IIMS News Bulletin



NOVEMBER 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 maritime professional

I choose to open my column this month by highlighting two recent maritime reports of significance that I want to bring to your attention, both of which I found disturbing for entirely different reasons.



The first headline reads *'Study Finds 29% of Ships Account for Nearly 70% of Maritime Accidents'*. That seems quite astonishing to me. I presume we do not know which 29% are the main culprits, or do we? If we do, targeted campaigns can surely be made to focus on the worst, repeat offenders. According to new research, a relatively small share of ships accounts for most reported maritime accidents. This suggests operational warning signs can often be detected before an incident occurs.

The Maritime Risk Report 2026, produced by ShipIn Systems and marine insurer NorthStandard, found that 29% of vessels accounted for nearly 70% of reported accidents. As I suggested, these findings challenge uniform approaches to fleet safety and point to a more targeted model where identifying risk is concentrated and direct attention focused first on the known worst offending vessels, owners and operators. That would surely be progress.

The other headline that exercised my mind was *'One in Ten Inspected Cargo Units Found with Safety Deficiencies'*. So, ten percent does not seem like a lot, perhaps not so bad? I disagree. In my opinion it is unacceptably high, and ten percent of the millions of container units in service is a large number!

The World Shipping Council broke this story when they revealed that more than one in ten cargo units inspected by government authorities last year were found with safety deficiencies, highlighting a persistent problem with how containers are declared, packed and secured before reaching ships. They said authorities in seven countries inspected 93,079 cargo transport units in 2025 and found deficiencies in 9,645 of them, a rate of 10.36%. Problems ranged from incorrect documentation, marking and labelling to improper packing and inadequate cargo securing - deficiencies that can contribute to damaged cargo, containers lost overboard and fires at sea.

Incorrect declarations can be especially dangerous at sea because they may result in hazardous containers being stowed in locations unsuitable for their contents. They can also leave crews without accurate information about what they are dealing with when a fire breaks out. The problem has become increasingly important as shipments of lithium-ion batteries have grown. Battery fires can be particularly difficult and challenging to control once thermal runaway begins, while today's largest containerships can carry more than 20,000 containers, complicating detection and firefighting. Now that's a story and discussion for another day!
As an industry we must continue to have grown-up debates around these issues without fear of recriminations until a consensus can be found and agreed upon to deal with these and similar safety concerns.

Recently, I had the absolute pleasure to spend two days with a select group of IIMS members and non-members in Shannon Harbour, Co Offaly in the heart of Ireland. Ireland is known for its green pastures and rain, but we were blessed with excellent weather so late in the season. Shannon Harbour and its environs captivated me. It is like stepping back into a location from a bygone era - remote, tranquil and delightful. Surveyors had the chance to witness dry docking, before inspecting two steel hulled inland waterways craft in the neighbouring dry docks, which can trace their roots back 250 years. After a full-on day of practical training, the group headed to the classroom for day two. A great event enjoyed by all. Read a more detailed overview with pictures elsewhere in the News Bulletin.

This year has been one of development, innovation and investment at IIMS. As I start to contemplate writing my year-end report to be published in the December Report Magazine, I am already starting to reflect on some of the activities we have undertaken. Of significant note is the sizeable investment we have made into the redevelopment of our distance learning Professional Qualifications. The modules have had more than just a facelift. Whilst some have been lightly edited and updated, others have had a major rewrite; and we are bringing several brand-new modules to market also. This work has taken up a lot of management time, but IIMS desires to remain "best in class" in what we teach, so it is essential.

Also of particular note, Vicki Loizides, Head of Education, tells me we have processed and assessed more than double the number of assignments than we did last year. The number of students studying has mushroomed to well over 300, and we have had more graduates this year completing their studies than ever before. Now that's real progress!

And finally, I bet you had no idea that International Stress Awareness Week is coming up from Monday 2 to Friday 6 November 2026. Never let it be said that a marine surveyor does not experience significant levels of stress in the course of their work! To mark this event, IIMS has published an article by Tracey Hewett which has some advice about how to cope with stress. See elsewhere in this bulletin.

Survey well,



MikeSchwarz
Chief Executive Officer



Rod Holland receives the IIMS John Excell Award for Outstanding Achievement

Following the three-and-a-half-day Practical Surveying Course in October, Rod Holland was presented with the John Excell Award for Outstanding Achievement. The award was given to Rod in recognition of the high standard and excellence he demonstrated in completing his Yacht & Small Craft Professional Qualification diploma. Since the award was established in 2021, Rod is one of only four students to have been recognised for exceptional studies. Rod was delighted and surprised as he graciously accepted the award and certificate from IIMS CEO, Mike Schwarz.

About the origins of the award
John Excell was an Honorary Fellow member of the Institute. He passed away in April 2021 following a long illness at the age of just fifty-one. He held high office within the Institute and was Director of Yacht & Small Craft Surveying, a member of the management board and an experienced MCA coding examiner. John was passionate about training and sharing his knowledge with fellow surveyors and gave generously of his time to do so. The award was created in John's memory.



Rod Holland (pictured left) is presented with the John Excell Award for Outstanding Achievement

IIMS exhibits at IBEX 2026

James (Randy) Renn and Ray Bracken on the IIMS stand at the IBEX show



The International BoatBuilders' Exhibition and Conference (IBEX) 2026 is North America's leading technical trade show and conference for the recreational marine industry held annually.

IIMS has had a stand for many years at the show, and it is an excellent opportunity to showcase the work of the Institute and our education offering to the thousands of people who visit the event.

IIMS is most grateful to James (Randy) Renn and Ray Bracken for expertly manning the stand and engaging in dialogue with show visitors.

James reported to say they had made some useful new contacts and had received plenty of interest in IIMS.

Report on IIMS small craft training event in Ireland

A small group of surveyors gathered at Shannon Harbour in the middle of rural Ireland recently for a two-day training event, which was both highly educational and enjoyable. Thanks are due to Niall Galway for assisting with the programme development, and Damien Buckley in particular, who facilitated the first day and the dry docking of a barge, which later became the subject of intense inspection by the group.

Shannon Harbour proved to be a delightful location in which to meet, and its rich maritime history is worth a quick review. Shannon Harbour in Co Offaly was a purpose-built village. Built in 1830, Shannon Harbour was once a thriving and vital place. Situated on the Grand Canal at its terminus where it joins the River Shannon at the mouth of the River Brosna, the village was originally a small town constructed to meet the requirements of accommodation and storage of its lifeblood, the Grand Canal.

