 2022, members of the Bellona-led Clean Hull Initiative (CHI) drafted a proposal that was later approved for development within ISO.

Project leader of the ISO working group that developed ISO 6319, Dr. Irene Ø. Tvedten, Senior Advisor Maritime at The Bellona Foundation, said: "This new international standard covers in-water cleaning of ships' hulls and sets out the documentation needed before and after cleaning. By providing a harmonised approach to documentation, it helps ports and authorities evaluate in-water cleaning applications more consistently while supporting environmentally responsible practices."

Find out more: **www.iso.org**

MCA update on MGN 708(M) Guidance on the merchant shipping ISM regulations

The UK MCA has released an amendment to MGN 708(M), which sets out guidance and instructions regarding International Safety Management and the application of the Merchant Shipping International Safety Management Regulations 2026.

This notice replaces the 2014 ISM regulations and assimilated regulations 336/2006 in implementing the ISM code in UK law.

It also addresses certain gaps which arose in the previous legislation as a result of the UK leaving the EU, which were not addressed at the point of EU Exit. They also remove references to EU law and redundant EU-specific provisions. The scope of the Regulations is broadly similar to the previous legislation, as originally adopted when the UK was an EU member state, but the following points are clarified:

Importantly, the Regulations do not alter the requirements of the ISM Code. The existing safety management systems, audits (also referred to as "verifications"), and certification duties remain unchanged. However, the procedures for these are set out in more detail in the Regulations, bringing them into line with the approach under other more recent sets of Merchant Shipping Regulations which implement SOLAS survey and certification obligations, such as the Merchant Shipping (Survey and Certification) Regulations 2015 as amended.

Read the notice in full: **https://bit.ly/4mnw4gg**

Brookes Bell on how technology is changing engineering investigations

Engineering investigations have always relied on physical inspection, operational records, and professional experience.

Brookes Bell has explored how technology has affected these investigations, saying that what has changed in recent years is not only the amount of information available, but the nature of the systems being investigated.
For Andrew Kingshott, the shift has been noticeable even over a relatively short period of time, with both vessel technology and investigative tools evolving at pace.

One of the more visible changes came during the COVID Pandemic, when remote surveys became more common out of necessity.

While they allowed investigations to continue, Andrew notes that they also highlighted the limitations of relying on information at a distance. "You have to be there to see it," he explained. "As a surveyor you need to use all your senses."

Physical presence remains fundamental to understanding machinery condition, particularly where subtle indicators, such as sound, smell, or vibration, can provide early insight that may not be captured in data alone.

Alongside this, the nature of machinery itself has changed. Systems are increasingly software-driven, with higher levels of automation and more complex control systems. Developments such as ballast water treatment systems, exhaust gas scrubbers, and the introduction of alternative fuels have added new layers of complexity, both in operation and in failure modes.

This requires engineers to continually update their understanding. Keeping pace with these changes, through training, industry engagement, and exposure to new technologies, has become an essential part of the role.

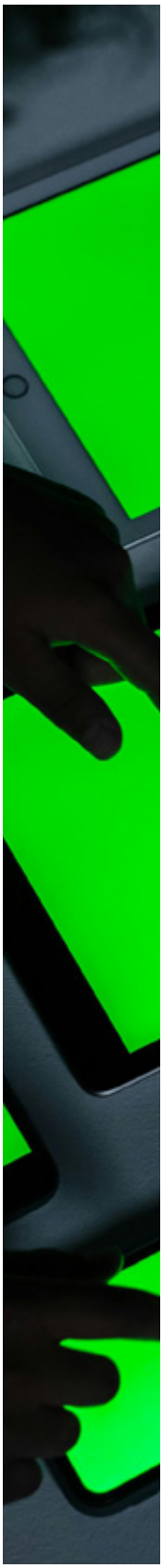
At the same time, vessels are now generating far more information than they did in the past. Where once engineers might have relied on printed logs or manual records, much of this data is now stored digitally and retained over long periods.

However, Andrew is clear that more data does not necessarily make investigations simpler. In some cases, the increased volume of information can introduce additional complexity.

The relationship between data and experience is therefore critical. Andrew emphasises that technology should be seen as a support to engineering judgement, rather than a replacement for it. "The technology is an aid, it's not a replacement," he explained. "Data can indicate when something has gone wrong, or highlight a developing trend, but it does not necessarily explain why it has occurred or whether it should have been anticipated."

The increasing availability of data has also influenced expectations in claims. Detailed records can provide confidence in presenting a case, particularly where they support key aspects such as performance or consumption. At the same time, access to data does not guarantee that all relevant information will be available, and decisions on what is shared can still influence how an investigation develops. As a result, while data can support claims, it does not remove the need for careful analysis or interpretation.

Whilst the tools available to engineers will continue to develop, the role of the engineer remains central. As investigations evolve, technology will play an increasingly important role in supporting analysis. However, the ability to gather evidence on the ground, understand its limitations, and place it within the wider operational context remains the defining skill of an experienced investigator.



Read the full article: **https://bit.ly/4mlcvVM**



Exercise Transit Challenge 2026 concludes successfully

Recently, the Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) lead the Exercise Transit Challenge 2026 in partnership with the Department of Transport and Major Infrastructure Western Australia and Fremantle Ports, with support from national and state response agencies and non-Government organisations.

The exercise, conducted by more than 300 national, state and local personnel under the National Plan for Maritime Environmental Emergencies, simulated a maritime collision offshore of Woodman Point Western Australia resulting in a fuel oil spill.