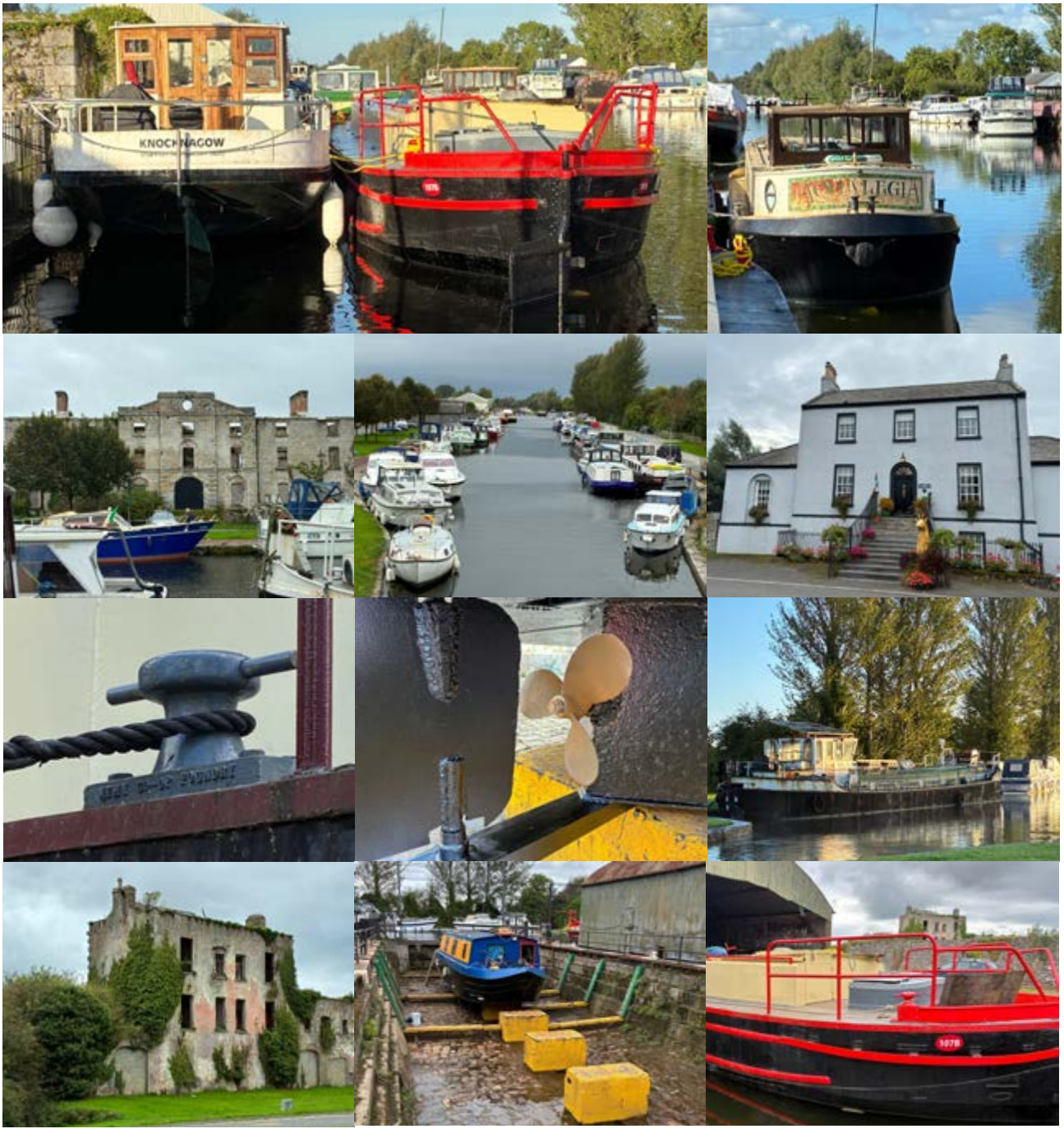
Over 250,000 people used the canal passenger barges, many of them to emigrate from Limerick and Cobh to America, Canada and Australia. In one year in the 1840s, 300,000 tons of produce was transhipped in Shannon Harbour's warehouses. The village boasted a bonded warehouse, a customs and excise post, a large Royal Irish Constabulary barracks complete with holding cells, the Harbour Master's house, boat and barge repair dockyard and drydocks, a small school, several taverns, a smithy and livery, many cottages and of course the standard Grand Hotel. At its peak over 1,000 people lived in Shannon Harbour and its hinterland. Today less than 30 people live in the village.



The first day concentrated on activity in the two dry docks, one of which is covered. They date back 250 years. They are in constant use and are amongst the busiest dry docks in Ireland. Day one was conducted under the guidance of Damien Buckley, who is something of a 'salvage and refit king'. Once the dry dock had been emptied, the surveyors spent the day inspecting and learning about the work that has been done on the vessel, and in particular the steel hull, and how it was undertaken. The inspection of the anodes provided much discussion.

The evening saw many of the group come together for dinner in the nearby town of Tullamore.

Day 2 dawned and the group assembled in the neighbouring community centre for a series of presentations. Dr Mike Lewus and Karen Brain had both travelled to be at the event in person. Mike opened up giving a deep overview of the challenges that corrosion poses for a marine surveyor, including reviewing the various different types. He was followed by Karen, who spoke about the surveyor's duty of care and ethics, concluding with some thoughts on the importance of getting reporting writing correct. Mike Schwarz gave an update on IIMS activities, followed by a presentation on the dangers of lithium-ion batteries. Sandwiched in between was a presentation of the challenges that electric systems pose for general marine surveyors.



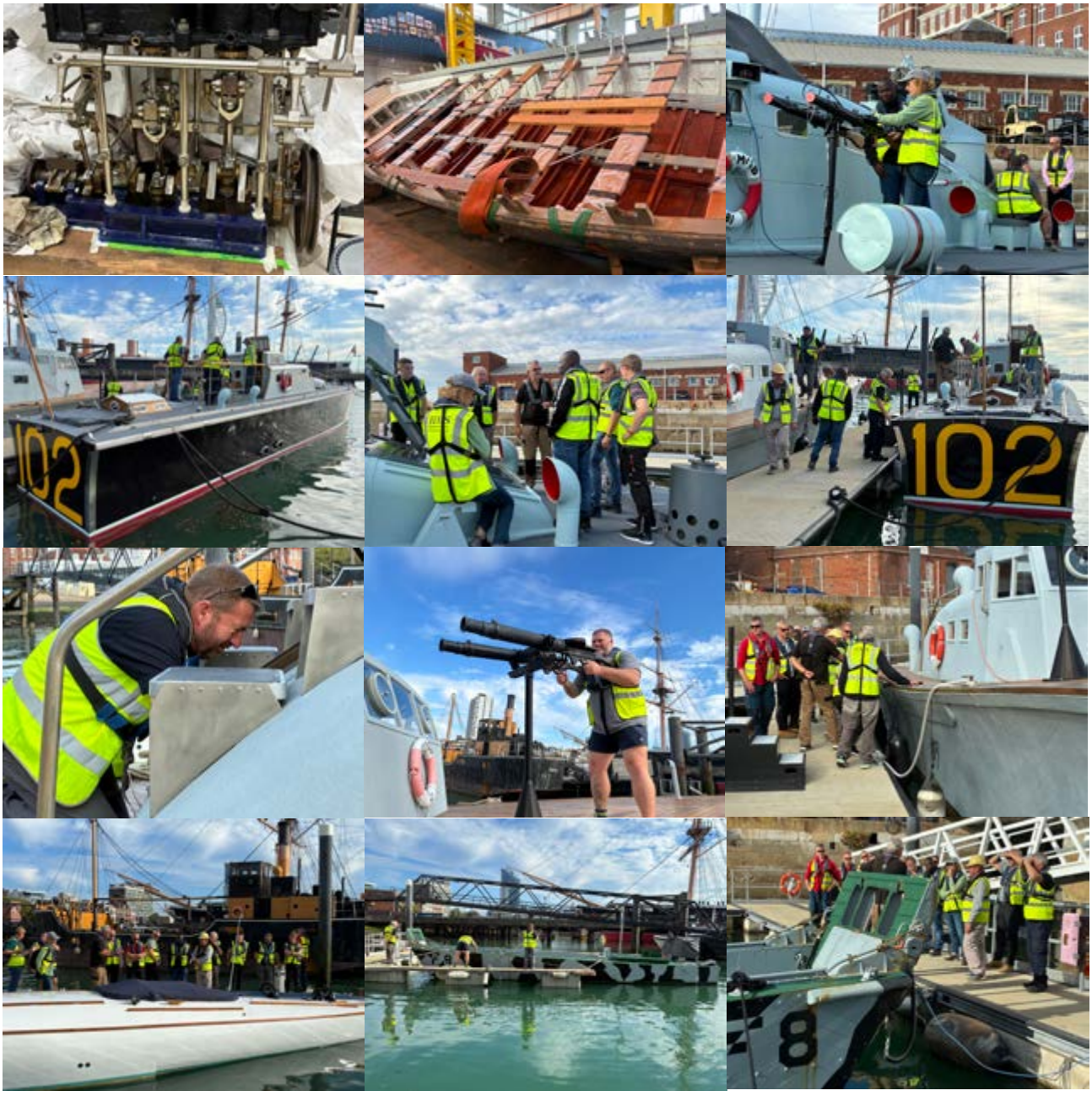
Report on the IIMS Practical Surveying Course

The Institute held the third iteration of its Practical Surveying Course in early October, this year based at Murrills House, the IIMS head office in Portchester, UK. The group of 11 surveyors with varying level of experience assembled on 5 October for three and a half days of tuition.

Three senior IIMS marine surveyors, Geoff Waddington, David Pestridge and Oli Byles, were on hand to provide tutoring and mentoring. Over the course of the first three days, the group spent time inspecting three vessels in the Port Solent marine complex, which were in a bad state of repair. David gave his informative toolbox reveal as part of the programme.

One of the extra activities included on the second day proved to be much appreciated. The group were given access all areas to Boathouse 4 at the Historic Dockyard in Portsmouth. As well as viewing some of the static projects under repair and restoration in the workshop, they were also taken down on to the pontoons to inspect and revel in some of the beautifully restored historic World War II craft.

On day four, Mike Schwarz hosted the group back at Murrills House for a morning where he gave a series of tips, hints and advice about effective report writing.



Fishing vessel sank killing 13 due to hatch failure

The line hauling hatch of fishing vessel Argos Georgia unexpectedly opened in heavy seas, which led to uncontrolled flooding and the vessel's eventual sinking, killing 13 crewmembers, according to the final investigation report from the UK Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB).



Courtesy of Argos Froyanes Limited.