Incident Management Teams were established in Canberra and Fremantle to coordinate the response to the exercise, with establishment of a Forward Operating Base at Jervoise Bay Sailing Club, and the integration of national and state response capabilities, including the Australian Marine Oil Spill Centre (AMOSC) and Department of Biodiversity, Conservation and Attractions (DBCA).

Dubai International Boat Show postponed

Owner and organiser of the Dubai International Boat Show (DIBS), Dubai World Trade Centre (DWTC), has postponed the event until 25-29 November later this year.

The event was originally due to take place 8-12 April, and the announcement came following the conflict in the Middle East.

In a Facebook post, a statement said: "Dubai International Boat Show have announced the rescheduling of the April edition to 25–29 November 2026 at Dubai Harbour. The revised dates align the event with the start of the Middle East's prime boating season, creating stronger market conditions for launches, sales and international participation. The November edition will also mark the permanent repositioning of the Dubai International Boat Show to the November calendar annually, reinforcing Dubai and the UAE's role as a strategic regional hub for the marine leisure industry."

Nautic Forum 2026, a strategic meeting for the future of French boating

The Nautic Forum will be held in Saint Malo, France on 28 and 29 May 2026. A number of key players from the industry and the regions have announced their attendance. And the topics they will be addressing are indicative of the changes to come in the nautical industry.

The event brings together decision-makers from the public sector, industry and the nautical sector to discuss the question of how uses and infrastructures will evolve by 2035.

The forum provides an insight into future boating usage. Pleasure boating is evolving, with more occasional practices, an increase in rental and a diversification in the types of craft used. New generations are approaching boating differently. Less focused on ownership, more on experience. This has a direct influence not only on boat design, but also on the organization of nautical bases. Discussions will focus on this balance. Maintaining attractiveness while guaranteeing accessibility and limiting environmental impact.

Ports remain a focal point. With berth saturation, boat turnover and changing services, port management is evolving. Port managers will have to adapt their models. Optimization of berths, development of onshore services, integration of new motorizations. For yacht owners this means more complex access conditions but also changes in the services offered.



Passenger died following fall on cruise ship received 'suboptimal treatment'



Image of Spirit of Discovery courtesy of Lambros Kakes (MarineTraffic).

A passenger died following a fall while 100 others were injured after cruise ship Spirit of Destiny hit heavy weather in its voyage, according to an accident investigation report by UK Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB).

What happened

Shortly after 1230 on 4 November 2023, the passenger vessel Spirit of Discovery lost propulsion in heavy weather while crossing the Bay of Biscay. This led to the vessel moving violently while the crew restarted the vessel's propulsion. The propulsion issues, storm force conditions and vessel motion continued until the vessel was able to resume its passage the following morning. Over 100 passengers were injured during this period. Eight of the seriously injured passengers were taken directly to hospital on arrival at Portsmouth, England. One of these passengers, Trevor Gilks, later died from his injuries.



Safety issues

- the vessel lost propulsion due to violent motion causing propeller exposure, overspeed and automatic shutdown
- the initial loss of control was exacerbated by unexpected parking of both propulsion pods at 90 degrees to the vessel's heading
- the decision to cross the Bay of Biscay was not effectively challenged by the crew and operational teams ashore
- the lack of implementation of the mass casualty incident plan contributed to the medical team becoming overstretched
- the delay in identifying that a passenger had suffered a spinal injury led to him receiving suboptimal treatment.

Recommendations

Recommendations have been made to the Maritime and Coastguard Agency to propose that international carriage requirements include electronic inclinometers, and to the vessel's classification societies to improve the quality of instruction manuals.

The propulsion manufacturer has been recommended to issue a customer advice note to owners of vessels fitted with similar pods.

The Cruise Lines International Association has been recommended to increase the number of medical personnel with an Advanced Trauma Life Support qualification carried on passenger vessels and to update its policies on the securing of vessel furniture in heavy weather.

Chief Inspector of Marine Accidents, Rob Loder, said: "While cruising remains safe and accidents rare, Spirit of Discovery's violent motion in heavy weather caused injury to over 100 passengers and, very sadly, one passenger lost their life as a result of injuries sustained.

"A complex sequence of events led to this accident and we have identified a number of clear lessons around vessel safety, crew decision-making and medical response. I am encouraged by the swift action taken by the vessel's owner, manager and manufacturers, but I urge the cruise industry to learn the lessons from this tragic accident."

Read the full report: **https://bit.ly/4skHN08**



First heritage engineering marine technician qualifies under new UK scheme



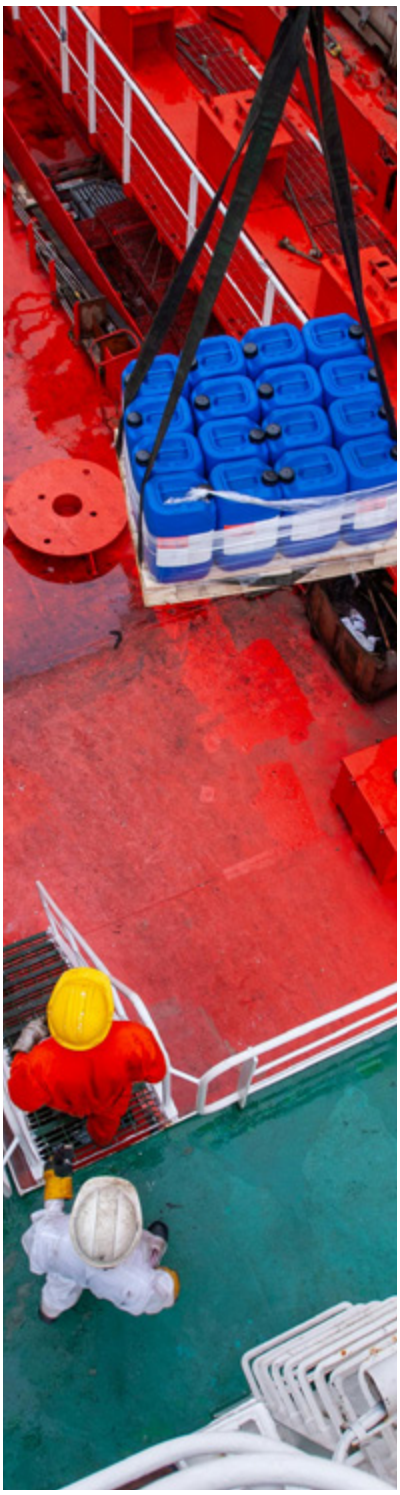
An apprentice at Banbury's historic Tooley's Boatyard in the UK has become one of the first people in the country to qualify as a heritage engineering marine technician, marking a nationally significant milestone in the safeguarding of endangered marine and inland waterways skills.

Traditional wooden boatbuilding and repair are currently listed as endangered crafts within national heritage frameworks, and specialist inland waterways dockyards are widely recognised as being at risk of skills loss.

Jacob Beak has successfully completed the Level 3 Heritage Engineering Marine Technician apprenticeship, a new qualification created to address the critical loss of traditional boatbuilding, dockyard, and marine engineering skills. His achievement places him among the very first cohort of just three apprentices nationally to complete the qualification and represents one of the earliest examples of the full heritage skills pathway being delivered successfully within a live working boatyard rather than a project or simulated training environment.

Traditional wooden boatbuilding and repair are currently listed as endangered crafts within national heritage frameworks, and specialist inland waterways dockyards are widely recognised as being at risk of skills loss. As one of the first completions of a new national heritage engineering qualification, Jacob's apprenticeship provides a practical and replicable model for how endangered craft skills can be sustained through real employment, training, and working heritage environments.

IMO Ship Systems and Equipment (SSE) 12 summary report



The Nautical Institute has shared a summary on the 12th session of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Ship Systems and Equipment Sub-Committee.

The sub-committee deals with a wide range of technical and operational matters related to systems and equipment on all types of ships, vessels, craft and mobile units covered by IMO instruments.

The Institute said the meeting opened with a statement by the Secretary General regarding the IMO's launch of a new website to counter disinformation regarding shipping in the Middle East region – this welcome development is reported separately on our website.

Upcoming changes to fire detection, suppression and firefighting, agreed at the meeting, included:

- New guidelines for the design, performance, testing and approval of water mist lances.
- Amendments to the FSS Code exempting gaskets from the 925°C melting point requirement for components of a fixed gas fire extinguishing system inside the protected compartment.
- Amendments to SOLAS regulations II-2/3 and II-2/9 regarding suppression and containment of fire. This includes clarity that dumb-waiters shall be regarded as lifts, in relation to the fire protection of stairways and lifts in accommodation areas.
- A new element in SOLAS regulation II-2/7.11 which will require at least two portable infrared thermal imagers, suitable for screening and detecting hot areas, to be provided on board each ship designed to carry containers on or above the weather deck.
- A series of amendments to MSC Circulars 1628, 1629, 1630 and 1633 to align their contents in respect of life-saving appliance evaluation and testing for the temperature cycling tests of survival craft.

All of the above changes are subject to formal approval at an upcoming meeting of the IMO's Maritime Safety Committee.

The sub-Committee also agreed an updated action plan to for enhancing fire safety on ships carrying new energy vehicles (including Battery Electric Vehicles), with a new target output year of 2029.

In respect of training, Model Course 3.06 on survey of lifesaving appliances and arrangements was validated and will be published shortly.





Seafarer died after being struck by steel plate says Marshall Islands



Source: RMI Maritime Administration

An Able Seaman died instantly after steel plates fell and struck him while on board Shaman Wisdom, said a safety investigation report by the Republic of the Marshall Islands Maritime Administrator.

What happened

On 5 June 2024, at 0800, the Bosun on board Shaman Wisdom instructed the ASD1 and ASD2 to select a suitable steel plate in the Forecastle Store to construct a step for one of the deck stairs. Both the ASD1 and ASD2 were wearing the standard PPE to work on deck, including a safety helmet, coveralls, and safety shoes.

Steel plates of different sizes and weights were vertically stowed against the bulkhead of the Forecastle Store. A retaining bar bolted onto two threaded rods kept the steel plates in position. The ASD2 was positioned at the entrance of the Forecastle Store, next to the steel plate storage location. The ASD1 was standing forward of the ASD2, in front of the steel plates. While the ASD2 was in the process of removing the nut from the threaded rod closest to the door, the retaining bar pushed the nut from the rod and some of the steel plates fell forward. The falling steel plates struck the ASD1 and subsequently pinned his head against steel plates which were resting against the opposite longitudinal bulkhead, resulting in severe head trauma. The ASD1 died instantly. The ASD1's safety helmet was found lying next to him and was not damaged.