What happened

At about 1900 on 22 July 2024, the St Helena registered longline fishing vessel Argos Georgia capsized and sank while on passage from Port Stanley, Falkland Islands to fishing grounds near South Georgia. Of the 27 people on board, 13 perished and 14 were recovered.

At about 1300, while approximately 190 nautical miles east of Port Stanley, Argos Georgia had experienced an uncontrolled ingress of water through the line hauling hatch. Water progressively flooded into the line hauler room then through the vessel via weathertight doors that had been left open, and the vessel took on a starboard list. A crew member raised the alarm via a colleague on a fishing vessel operating in the same region. This alarm was relayed to the authorities in the Falkland Islands and a rescue operation was initiated.

As the list of the vessel steadily increased, the crew mustered and donned their immersion suits. At about 1551, Argos Georgia lost propulsion and the vessel drifted in the heavy seas. By about 1600, with the list further increasing, the crew started abandoning ship into two liferafts. One of the liferafts became damaged during the abandonment. Argos Georgia foundered at about 1900.

By about 1130 on 23 July 2024, two of the responding vessels had recovered 14 survivors and nine deceased crew members. Four crew members remain missing, presumed dead.

Safety issues

- Cause of loss: The manual securing mechanism for the line hauling hatch had likely not been applied and the hatch could not be closed by the crew. This led to the vessel progressively flooding, loss of stability and foundering.
- Technical and operational failures: The hatch's drive mechanism had an unidentified design weakness, while open weathertight doors, vulnerable electrical systems and inaccessible manual controls allowed flooding to spread.
- On board emergency response: The crew's response was unstructured, and delays in declaring distress and abandoning ship reduced rescue time. Poor evacuation control, extreme conditions and liferaft damage increased cold water exposure and loss of life.
- Shoreside management deficiencies: The company lacked effective systems for controlling safety-critical risks and for assessing, escalating and responding to flooding, abandonment and distress emergencies in severe weather and remote waters.

Recommendations

The Maritime and Coastguard Agency is recommended to amend Merchant Shipping Notice 1873 (F) – The Code of Practice for the Construction and Safe Operation of Fishing Vessels of 24m Registered Length and Over – to include design requirements for shell door arrangements that, as a minimum, require automatic locking arrangements capable of securing doors in the closed position.

Argos Froyanes Limited is recommended to implement a documented safety management system across its fishing vessels.

The Falkland Islands Government, Directorate of Emergency Services and Islands Security is recommended to enhance the Falkland Islands maritime search and rescue communications capability so that direct and reliable contact can be established with vessels in distress within the Falkland Islands maritime search and rescue area of responsibility.

Read the full report: **https://bit.ly/4yc7KCg**.



Modern software tools are essential for professional marine surveyors

Draft surveys have been a cornerstone of bulk cargo measurement for more than a century. They are simple in principle, widely accepted, and deeply embedded in certifying commercial weights. The reason for this is that the weighing instrument is the same at both load and discharge ports – the ship's hull. Belt weighers or shore scales need calibration and are prone to errors under different weather conditions. There are different belt systems at the load and discharge ports giving discrepancies in cargo loaded or discharged. Hence draft surveys are the gold standard for bulk cargo measurement and bills of lading.

Yet beneath their apparent simplicity lies a complex chain of calculations, corrections, assumptions, and human judgement. For the professional marine surveyor, particularly those aligned with the International Institute of Marine Surveying (IIMS), understanding the limitations of manual draft survey methodology is essential for maintaining accuracy, defensibility, and professional credibility.

In an era where shipping margins are tight, cargo disputes are costly, and clients expect audit ready reporting, the traditional manual approach is increasingly exposed. This includes the vast varieties of spreadsheets floating around the oceans today. Do we really know what formulae are behind the multitudes of spreadsheets onboard ships. Modern tools such as **CargoMax Pro**, built on validated hydrostatic models with error checking and automated logic, offer a level of precision and reliability that manual methods struggle to match.

This article explores some of the pitfalls inherent in manual and excel based draft survey calculations and explains why sophisticated applications are rapidly becoming the new standard for professional practice.

The Fragility of Hydrostatic Table Lookups

Ships hydrostatic tables are the data backbone of all draft surveys. They provide the variables needed to bring Archimedes principle to life. Displacement, TPC, LCF, and MTC values must be found and interpolated for the various calculations. They are often found in an old worn loading manual. The text is sometimes faded and at 0200hrs often an 8 may read as a 6 through tired eyes. Interpolation or looking up the wrong table can also lead to error. Regardless of how good you are at the calculation if the starting figures are wrong then the calculations are also wrong. Imagine you are trimming a vessel and you make a mistake? You could end up short of cargo or by the head or even worse – over draft. The consequences are serious.

Calculation shortcuts

Often if time is critical there may be a tendency to take the nearest value from the table and not interpolate at all. This leads to errors as well. Some spreadsheets do not have good interpolation routines and simply take the nearest value. Trim corrections are essential for accurate displacement determination. They are also among the most misunderstood and inconsistently applied elements of manual draft surveys.

How do we know if the hydrostatic spreadsheet table is correct? Who, if anyone, has analysed and validated them? The reality is that the myriad of home-grown spreadsheets floating around the oceans may have errors which are only brought to light after an incident.

Draft corrections are often misunderstood and wrongly applied. The sign convention used will depend on the user. Which draft mark did I read? Do I add or subtract the correction?

Many surveyors rely on simplified trim correction formulas that assume linear hydrostatic behaviour, symmetrical hull response and constant TPC across small draft ranges.

Density Errors



Density mistakes are among the most common manual errors. They include:

- Using a single density reading for all drafts
- Misreading hydrometer temperature corrections
- Applying density correction to displacement and not to TPC
- Ignoring stratified water layers in estuaries or river systems

Arithmetic and Transcription Errors: The Human Factor

Manual draft surveys involve dozens of arithmetic steps:



- Summing drafts
- Averaging
- Applying corrections
- Interpolating
- Adjusting displacement

Each step is an opportunity for error.
Even highly experienced surveyors are vulnerable to:

- Transposed digits
- Incorrect rounding
- Calculator slips
- Writing values in the wrong column
- Carrying forward incorrect results

These errors are rarely obvious and often go undetected until a cargo dispute arises.

Vessel Data Integrity: The Problem of Outdated or Incomplete Hydrostatics

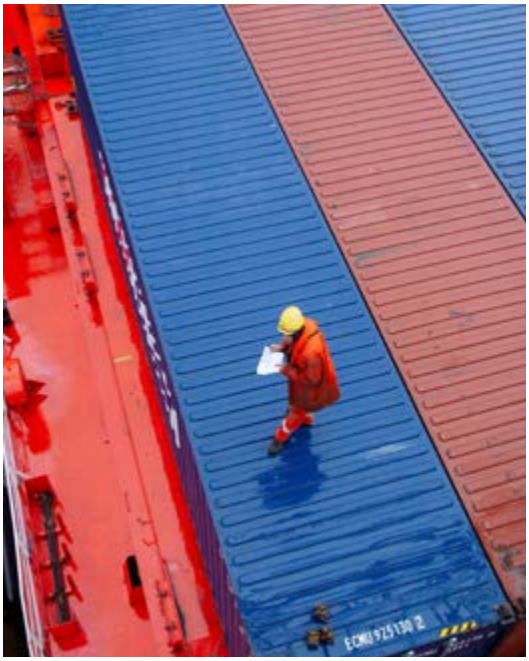
Hydrostatic books are physical objects. They can be:



- Outdated
- Damaged
- Have missing pages
- Incorrectly photocopied
- Not updated after modifications or re class surveys

Even small changes to hull form, ballast configuration, addition of scrubbers or added structural weight will alter displacement characteristics. Using outdated hydrostatics introduces significant risk.

Environmental and Operational Challenges



Draft surveys are performed in real world conditions,
not controlled environments. Surveyors must contend with:

- Poor visibility
- Vessel movement
- Seas and swell
- Rain, spray, or glare
- Night operations and water reflection
- Fouled draft marks
- Restricted access to draft locations

These conditions can contribute to:

- Incorrect draft readings
- Inconsistent readings between surveyors / officers
- Difficulty verifying marks on heavily fouled hulls

Lack of Built In Error Checking

Manual calculations and poorly written spreadsheets cannot include automated validation. Surveyors must rely on experience and intuition to identify anomalies. A good surveyor will have a feeling of chronic unease if the results seem odd. A more inexperienced surveyor or officer may miss these signs.

After reading the drafts you go back to the ships office and start the calculation process.
Without a layer of data validation, you may miss the following.