The Republic of the Marshall Islands Maritime Administrator's marine safety investigation determined that the provisions for the stowage of steel plates on board Shaman Wisdom were insufficient to prevent the steel plates from falling when the nut securing the retaining bar was loosened. The potential risk of falling steel plates had not been assessed during the stowage of the plates or prior to removal of the retaining bar. This resulted in the ASD1 being positioned in the impact zone of the falling steel plates, as any measures to prevent them from falling were absent. The investigation further determined that the ASD1 was likely not properly using the chin strap to secure the safety helmet in place.



Lessons learned

The below lessons learned were identified:

- The location and design of storage racks for steel plates should eliminate the potential for steel plates to fall while being handled.
- Unsecured or partially unsecured objects have the potential to fall or move. Seafarers should maintain a safe position relative to the unsecured object.
- Safety helmets need to be properly fastened to prevent falling off during a fall or an abrupt movement.

Read the full report: **https://bit.ly/48zMLz3**

IMPA warns of risks of deregulation in maritime pilotage

INTERNATIONAL MARITIME PILOTS' ASSOCIATION

The International Maritime Pilots' Association (IMPA) has sent out a warning of the consequences of deregulation and competition in maritime pilotage.

Maritime pilotage is a public, not commercial, service that exists for safety of navigation — protecting people, the environment and trade. IMPA said some jurisdictions are tempted by the idea that deregulation and competition deliver a better service at a lower cost. This is a mistake, and the evidence agrees.

IMPA believes decision-makers need to understand that deregulation and competition are not sound policies in pilotage and expose the public and the shipping industry to unnecessary and avoidable risk.

"Where deregulation and competition have been introduced, we see increasing costs, reductions in safety and efficiency. In the worst cases, we see systems that fail to adequately protect the public," said Captain Simon Pelletier, President of IMPA, "To capture the economic, social and environmental benefits from maritime pilotage, governments must create the right environment. This is what the overwhelming majority of jurisdictions do. The few jurisdictions that have introduced deregulation and competition need to change course."

The data speaks for itself. In one jurisdiction where competition in service-delivery was introduced, pilotage fees have doubled since 2018, while the incident rate per port call is 41 times the international average. In another, 60% of maritime safety incidents under pilotage occur in areas where providers compete against one and other to provide the service. In another, the main provider's efficiency has declined by 9%, and the service's ability to meet total demand has been compromised. In another, deregulation and government profiteering, in combination with a dilution of training and licensing standards, make it hard to say the service is pilotage.

Deregulation and competition are not features of mature, high-performing pilotage systems. Because of this, some jurisdictions are very explicit in their position. The European Union's Port Services Regulation safeguards against competition in maritime pilotage. Alaska and Florida, having experimented with competition in the past, explicitly prohibit the practice because of the threat to public interest.

The systemic risks arise from the negative impact of competition on pilots' professional independence and the incentive for commercial service providers to underinvest in training and professional development. In 2018, KPMG identified under-investment in safety and quality as a reason why competition can be more damaging than a natural monopoly.

When multiple operators must replicate infrastructure – pilots, pilot boats, training programs and facilities and seek to recover costs from a divided market, costs inevitably go up, not down. Furthermore, when the prospect of profit is insufficient, there can be under-provision of pilotage, necessitating government intervention. And when providers abuse their market power, the government must intervene again. The great irony is that deregulation in pilotage creates a greater need for intervention, not less.

The benefits of a well-regulated system of pilotage are clear. The most detailed study by economists on the subject, published in 2023, found that every $1 invested in a well-regulated system returns $60 in safety and efficiency benefits. Deregulation and competition are the surest route to governments locking themselves and their public out of that opportunity.



Marine Safety Investigation Unit

Transport Malta

SIMPLIFIED SAFETY INVESTIGATION REPORT

202503/021 REPORT NO.: 04/2026 March 2026

The Merchant Shipping (Accident and Incident Safety Investigation) Regulations, 2011 prescribe that the sole objective of marine safety investigations carried out in

MV *CMA CGM SHANGHAI*
Starting air explosion
during berthing operations in Singapore
15 March 2025

Transport Malta publishes report into explosion aboard container ship CMA CGM Shanghai

Transport Malta has released a simplified final report into a starting air explosion during berthing operations aboard CMA CGM Shanghai in Singapore.

What happened
CMA CGM Shanghai arrived just outside its designated discharge port of Singapore in the early hours of 15 March 2025, completing an 11-day voyage from Karachi, Pakistan.

The vessel was expected to remain outside port limits for approximately 50 minutes. During this time, the crew prepared the pilot ladder and completed arrangements for the pilot, who boarded the vessel at 0612 local time. At around 0700, the crew was called to standby once more in preparation for berthing and mooring. Tugs were secured at the forward and aft ends, and at 0742, the pilot ordered 'dead slow ahead' on the main engine. The chief mate moved to the port wing telegraph to execute the order.

At that moment, a loud explosion was heard from the aft section of accommodation block.

Smoke was seen emanating from the area, and multiple alarms, including the fire detection system, sounded on the bridge. The water mist system inside the engine-room also activated.

Although the engine telegraph was returned to the stop position, the pressure gauges showed a loss of control air pressure. The chief engineer, who was in the engine control room at the time, reported significant technical issues with the main engine to the bridge, but confirmed that no fire was present in the engine-room.