- Impossible trim conditions
- Incorrect list direction (Port or Stbd)
- Unusual hull deflection
- Incorrect application of keel thickness for moulded tables
- Displacement inconsistencies
- Density anomalies

By now, of course some time has passed and commercial pressure kicks in. But unfortunately, these errors filter through to the survey or trimming results. Ultimately leaving the vessel with a poor sailing condition or indefensible survey result.

Having real time feedback when reading the drafts will give the surveyor the confidence that the starting point of the calculation process is valid. **CargoMax Pro** has several layers of user feedback to help the user at the data entry level. As the calculations are done instantly and accurately more time and focus can be given to the draft readings. The live feedback will give warnings on trim, list and hull deflection as the drafts are entered.

Trimming Calculations



This is the most important survey. If you get this wrong,
then all sorts of consequences arise.

- Underloading (loss of earnings)
- Overloading beyond summer draft (Detention and costly discharge)
- Overloading for a tidal departure (Delayed sailing)
- Overloading for the arrival at the disport (Fines and delays)
- Overstressing the vessel (Hold mass exceeded reducing the life of the asset)
- Max / Min (out of contractual obligations – commercial impact)

Time constraints make this one of the most stressful periods in any loading. It is not the place to be making mistakes.

Reporting Quality and Auditability



Manual or spreadsheet driven draft survey reports often suffer from:

- Inconsistent formatting
- Poorly documented corrections
- Lack of photographic evidence
- No digital audit trail in case of a dispute

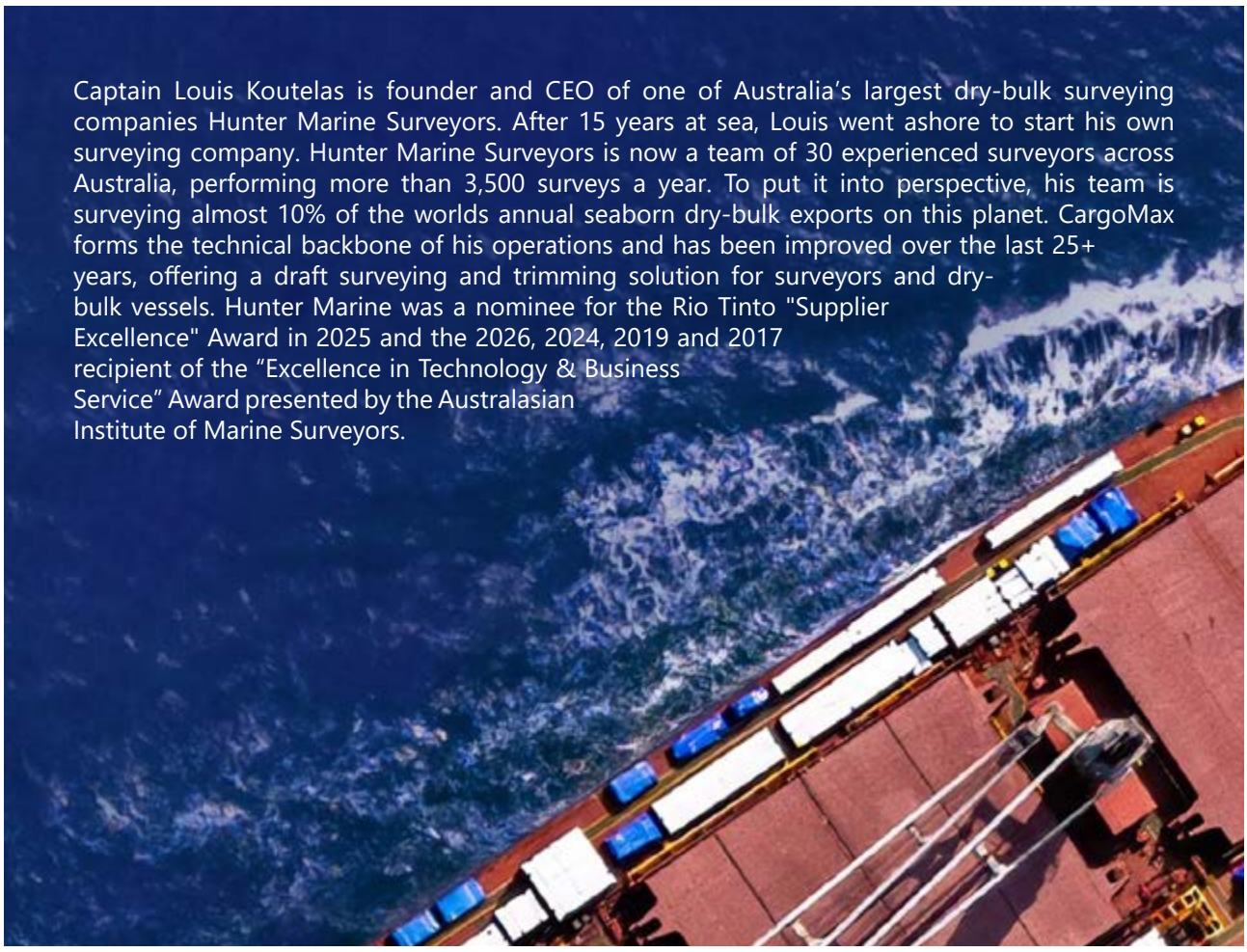
In an era where clients expect transparency and audit ready documentation, these shortcomings are increasingly problematic.

CargoMax Pro is an application based on over 30 years of experience. It addresses many of the issues raised in this article. Hydrostatic validation and visualisation give the user confidence in the backbone of the calculations. Live feedback as drafts are entered help trap errors at the time they are read. Visual selection of the marks read eliminate the errors associated with draft corrections. Survey results, trimming calculations, contract and structural tolerances are instant and visual. Fully structured and consistent reporting is done instantly.

All data, calculations, notes and photos are captured and audit ready. This enhances the user's profession reputation significantly.

Draft surveying and trimming are critical in bulk trade globally. A standard such as **CargoMax Pro** gives confidence to all that use it and all that rely on the accuracy of its algorithms and reports.

Isn't it time that processes of the past are left behind.



Captain Louis Koutelas is founder and CEO of one of Australia's largest dry-bulk surveying companies Hunter Marine Surveyors. After 15 years at sea, Louis went ashore to start his own surveying company. Hunter Marine Surveyors is now a team of 30 experienced surveyors across Australia, performing more than 3,500 surveys a year. To put it into perspective, his team is surveying almost 10% of the worlds annual seaborn dry-bulk exports on this planet. CargoMax forms the technical backbone of his operations and has been improved over the last 25+ years, offering a draft surveying and trimming solution for surveyors and dry-bulk vessels. Hunter Marine was a nominee for the Rio Tinto "Supplier Excellence" Award in 2025 and the 2026, 2024, 2019 and 2017 recipient of the "Excellence in Technology & Business Service" Award presented by the Australasian Institute of Marine Surveyors.

2-6 November 2026 is International Stress Awareness Week

This excerpt is from an article, written by Tracey Hewett, which looks at the ways marine surveyors can deal with stress. Tracey helps teams and individuals stress less, focus better and work more sustainably.

A Practical Approach to Managing Stress... Demands placed on marine surveyors come in many forms.

One day you are conducting a hull inspection in freezing rain; the next, you are juggling tight deadlines with a gruelling travel schedule. Add in delayed vessels, restrictive port access, and intense commercial pressures, and stress can mount.

At such times, generic advice like "take a deep breath" or "go for a walk" can feel completely disconnected from the reality of the role. While these actions have their place, they are only half the battle.

Successfully coping with stress requires a range of strategies: some to manage its impact and others to deal with the stressor itself.

The good news is that coping is a skill, and one that can be developed.

Read the full article:
https://bit.ly/47JiL2S



Photo credit: BoatUS Foundation

New Jersey partners with BoatUS Foundation to track abandoned boats

The New Jersey State Police is BoatUS Foundation's newest partner in tracking and removing abandoned and derelict vessels (ADV) through the foundation's innovative ADV database. The national database provides a centralized resource for documenting ADVs, helping officials and agencies track vessels that may pose environmental, navigational and public safety concerns.

ADVs pose significant environmental and safety risks. They can damage sensitive aquatic habitats, leak fuel and other pollutants, obstruct navigation channels and create hazards for other boaters, according to the organization. Removal costs can average $24,000 or more, depending on a vessel's size, location and condition. A centralized tracking system provides a way to document these vessels and help identify those requiring further investigation or removal.

The database is the first national tool of its kind for tracking abandoned and derelict vessels. Boaters and residents can upload an optional photo, log the date and time of a sighting, answer a short set of safety and vessel-related questions and drop a pin on an interactive map to mark a vessel's exact location, the organization notes. Every report, whether submitted by the public or by an agency like NJSP, feeds into a single national dataset, giving communities, agencies and advocates a shared picture of the ADV problem nationwide.