Following a discussion with the pilot, the master requested two other tugboats to assist the vessel during berthing.

The vessel came safely alongside at about 1049. A preliminary inspection by the chief engineer revealed that an explosion inside part of the main engine starting air pipe had occurred.

Reported injuries and extent of damage
No injuries were reported to any of the crew members.

Three starting air valves were found with damaged compressed springs. The inlet pipe to the main starting air valve had exploded, including various 90° bends, suggesting localised overpressure or stress concentration. The main starting air valve itself sustained damages, and the end flange of the main starting airline was blown off due to the force of the blast.

Additionally, all the burst discs installed in the system had ruptured. Other areas in the engine-room were also affected, either by the flying debris or the explosion per se.

You can read the report in full, including details into the probable cause, here: **https://bit.ly/4sowlkl**



Indian Register of Shipping and Indian Coast Guard discuss emerging maritime technologies

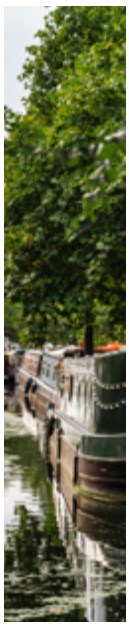
Indian Register of Shipping (IRS) hosted a technical seminar bringing together senior officials from the Indian Coast Guard and representatives from leading shipyards to deliberate on emerging technologies and strategic developments shaping the maritime sector. The Chief Guest for the seminar was Inspector General Sudhir Sahni, TM, DDG (Material & Maintenance), Indian Coast Guard.

The event provided a platform for meaningful dialogue on important themes, including digitalisation, autonomous vessels, cyber security, alternate fuels, and research work undertaken by IRS. The Indian Coast Guard currently operates a large fleet comprising several types of vessels, of which a growing number are classed by IRS.

The seminar featured a series of technical presentations by IRS domain experts, covering the organisation's role in supporting defence services, advancements in maritime digitalisation, the implications of autonomous systems and cyber security, alternate fuel technologies, and ongoing research initiatives.

The event concluded with an engaging Q&A session, followed by a felicitation of the Chief Guest and a networking session that enabled further exchange of ideas among stakeholders.





UK Canal & River Trust outlines upgrade plan

The Canal & River Trust has announced plans for what it describes as a "once-in-a-generation" programme of investment aimed at strengthening the long-term resilience of the canal network.

Chief executive Campbell Robb shared his direction for the charity with staff and volunteers, setting out proposals that would see increased spending on the waterways alongside a new financial approach designed to secure the network's future. The strategy, which will be developed and consulted on over the coming months, focuses on tackling underlying structural issues across the ageing canal system while embedding waterways more firmly into community life and national infrastructure.

The Trust says the programme will prioritise major maintenance work and address longstanding and complex projects across the network.

For boaters, this is expected to mean continued investment in navigation and improvements to infrastructure that has become increasingly costly to maintain. The organisation believes addressing core structural challenges now will bring longer-term savings and help attract new commercial partnerships and fundraising opportunities.

Tokyo MOU shares preliminary results of CIC on Ballast Water Management



The Tokyo MOU has released the preliminary results of a Concentrated Inspection Campaign (CIC) it held which focused on aspects of the Ballast Water Management Convention (BWM) 2004.

The campaign was carried out from 1 September 2025 to 30 November 2025, jointly with the Paris MoU. Over the course of the CIC period, involving all types of ships, a total of 9,244 inspections were carried out. Of these inspections, 6,930 (74.96%) inspections were performed using the CIC questionnaire and a ship was subjected to only one CIC inspection during the campaign period. During the period, 184 ships where CIC was carried out were detained in total (2.66% detention rate). Of which, 30 detentions were the result of inspections with CIC questionnaires, which were detained as a direct result of the CIC concerning deficiencies, reflecting a CIC topic related detention rate of 0.43%.

The most common deficiencies (and deficiencies that resulted in a detention) found during the campaign were associated with under the deficiency code 14811 (Q6 – Is the BWMS operational?) underscoring the fact that the operation and maintenance of BWMS onboard remains a critical area for the effective implementation of the intent of the Convention.

During the campaign, vessels registered under the flags of 94 different States were inspected under the CIC scope. The greatest number of CIC inspections were carried out on ships flying the flags of Panama with 1,983 inspections (28.61%), Liberia with 958 inspections (13.82%) and the Marshall Islands with 683 inspections (9.86%).

The highest absolute number of CIC-related deficiencies was recorded on ships flagged to Panama (475), Liberia (234) and Marshall Islands (168). This reflects the high inspection exposure of these flag States during the campaign. When normalised against the number of inspections conducted with a CIC questionnaire, the corresponding deficiency ratios were 23.95%, 24.42% and 24.59%, respectively.

Most ships with CIC-topic related deficiencies marked as grounds for detention were in the High Risk category (26/30), or 86.6% of all detentions. By ship type, General Cargo/multipurpose ships accounted for 43.33% of all CIC-topic detentions (13 detentions) followed bulk carriers (4), Oil tankers (5), Gas carriers (3), Oil Chem (3), Container Ships and other special activities (1) each. Ship age did show a correlation with CIC-topic detention rate. Most of the detentions were recorded for ships aged between 19 – 24 years of age. The majority of flag States associated with CIC-topic detentions were listed on the Tokyo MOU High Performance List.

Further analysis of the results of the campaign will be considered by the Port State Control Committee meeting scheduled in September this year.