New Jersey's adoption of the database builds on the foundation's broader push to remove hundreds of ADVs from coastal waterways nationwide, supported by a 2023 award from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Marine Debris Program.



Spanish boat registrations show good growth up 7% in first nine months of 2026

The Spanish nautical market closed the first nine months of 2026 on an upward curve. 4,642 recreational boat registrations were recorded, an increase of 7% compared to the same period in 2025. Motorboats were the strongest-performing segment, with registrations rising 16.2%, accounting for 43.2% of the market. Vessels exceeding 12m recorded the most significant gains by size.

The nautical charter market also grew, with 1,440 registrations in the period, an 8.1% increase compared to the same period of 2025. However, the market remains 12.9% below 2024 levels.

September proved to be a strong month with 271 registrations being recorded – a 6.3% increase over September 2025.

These figures come from the Recreational Boat Market Report, prepared by ANEN based on data provided by the Directorate General of the Merchant Marine.

Vessels over 12m in length show the strongest growth.

By length, all segments improved compared to the same period in 2025, with notable growth in the 12m-16m segment (+38%) and among vessels larger than 16m (+51%). Vessels up to 6m in length, which continue to represent the largest share of the market at 67.8%, reached 3,149 registrations, a 4.5% increase. The 6m-8m segment totalled 886 units, recording 10.5% growth, while vessels in the 8m-12m range rose by 3.9% to 369 units.

Genoa boat show reports 11% visitor increase

The 66th Genoa International Boat Show, organised by Italian marine industry association Confindustria Nautica from 1-6 October, recorded 138,273 visitors, an 11.3% increase over the previous edition, thus reflecting the positive position of the Italian boating industry. The show featured over 1,000 boats and exhibitors from 45 countries across all segments of the recreational marine sector.

The event facilitated more than 4,600 sea trials over six days, with 215 new products launched. The show's waterfront location enables direct on-water testing, allowing buyers and operators to evaluate vessels under operating conditions.

Organisers reported positive exhibitor feedback, with shipyards concluding orders and contracts during the show. International buyer attendance was described as qualified, though specific transaction data was not disclosed.

Piero Formenti, president of Confindustria Nautica, stated: "The Salone Nautico is first and foremost a tool serving the industry, and the results of this edition confirm its strength and function. In a changing market, the most significant data is the quality of business generated: demand met supply, contracts were concluded and shipyards built new opportunities. This is the value of a show organised by the industry for the industry, capable of bringing together representation and market, industrial vision and international projection.

"The results of the new projects introduced this year were also positive. The Blue Arena worked, as did the integration between the Salone, the Palasport and the shopping centre, also creating a new opening toward the city and young people. The Living Made in Italy was also very successful, which we want to develop further, strengthening synergies between boating, design and other expressions of Made in Italy. We will work on both projects immediately for 2027. Work on the next Salone has already begun.

The 67th edition is scheduled for 30 September to 5 October 2027 in Genoa.

YSEC launches new guidance to support consistency in yacht load line compliance



The Yacht Safety & Environmental Consortium (YSEC), a collaboration between leading classification societies including LR, RINA, ABS, Bureau Veritas and DNV, has published a new Guidance Note for Load Line to Yachts, providing practical recommendations to support the consistent application of load line requirements across the sector.

Launched on the Lloyd's Register stand at the Monaco Yacht Show 2026, the guidance has been developed to help yacht designers, builders, owners, Flag Administrations and marine surveyors navigate areas where interpretation of load line requirements may vary between projects.

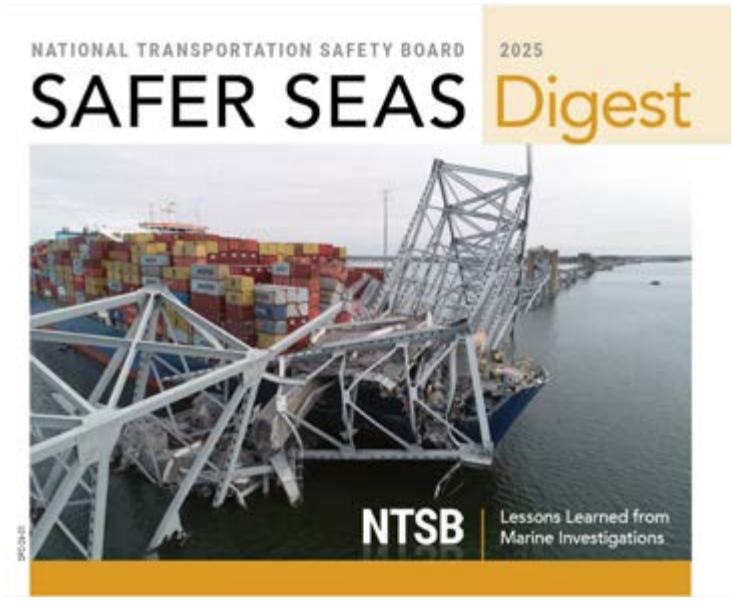
By providing a practical framework and clear recommendations, YSEC aims to reduce uncertainty and promote greater consistency during design and construction while supporting safe operation throughout a yacht's service life. The Guidance Note has been developed as a ready-to-use resource, supporting technical teams throughout design appraisal, plan approval and survey activities. It reflects YSEC's commitment to providing practical, responsive support to an industry facing increasing regulatory complexity and growing demand for consistency across projects.

As yacht designs continue to evolve, with larger vessels, innovative arrangements and more ambitious layouts becoming commonplace, stakeholders are seeking greater certainty during design, approval and construction. While load line requirements remain a cornerstone of vessel safety, their application to modern yachts can often require careful technical assessment and engineering judgement.

YSEC's new guidance seeks to bring greater consistency to that process by capturing industry experience, clarifying key considerations and supporting a common approach to compliance.

The publication recognises that acceptance of any project-specific arrangement, interpretation or equivalent solution remains subject to review and approval by the relevant Flag Administration. Any criteria, recommendations or solutions are intended to help stakeholders and Administrations take a consistent approach, while recognising the statutory authority of the Flag Administration in each case.





NTSB publishes Safer Seas Digest 2025 highlighting the same safety problems occurring

The U.S. National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB) has published Safer Seas Digest 2025, a collection of safety lessons drawn from the NTSB's marine investigations completed in 2025.

The annual publication provides the marine community with a concise look at what happened, why it happened, and what can be done to prevent similar casualties in the future. The 2025 digest examines 49 investigations that looked at accidents including capsizings, collisions, contacts with fixed objects, fires, floodings, groundings, and machinery damage.

Among the investigations featured in Safer Seas Digest 2025 are the contact of the containership Dali with the Francis Scott Key Bridge and subsequent bridge collapse, the hull failure and implosion of the Titan submersible, and the fire aboard the roll-on/roll-off container vessel Grande Costa D'Avorio.

The NTSB encourages marine operators and other stakeholders to review the safety issues identified in the Safer Seas Digest 2025 and consider how the lessons from these investigations can be applied to their own operations. Applying these lessons before a casualty occurs can save lives, prevent injuries, and reduce property and environmental damage.

NTSB investigators noted some commonalities that all mariners and vessel operators should consider. These include the following:

- Performing maintenance effectively
- Effective voyage planning and management
- Detecting and containing vessel fires
- Assessing the condition of waterfront infrastructure
- Ensuring watertight integrity
- Accounting for bank effect
- Combating fatigue and distraction,
- Properly securing and monitoring lithium-ion batteries
- Mitigating the risks of a loss of electrical power
- Planning and training for emergencies
- Operating in strong currents or heavy-weather conditions, and
- Operating equipment and machinery systems as designed.



The NTSB's Office of Marine Safety investigates major marine casualties upon the navigable waters of the U.S. and accidents involving U.S. flagged vessels worldwide. The investigations determine probable causes and lead to safety recommendations to prevent future casualties and improve maritime safety.

Download the Digest: **https://bit.ly/4hczgsG**.



2026 Marina of the Year Award winners announced

The Yacht Harbour Association (TYHA) has announced the winners of its 2026 Marina Awards. The awards covered eight categories for marinas, employees and teams in the UK and internationally.

The awards were presented on the Boating Stage at the Southampton International Boat Show, which concluded on 27 September 2026, and included separate categories for coastal marinas based on berth numbers, along with inland, international and superyacht marina categories. Individual awards recognised a marina employee and team, while the Sustainable Marina of the Year category focused on sustainability initiatives.

2026 Marina of the Year Award winners

Coastal Marina of the Year, under 250 berths:
Poole Quay Boat Haven.