Fishing trawler Freedom II sank following engine room flooding



Image courtesy of MarineTraffic

Four crewmembers had to be rescued after uncontrolled flooding on prawn trawler Freedom II caused the vessel to founder and later sink off the Scottish coast.

The MAIB received 230 reports of flooding of fishing vessels between 2013 and 2022, of which 78 (34%) resulted in the loss of the vessel. The data indicates flooding remains a significant safety issue.

What happened

At 1535 on 21 February 2024, the 15.94m prawn trawler Freedom II foundered and sank to the east of the Garvellach Islands in the Firth of Lorn off the west coast of Scotland. Freedom II had suffered an uncontrolled flood into the engine room. The crew were initially alerted to the flood by the activation of the bilge alarms but did not isolate any sea cocks as they believed that the flood was due to a failed stern seal. The flood, likely caused by the failure of a seawater pipe, overwhelmed the available bilge pumps and passed into the fish hold.

The skipper and a deckhand tried to deal with the flood while Freedom II was taken under tow by an RNLI lifeboat. The tow was abandoned when it became apparent that the vessel was sinking, and the skipper and the deckhand swam clear of the vessel as it foundered; they were recovered from the water by the lifeboat's crew.

Safety issues

- The vessel foundered due to a progressive flood into the engine room.
- The exact source of the flood could not be identified. The most likely cause was a vibration-induced fracture of the seawater suction pipe for the deck wash pump.
- The rate of flooding overwhelmed the operational bilge pumps and additional pumps either failed or could not be used due to power supply issues. The salvage pump from the lifeboat was not used.
- The skipper was proactive in ensuring that the crew were safe and managed to raise the alarm in an area of poor signal coverage.

Lessons

1. Flooding is preventable, but if it occurs can be controlled in most cases. If discovered early, leaking pipes can be isolated and the flooding controlled by pumping out the affected space. Flooding can be rapid, and late discovery leaves no time to treat the cause. An efficient bilge alarm can be critical in providing early warning of flooding.
2. If in doubt as to the source of a flood, closing down the seawater system might contain the floodwater and help to identify the source.
3. On board Freedom II the crew initially checked all the compartments around the vessel; however, it was only later in the emergency that the fish hold was found to be almost fully flooded. Regular checks for progressive flooding can help inform effective decision-making throughout each stage of the emergency.
4. Regular checks and function tests of bilge alarms and pumps, together with regular examinations of vessel hulls and pipework will assist in preventing potential leaks or failures occurring.
5. Being prepared for an emergency, and knowing what to do when it occurs, is vital for the safety of all on board: know your vessel systems; test your emergency pumps and drill for emergencies.

Download the report and safety flyer: **https://bit.ly/4vjECsg**



The Italian Sea Group starts negotiated settlement

The Italian Sea Group (TISG) has announced it has filed an application to start the negotiated settlement procedure governed by Articles 12 et seq. of Legislative Decree No. 14 of 12 January 2019.

In this petition, the Company, as required by law, requested the imposition of asset protection measures in respect with all creditors.

On 13 March 2026, the designated expert, Dr. Enrico Terzani, President of the Order of Chartered Accountants and Accounting Experts of Florence, accepted the appointment.

The protective measures over TISG's assets are therefore provisionally effective as of 13 March 2026; TISG will seek confirmation thereof from the Court of Florence.

The negotiated settlement procedure is a legal framework designed to safeguard business continuity and facilitate the restructuring of companies experiencing economic and financial imbalance, through a structured dialogue with principal creditors and stakeholders, assisted by an independent expert.

Throughout the negotiated settlement process, management of the Company remains vested in the corporate bodies, in compliance with the applicable legal provisions.

TISG continues to operate in the ordinary course of its industrial and commercial activities, including the ongoing execution of orders in its backlog and the management of its relationships with customers, suppliers and financial partners.

French Electric Boat Association elects new president



The French Electric Boat Association (AFBE) has elected Michel Navé as its new president at its latest General Assembly, succeeding Yannick Wileveau, who will remain on the board of directors with responsibility for partner relations. Navé, head of E-Nav Systems, brings more than seven years' experience in the integration of electric propulsion systems. His appointment comes as the association continues to position itself within the development of electric and hybrid marine technologies.

During his tenure, Wileveau led efforts to expand the AFBE's profile and strengthen its role in promoting electric propulsion and sustainable navigation solutions within the sector.

Commenting on his appointment, Navé said: "In a context where the electrification of all uses is becoming a strategic issue in terms of economic sovereignty and the reduction of greenhouse gases. The maritime sector is responsible for as many GHG emissions as the aviation sector (3% each worldwide) and its electrification/ hybridization constitutes an essential lever to meet the rise in regulatory and climate requirements."

National Historic Ships UK announces its Flagships of the Year 2026



The barge Hydrogen pictured

National Historic Ships UK (NHS-UK) has appointed four historic vessels to act as its Flagships of the Year for 2026 and 'fly the flag' for maritime heritage.

They are:
Hydrogen (Maldon, Essex): 1906 Spritsail Barge which once carried tar, creosote and oil from the Thames and Medway to Grangemouth, served on the Clyde during WWII, and now operates a variety of sailing trips from Maldon. Celebrating 120th anniversary in 2026.

Redshank (Bristol): 1936 Narrowboat which once transported cargoes such as coal, timber and Rose's Lime Juice between Birmingham and London, and now operates passenger and charter trips in Bristol and along the River Avon. Celebrating its 90th anniversary in 2026.