Runner-up:
Emsworth Yacht Harbour.
Third place:
IGY St Katharine Docks Marina.

Coastal Marina of the Year, over 250 berths:
Cowes Yacht Haven.

Inland Marina of the Year:
York Marina.

International Marina of the Year:
Ayla Marina.

Superyacht Marina of the Year:
Marina De Vilamoura.

Marina Employee of the Year:
Harry Durrah, Emsworth Yacht Harbour.

Sustainable Marina of the Year:
Parkstone Bay Marina.

Marina Team of the Year:
Shepperton Marina.

Over 1,000 boaters apply for Canal & River Trust citizens' panel

Nearly 1,200 boaters have applied to take part in the Canal & River Trust's Citizens' Boater Panel, which will help shape a forthcoming consultation on changes to the boat licensing system.

The consultation is due to launch in December 2026 and is being developed with boaters and boating organisations following recommendations from the Independent Commission on Boat Licensing.

The trust has completed stakeholder workshops and is recruiting a Citizens' Boater Panel to provide input on the consultation materials before they are published. Around 40 volunteer boaters will be selected through an independent, anonymised process intended to reflect the diversity of the boating community.

Italy's boat building industry sees small growth

The Italian nautical industry is reported to have increased in 2025, while the global boat building market grew by at least 3%, with the small and medium-sized sectors estimated to have slipped 20-25% year-on-year, according to an Affari & Finanza supplement appearing in the Italian newspaper Repubblica.

The report quotes Deloitte's annual "The State of the Art of the Global Yachting Market 2026" report, indicating that the world market for new boats was estimated at around €33.3bn in 2025, down 2.1% from 2023. The production value of Italian ship and boat building yards is said to be between €5.4bn and €5.5bn in 2025, which is about the same as the €5.572bn recorded in 2024. The Repubblica report states that year-on-year growth was 7%, against a 3% fall in the global market.

In 2024, Italian ship and boatyards accounted for 64.8% of the total and record €8.6bn revenue achieved by the Italian nautical industry. The report states that, for the global superyacht market, Italy's share reached 56% by volume and 36% by value. In 2024, the smaller and medium-sized boat market fell by 10%.

UAE makes pre-load cargo declarations mandatory from 1 October

The United Arab Emirates has introduced a new layer of pre-arrival scrutiny for maritime cargo, making advance cargo information filings mandatory for shipping lines and freight forwarders from 1 October.

Under the Maritime Pre-Load Cargo Information (MPCI) programme, cargo data must be submitted and reviewed before a vessel departs its port of loading, according to The National. The requirement applies to cargo destined for the UAE, transiting through the country, transshipped at UAE ports, or remaining on board a vessel during a UAE port call.

The new system gives authorities greater visibility of cargo before it enters the UAE's maritime supply chain and shifts part of the security screening process from the point of arrival to the beginning of the voyage.

The MPCI programme is being administered by the UAE's National Advance Information Centre (NAIC), which was established to strengthen the security and efficiency of the country's ports, borders and free zones.

Shipping lines and freight forwarders are required to submit cargo information to the centre, including details of the consignor and consignee, before the goods are loaded. NAIC will then review the declaration and can approve the cargo, request additional information or issue a prohibition against loading. Where a loading prohibition is issued, the container cannot be placed on the vessel.

The new pre-loading requirement does not replace existing procedures once the vessel reaches the UAE. Carriers will still need to provide the required information to local port and customs authorities upon arrival.

Data already contained in shipping documents
For carriers and forwarders, much of the information required under the new regime should already be available through standard shipping documentation. Companies can submit information directly to NAIC through an integrated system available to shipping lines or use an accredited third-party service provider. NAIC does not charge a fee for filing cargo information, although service providers may impose their own charges.

The regulatory change nevertheless introduces a new compliance obligation for carriers and forwarders, with late filings, missing declarations and inaccurate information potentially resulting in fines.



Isle of Man Ship Registry shares 2025 Casualty Summary report

The Isle of Man Ship Registry has released its most recent casualty summary report – highlighting that mooring and anchoring operations remained one of the most common activities being undertaken at the time of an incident in 2025.

Key points:

- There were 53 Incidents, 15 Accidents and 5 Casualty Reports in 2025
- The most common occurrences in 2025 were personal injury and machinery / equipment failures
- Mooring operations were the most common activity reported on the Accident Report Forms (ARF)
- There was 1 fatality, 10 serious injuries and 21 minor injuries reported in 2025
- Times of no activity and manoeuvring operations presented the most dangerous periods for seafarers
- The most common root cause were procedural and operational factors and human factors
- The most common causes identified for each causal factor were:
  - o Workplace and Ergonomic Factors – Slippy, uneven floors and Awkward/Inaccessible equipment
  - o Procedural & Operational Factors – Failure to comply with safe working practices
  - o Management Systems Factors – Inadequate Processes and Inadequate supplies of spares or equipment
  - o Machinery & Equipment Factors – Machinery/Equipment breakdown, Electrical installation failures/ inadequacy
  - o Human Factors – Poor judgement and decision making, Unsafe acts and negligence
  - o External Factors – Navigational hazards and tides/currents

Conclusions

The findings of the 2025 casualty data continue to demonstrate that many occurrences arise not from a single cause, but from a combination of human, operational, technical, environmental, and organisational factors. While the specific circumstances of each incident vary, common themes remain evident, including the importance of effective planning, robust maintenance regimes, clear procedures, good communication, and ongoing training.

A strong safety culture remains one of the most effective safeguards against accidents. Companies should ensure that personnel are provided with the tools, resources, and support necessary to work safely, while seafarers should be encouraged to take an active role in identifying hazards, reporting concerns, and learning from incidents and near misses. Adherence to safe working practices, established procedures, and industry best practice is fundamental to preventing harm and maintaining safe vessel operations.

Ultimately, the lessons identified from the occurrences reported in 2025 reinforce the need for continuous vigilance both on and off duty. By promoting a proactive approach to risk management and fostering an environment where safety takes precedence over operational or commercial pressures, the maritime industry can continue to reduce the likelihood of future casualties and improve outcomes for all those working at sea

Download the full report: **https://bit.ly/4yFzK2d**.

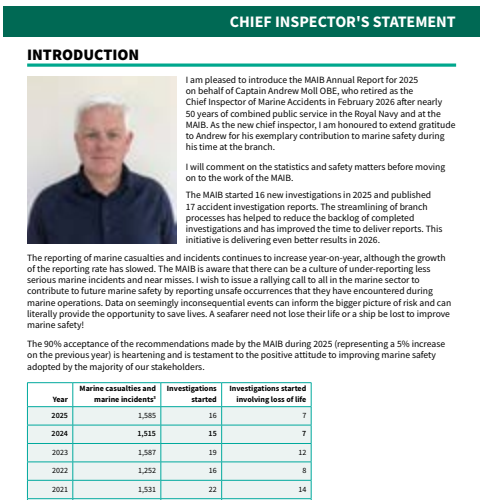


UK MAIB Annual Report shows 1,585 accident reports in 2025

The UK Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) has published its Annual Report 2025, recording 1,585 accident reports to UK vessels worldwide or any vessels within UK coastal waters during 2025.

The MAIB started 16 new investigations in 2025 and published 17 accident investigation reports.

It also made 50 recommendations that were issued to 26 distinct addressees in 2025 of which 90% were accepted – a 5% increase on the previous year.



CHIEF INSPECTOR'S STATEMENT

INTRODUCTION

I am pleased to introduce the MAIB Annual Report for 2025 on behalf of Captain Andrew Moll OBE, who retired as the Chief Inspector of Marine Accidents in February 2026 after nearly 50 years of combined public service in the Royal Navy and at the MAIB. As the new chief inspector, I am honoured to extend gratitude to Andrew for his exemplary contribution to marine safety during his time at the branch.

I will comment on the statistics and safety matters before moving on to the work of the MAIB.

The MAIB started 16 new investigations in 2025 and published 17 accident investigation reports. The streamlining of branch processes has helped to reduce the backlog of completed investigations and has improved the time to deliver reports. This initiative is delivering even better results in 2026.

The reporting of marine casualties and incidents continues to increase year-on-year, although the growth of the reporting rate has slowed. The MAIB is aware that there can be a culture of under-reporting less serious marine incidents and near misses. I wish to issue a rallying call to all in the marine sector to contribute to future marine safety by reporting unsafe occurrences that they have encountered during marine operations. Data on seemingly inconsequential events can inform the bigger picture of risk and can literally provide the opportunity to save lives. A seafarer need not lose their life or a ship be lost to improve marine safety!

The 90% acceptance of the recommendations made by the MAIB during 2025 (representing a 5% increase on the previous year) is heartening and is testament to the positive attitude to improving marine safety adopted by the majority of our stakeholders.

Year	Marine casualties and marine incidents[1]	Investigations started	Investigations started involving loss of life
2025	1,585	16	7
2024	1,515	15	7
2023	1,587	19	12
2022	1,252	16	8
2021	1,531	22	14

Chief Inspector of Marine Accidents, Rob Loder, said: "The reporting of marine casualties and incidents continues to increase year-on-year, although the growth of the reporting rate has slowed. The MAIB is aware that there can be a culture of under-reporting less serious marine incidents and near misses. I wish to issue a rallying call to all in the marine sector to contribute to future marine safety by reporting unsafe occurrences that they have encountered during marine operations. Data on seemingly inconsequential events can inform the bigger picture of risk and can literally provide the opportunity to save lives. A seafarer need not lose their life or a ship be lost to improve marine safety!

"The 90% acceptance of the recommendations made by the MAIB during 2025 (representing a 5% increase on the previous year) is heartening and is testament to the positive attitude to improving marine safety adopted by the majority of our stakeholders."

Safety issues

Merchant vessels

- The standard of watchkeeping, lookout and the application of the collision regulations continue to be a concern on merchant ships.
- Further, effective use of safety management systems and the application of the International Safety Management Code provide the best opportunity to keep seafarers and vessels safe.
- A future challenge to marine safety manifested in the collision between the uncrewed surface vessel X18 and crew transfer vessel Iceni Legend in the North Sea in September 2025. Fortunately, there was no loss of life, but the accident is providing the opportunity to understand how a remotely controlled slow-moving vessel operates in the same sea space as a fast-moving vessel helmed by a human. There is a drive to automate, reduce manning and move to larger fully autonomous vessels. The MAIB recognises this is an important investigation that can inform vessel build and operation standards, seafarer training and how a human can understand what the robot might do (and vice versa).

Fishing vessels

- Safety folders are often present on fishing vessels but it is common to find that the safety procedures that are written are not used and the equipment that they describe, such as safety tethers, are not present.
- Although a personal flotation device (PFD) is sometimes worn, PFDs are often presented as a mitigation to preventing falls into water. They can also mitigate the effect of falling overboard, helping to keep the airway clear of the water and prevent drowning.
  - The cold waters in the fishing grounds can claim a displaced fisher floating in their PFD – the best policy is to keep the fisher on board their vessel.
- Fatigue continues to plague the fishing industry, with two vessels grounded and lost during 2025. The drive to keep fishing is understandable in such a tough economic climate. Long days of fishing and night maintenance can take their toll and the risk of falling asleep on watch is ever present.

Download the report: **https://bit.ly/4icsIMn**.

2026 Blue Wake Award winners announced in Monaco



The Blue Wake Awards, a key part of the Monaco Yacht Show's

commitment to sustainability, were presented to six industry innovators on the opening day of the event.

The 2026 Blue Wake Award winners were:

Tenders & Water Toys category: Tykun. Marco Galimberti, CEO of Tykun, received the award for its aluminium-hulled tenders, which deliver measurably lower environmental impact than conventional alternatives. Tykun's solution has been assessed through a full life-cycle analysis following ISO 14040 and 14044 standards, covering 14 impact categories. Tykun's Environmental Product Declaration is currently under review by RINA.

Luxury Services & Products category: Bespoke Projects. Vasilisa Mironova, operations manager, received the trophy for GreenCast – a sustainable alternative to traditional yacht interior materials. The recycled-monomer cast acrylic repurposes teak offcuts from yacht projects while delivering major reductions in global warming potential, acidification, eutrophication and fossil resource use compared with virgin alternatives.

Nautical Supplier category: Termodinamica. Maurizio Tropea, founder and CTO, was selected by the judges for the company's direct-expansion marine HVAC system with inverter heat pump technology. An independent life-cycle assessment showed reductions of 60-66% across 10 impact categories, with real-world testing demonstrating potential annual savings of 8,000 litres of fuel and 22 tonnes of CO2.

New Build/Refit Shipyard category: Amico & Co. Corrado Medina, technical & sales manager, accepted the award for comprehensive operational sustainability at the company's Genoa refit shipyard. Its 1MW solar array generated nearly 1 million kWh last year, avoiding more than 400 tonnes of CO2. The facility features full-dock shore power, on-site wastewater treatment and 25-category waste recovery.

Yacht Services/Brokerage/Charter category: Marina Ibiza. Isabel Martínez Picornell, head of commercial department, IPM-IMG Group, was recognised for actively restoring marine ecosystems through Posidonia seagrass meadow restoration. Since 2021, 86,000 plants have been planted, covering nearly 3,000 sq m, with survival rates above 90% and 28 species recorded in restored areas.

The Blue Wake Special Award for a Yacht: Simena by Ares Yachts. Piraye Şahinkaya Orhun, Ares Yacht project director, accepted the award for the 62m sailing yacht, which blends traditional sailing with hybrid propulsion technology, including 220kW electric motors, battery-supported silent operation, regeneration under sail and optimised energy efficiency. The yacht achieved an 11% improvement over the average fleet in its YETI assessment, based on ISO/TS 23099, showcasing how innovation and operational efficiency can enhance environmental performance.





UK Canal & River Trust 2025/6 Annual Report published

Canal & River Trust is the charity that cares for 2,000 miles of waterways across England and Wales. The Canal & River Trust 2025/6 Annual Report has published and is available to read. The Report highlights a year in which extreme weather tested the resilience of the nation's canal network while underlining the increasingly important role waterways play in supporting nature, communities and the management of water in a changing climate. The year 2025/26 was dominated by a summer of drought. Despite the UK's warmest and sunniest year on record and the driest spring since 1974, the Trust was able to keep over 80% of the network fully open and operational. Colleagues and volunteers worked tirelessly to manage water supplies, keep boats afloat, and protect wildlife.

While prolonged dry conditions affected summer water supplies, the devastating breach on the Llangollen Canal at Whitchurch in December demonstrated the scale of challenges that an ageing canal infrastructure can bring. Working quickly in difficult conditions, teams were able to rescue stranded boats, secure the water supply around the breach site and start the rebuild which is now well underway.

The drought conditions experienced during 2025 have continued beyond the reporting period. Another drought in 2026 has meant the nation has now experienced its third major drought in five years, with waterways across England and Wales once again coming under significant pressure. Increasingly regular drought incidents reinforce the importance of canals not only as cherished heritage assets but as key infrastructure that, with investment, will help to improve the nation's water resilience.

Despite the challenges caused by extreme weather, the Canal & River Trust 2025/6 Annual Report highlights a year of investment and progress across the network. The Trust completed more than £55 millions of major infrastructure projects, spent around £29 million upgrading reservoirs, removed over 75,000 tonnes of material through dredging, and completed 137 large-scale winter maintenance projects.

The charity also continued its work to improve the experience of boaters, increasing investment in dredging, vegetation management, lock repairs and customer service facilities. It also published, and is acting upon, the report and recommendations of an independent Commission which examined how waterways are used by boaters today. Despite the operational challenges, the nation's waterways remained hugely popular. The Trust estimates that 881 million visits were made to its waterways during the year.

Alongside this vital work, fundraising and public support continued to grow. Income from donations and legacies increased to a record £10.3 million, while the number of regular supporters rose to 38,355 and volunteers contributed a record 776,242 hours helping to care for the waterways.

During the year, the Trust also secured important additional public funding to support the long-term future of the canal network. The Welsh Government announced it would contribute to increased costs of water supply for the Monmouthshire & Brecon Canal over the next five years, while Defra announced extra financial support of £6.5 million for projects to build long-term resilience across the network.

Download the report: **https://bit.ly/4rVDUQN**.

Southampton International Boat Show launches eight-day format for 2027

A new strategy for the future of the Southampton International Boat Show (SIBS) has been announced by British Marine, based around a new eight-day format. The new format has been developed in response to exhibitor feedback. The new Saturday-to-Saturday format will create a more focused eight-day event, retaining three valuable weekend trading days while concentrating visitor activity and commercial opportunities for exhibitors.

This change also brings SIBS closer to other international shows such as the Cannes Yachting Festival, which runs for six days, the Monaco Yacht Show for four and the Genoa International Boat Show, also six.

British Marine has also committed to hosting the show in Mayflower Park for the next three years, confirming it as the best location to deliver the right commercial setting for exhibitors and experience for visitors. This long-term venue agreement provides a strong foundation for future planning, investment and growth.