Sea Scamp (Southampton): 1936 Racing Yacht built in Germany and once used to train Luftwaffe navigators, brought to the UK as part of war reparations and raced by the Royal Marines, now owned by a syndicate of 100+ owners for racing and sailing in the Solent. Celebrating 90th anniversary in 2026.

The Golden Hinde (London): Full-size reconstruction of Sir Francis Drake's famous Elizabethan galleon which circumnavigated the globe in the 1970s, now celebrating 30 years as a heritage and visitor attraction on the Thames at Southwark.

NHS-UK's annual Flagship Awards have been running since 2009. The Awards provide an opportunity to demonstrate and celebrate the value of historic vessels to the wider public. This can be through a variety of online activities, special events, open days, workshops and tours.



Ex-Beneteau chief named as Nautor Swan and Bluegame CEO

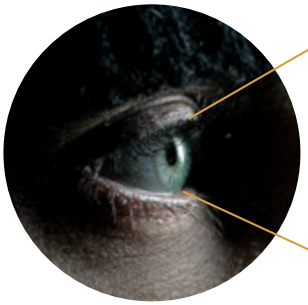
Gianguido Girotti pictured

Sanlorenzo has confirmed a leadership transition at its Nautor Swan and Bluegame business units, with changes scheduled to begin in June 2026.

Gianguido Girotti will become CEO of Nautor Swan and Bluegame. He currently serves as deputy CEO of Group Beneteau and CEO of its boating division. His decision to resign from the French boating giant was confirmed in January 2026. Nautor Swan and Bluegame will continue to operate as separate brands within the Sanlorenzo portfolio. Girotti will report to executive chairman Massimo Perotti and oversee brand operations and associated services across both business units.

Tommaso Vincenzi will continue to lead Sanlorenzo's yacht and superyacht business units.

Carla Demaria, former CEO of Bluegame, will step back from executive responsibilities and take on the role of advisor to the chairman. She will remain on the Sanlorenzo board.



What caught my eye...

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

Sauna culture comes to the Connecticut coast



This is not the first time that floating sauna stories have come to my attention, so clearly you can see I am fascinated by this concept. It is just, well, so whacky!

As we all know, sauna bathing is a centuries-old tradition in Scandinavia that's closely tied to the outdoor lifestyle. Peter Boldt, an architectural designer, based in Cos Cob, Connecticut, was first introduced to sauna culture when he lived in Sweden. Years later, during the pandemic, Boldt and his wife were looking for a project they could work on at home. She had grown up sailing, and they both enjoyed spending time on the water. Drawing on Boldt's architectural background, they created the sauna float, a vessel that rides on a reclaimed pontoon boat hull.

The shed on the boat, which houses the sauna and a small changing room, is a relatively basic structure. Boldt says that it's similar in scale to an accessory dwelling on a residential property.

Aesthetically, Boldt drew inspiration from the shapes and materials used in other small waterfront structures along the Connecticut coast, including boat sheds and lobster shacks.

Powered by a 20-hp Honda outboard, the sauna float easily navigates the coves, inlets and harbours around northwestern Long Island Sound. Boldt and his family use the vessel year-round.

Use of fitness app may have revealed French aircraft carrier's location



At first glance this seems a bonkers story, and you would be right, it is! For sure it's a modern day challenge but it is not unique apparently. Read on. I wanted to share it because it shows how interconnected our world has become and how on the face of it such an innocent activity could have potentially catastrophic implications.
French news outlet Le Monde has reported that a sailor's use of a popular fitness app may have inadvertently revealed the location of a French warship currently deployed overseas. The individual, whom Le Monde said was a French Navy officer, reportedly used the fitness app Strava to register a run lasting 35 minutes while he was on board the nuclear-powered aircraft carrier Charles de Gaulle.

The officer's use of the app via his smartwatch generated a map that showed the carrier's location at the time, which Le Monde said was approximately 100 kilometres off Turkey and northwest of Cyprus. This is not the first time that use of the fitness app may have accidentally revealed the location of a French Navy warship while at sea.

So be careful. You never know who might be watching or tracking you on your daily jog!

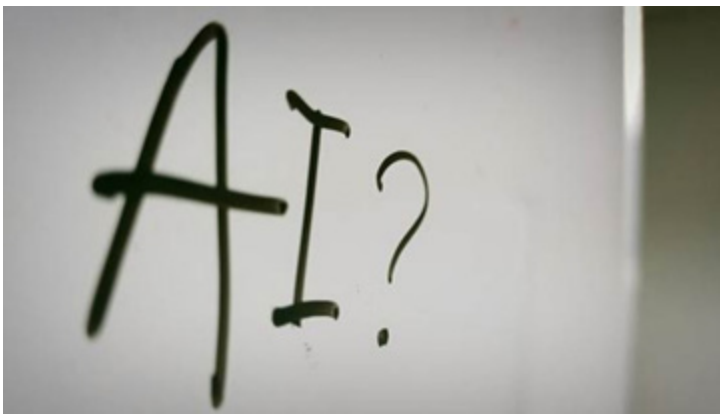
As AI unfolds, you were not trained for this...

This 'what caught my eye' story is a much longer one than usual, but an important one in my opinion. The original feature length article was written by Nina Young FCA who runs a surveyor's forum on LinkedIn, which is where she first published it.

I have shamelessly lightly edited her original text that was targeted at building surveyors, but so much of what she has written applies equally to the marine surveying profession. So, with humble apologies to Nina, here we go.
Nina writes: "Over the past few years I have had hundreds of conversations with surveyors about AI. Some surveyors are already deep in. They are using AI daily, testing tools, building prompts, rethinking how they write reports and manage data. Others have not opened an AI tool once. Some are angry about it. Some are dismissive. Many are frightened but will not say so publicly. Some have decided it is a fad or hype. Some have decided it will destroy the profession. Some are looking forward to retirement. Some are pretending it does not exist with their head in the sand. Some are fearful of younger generations.

When the internet arrived, we saw exactly the same spectrum. The sceptics. The early adopters. The ones who said it would never replace the high street, the phone call, the face to face meeting. And they were right, for

a while. Until they were not. But this is different. The internet gave us a new way to access information. AI is not doing that. AI is generating intelligence. It is reasoning. It is producing work that, until very recently, required years of training, professional qualifications, and ongoing CPD to deliver. That is an identity shift.



Think about what it means to be a professional. You studied. You trained. You sat exams. You committed to ongoing learning. You earned the right to charge a premium for what you know. Your knowledge, your judgement, your professional expertise. That is your value proposition. That is what clients pay for.

Nobody asked for this. Nobody got a vote. The most transformative technology most of us will experience in our working lives arrived without permission and it is not slowing down for anyone. Now, for the first time, much of that knowledge is accessible through a free tool. Or a tool that costs less than a monthly phone contract.

The replacement of professional judgement. I am not saying AI replaces professional judgement. It does not. But the knowledge layer, the thing that made you the expert in the room, is no longer exclusively yours.

Many of the people already using AI are doing so "quietly". It saves them time. It makes them faster. But they are not passing that on. They are not lowering their fees. Many are just doing more, and they are not telling clients. Because the moment you admit AI helped you produce that report in two hours instead of six, the client asks why they are still paying for six. That contradiction will not hold long term.

I believe the professional model itself will change. Charging by the hour only works when your time is scarce and your knowledge is hard to access. When neither of those things is true, the value shifts to the outcome you deliver, not the hours you spend delivering it. Law and accountancy will feel this first. Surveying will not be far behind. And pricing will change.

We know website traffic across almost every professional services sector is falling as more and more turn to the AI tools rather than Google. We know AI search is answering questions that used to drive phone calls and emails. For surveyors, there is some protection. Much of what you do is physical. You attend site. You inspect. You measure. You report. You observe things a language model cannot see from behind a screen. Those roles are not disappearing any time soon.

But the advisory layer. The report writing. The interpretation. The recommendation. That is where the ground is shifting.

And this is where the fear lives. Because the fear is not really about technology. It is about relevance. It is about spending decades building expertise and watching something replicate the output in seconds. It is about wondering whether the next generation of clients will still see the value in your qualifications when they can get a plausible answer for free.

I do not think the answer is to panic. I do not think the answer is to ignore it.

"And I certainly do not think the answer is to pretend you are above it. Some will. And in five years, they will wonder why the phone stopped ringing." The answer is to get honest and work on conveying what makes you valuable beyond knowledge alone.

You cannot outsource professional responsibility to AI. Those things matter. They matter enormously. But they only matter if you can articulate them. And they only hold value if clients understand why they should still come to you instead of asking an AI chatbot.

That is the work now. Not learning every AI tool. Not ignoring the whole thing. Not raging against it. The work is understanding what AI changes about your profession and being clear, to yourself and to your clients, about what it does not.

The surveying profession is in transition. That is not comfortable. And I understand why some surveyors want nothing to do with AI. They built their careers on a model that worked. It is not easy to watch that model get questioned. But the surveyors who will thrive are not necessarily the most tech-savvy. They are the ones who are willing to sit with the discomfort, be honest about what is changing, and do the thinking that matters.

I know some of you reading this will think I am overstating it. That is fine. I would rather say it now and be proven wrong in two years than say nothing and watch people get caught out. And some of you will not have seen any of this in your day-to-day work yet. AI has not knocked on your door. Your clients have not mentioned it. Your workflow has not changed. That does not mean it is not happening. It means it has not reached you yet."

With thanks to Nina Young FCA.

The Florida Plywood Regatta



The wonderfully named Plywood Regatta set me off on a search to find out more. The event name just begged questions for my inquisitive mind, and I needed to find answers! By the time you read this story, the 2026 event (the 29th iteration) will have just taken place at the end of April.

It seems that the Plywood Regatta was established in 1996 by the Marine Industries Association of South Florida. The event honours the craft of boat building and the excitement of recreational boating in an effort to continue 'building boat's future today!' Now that is a concept I totally support.

Teams of middle school, high school, and marine technical school students attempt to build seaworthy vessels in one day, using simple hand tools and only the supplied materials of: plywood, 3M 5200 fast cure caulk, and zip ties. Once the boats are built, the students paint, decorate, and name their boats. On day two of the event, participants compete in a fun-filled and friendly rivalry as they line up their boats to test them in the water and race each other in a series of heats to determine an event champion.

All Plywood Regatta proceeds benefit South Florida's marine industry education programs and the Plywood Regatta Scholarship Fund. The aim of these programs is to encourage marine education and develop students' interest in the marine industry.

Great initiative and one I am delighted to share with you.

More next month.
Mike Schwarz



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