AUTORIDAD MARÍTIMA DE PANAMÁ

Panama Ship Registry drops to 3rd place in global rankings

Panama Ship Registry, once the world leading register, has dropped to third position in tonnage, according to the 2026 edition of the Clarkson Research World Fleet Register.

Panama, with 202.1 million gt and 7,677 vessels, follows the Marshall Islands Registry that climbed to number two, with 209.4 million gt, and 4,732 vessels while Liberia continues to lead with 314.6 million gt and 6,138 vessels. Clarksons World Fleet Commercial and Merchant report includes vessels over 100 gt.

What some might interpret as a reduction in tonnage represents a fresh start, comments Ramon Franco, head of Panama's Ship Registry.

"At the moment, our priority is to ensure that the vessels in our fleet are the best. If this means being more selective – by refusing to register certain vessels or by cancelling the registration of those whose performance is not up to standard – we will do so."

The Panama Ship Registry has removed a substantial number of vessels from its books to comply with US sanctions and has faced issues with Chinese detentions in a geopolitical spat over port concessions in Panama. Vessel registration in Panama is important for law firms and companies representing the Registry. Any changes in Panama's international position and image affect a sector that provides substantial revenues to the local maritime industry.

Flor Torrijos, a maritime lawyer and executive director of InterMaritime Group agrees that "the Panama Maritime Authority must improve its customer service and listen more closely to the needs of its users. It must be an institution that applies international regulations rigorously while providing efficient, responsive and practical support. This is the only way Panama can regain the trust and confidence of shipowners worldwide."

The world's largest yacht-dedicated shiplift and a 1,700-tonne travel lift showcased at the Monaco Yacht Show



Pictured left to right: Javier De Juana, Spain director at Lloyd's Register; Mónica Aznar, daughter of Alejandro Aznar; Alejandro Aznar, president of Grupo Ibaizabal; Panos Mitrou, senior vice president – Shipping Strategy at Lloyd's Register; and Miquel Lliteras, managing director of VMG Astilleros de Sagunto.

With the superyacht fleet increasing in number and the size of yachts within the fleet growing, heavier lifting equipment will be needed to handle refits of such superyachts. At the Monaco Yacht Show MYS), the world's largest yacht-dedicated shiplift and a 1,700-tonne travel lift were highlighted.

The world's largest yacht-dedicated shiplift received Lloyd's Register (LR) classification at MYS 2026. The 5,000-tonne facility at VMG Astilleros de Sagunto expands capacity for large-yacht refit and maintenance projects, strengthening Spain's position as a growing superyacht service hub. Classed by LR in April 2026, the 5,000-tonne shiplift enables the safe handling of some of the world's largest yachts and expands capacity for major refit, repair and maintenance projects in the region. The VMG Sagunto facility features a 102m-long, 22m-wide platform and is the largest yacht-focused shiplift of its kind globally.

Once lifted, vessels are transferred to land-level repair berths across 76,800m² of hard-standing area using self-propelled modular transporters (SPMTs), a technology that offers greater manoeuvrability and precision than traditional bogie systems.

Through classification, LR has independently verified that the shiplift complies with its Regulations for Lifting Appliances in a Marine Environment, providing assurance that the facility meets recognised standards for safety and operational integrity. The certification comes as demand for large-yacht refit infrastructure continues to grow.



Enclosed Spaces – Safety and Risk Management

Read the Steamship Mutual Risk Alert: **https://bit.ly/4rOouh6**.

Steamship Mutual

Enclosed space entry remains one of the most serious and persistent risks facing seafarers. Despite increased industry awareness, training and regulatory requirements, fatalities continue to occur, often during tasks that crews may have carried out many times before.

One of the challenges is that an enclosed space may not appear hazardous. A ballast tank, cargo hold, void space, chain locker or other confined compartment can look safe to enter, while potentially dangerous conditions, including oxygen deficiency, toxic gases or flammable atmospheres, may exist within.

Enclosed space incidents can also result in multiple casualties. In some cases, crew members attempting to rescue a colleague have entered the space without appropriate precautions and become casualties themselves. This highlights the importance of following established entry and rescue procedures every time, regardless of how familiar or routine the task may appear. Enclosed space entry should never become a routine administrative exercise. Proper risk assessment, atmosphere testing, ventilation, communication, supervision and emergency preparedness remain essential before and throughout every entry.



AkzoNobel expands global network with launch of first yacht paint application centre in Germany

AkzoNobel has announced the opening of its Yacht Paint Application Centre (YPAC) in Hamburg, Germany, extending its global network and providing access to industry-leading technical expertise, advanced product education and technical training resources in the region.

The state-of-the-art YPAC facility is designed for use by applicators, distributors, designers, contractors, and other professionals across the superyacht and leisure marine sectors. The YPAC forms part of AkzoNobel's global strategic investment initiative to enhance regional technical support.

The centre will serve as the industry's leading resource for product education and hands-on training, helping professionals navigate evolving regulations and consistently deliver premium results across superyacht paint refit, custom build, and small professional markets. The facility will also look to address some of the most pressing challenges faced by boatbuilders, refit yards and distributors, including the growing demand for professional training to help close the skills gap.

Strengthening AkzoNobel's international network of established application centres, the new Hamburg hub will support the specific needs of customers across Germany, Austria, Switzerland, Poland, Hungary and the Czech Republic.

The facility joins established YPAC locations in North America, the Netherlands, United Kingdom, and Australia. The latest program at the prestigious Gold Coast City Marina in Coomera has been recognized for setting a global industry benchmark in training, most recently receiving an EPIC Award, an initiative honouring Exceptional, Purposeful, Innovative, Compassionate Companies, in November for excellence in the 'Training' category.

U.S. Coast Guard addressing marine firefighting challenges, but worrying gaps remain



The disastrous fire aboard the ro/ro Grande Costa D'Avorio prompted a reevaluation of shoreside firefighter preparations for maritime casualty response - (NTSB file image)

Fires on vessels present serious dangers to passengers, crew, and firefighters. They can have significant environmental impact and can affect billion-dollar commerce in busy ports. Marine fires present unique hazards that are incredibly dangerous and challenging incidents for firefighters to respond to, including vessel instability, tight onboard spaces, and the need for specialized resources that are not typically available in many ports.

The U.S. Government Accountability Office (GAO), the non-partisan, fact-based arm of Congress, recently published a report highlighting the prevalence of these fires and the Coast Guard's efforts address them. According to Coast Guard data, 886 nearshore marine fires occurred between 2015 and 2025. About a quarter of these were classified as serious because they resulted in either death, injury, over $200,000 in damage, or a total loss of the vessel. The figure below shows the locations of these marine fires, including incidents where fire departments responded.

Fifty-five people died in serious marine fires from 2015 through 2025. These included the deaths of land-based firefighters, such as a 2023 incident where two Newark firefighters died while responding to a fire on a large vehicle cargo vessel. Following the Newark fire, the Coast Guard established a task force to identify and address marine firefighting challenges. The task force took several steps to address these challenges, including developing guidance for standardizing marine firefighting plans and a tool to quickly collect and share information during a marine fire. But some gaps persist:

Training for firefighters

The Coast Guard, the National Transportation Safety Board, and fire chiefs have found that available training on preparing for and responding to marine fires for land-based firefighters is limited. In response, the Coast Guard partnered with an emergency response organization to develop online training videos on marine fires for firefighters. But Coast Guard officials and fire chiefs told us that ensuring firefighters have hands-on training, like vessel tours and exercises with "boots on boats," will better prepares firefighters for complex marine fires, instead of virtual or classroom training alone.

Funding

While formal marine firefighting training is available at several institutions across the country, fire chiefs in four ports GAO spoke with said they have trouble justifying the training because of budget constraints. For example, one fire chief told GAO that tuition for one firefighter to attend a 5-day training course may cost $500, but the total cost of attendance would be around $6,000 because of enrolment, lodging, and overtime costs. Fire chiefs also said that some fire departments lack resources, such as fireboat assets and water pumps, to provide effective responses to marine fires. Fire departments have used federal Port Security Grant funds to address these issues in the past. GAO made recommendations to improve this program in September 2025.

Delayed vessel response plan activation

The Coast Guard also found that sometimes vessel owners or operators delay activating vessel response plans, which dispatch pre-contracted resources to respond to a worst-case scenario. For example, vessels may use a "wait and see" approach, not activating a plan until the situation deteriorates and endangers firefighters. However, the Coast Guard has not developed or distributed more detailed guidance on when to activate vessel response plans, such as by including scenarios of fires that warrant activating a plan.

Fires on vessels that use alternative fuels

Vessels that use alternative fuels are becoming increasingly common and can pose significant risks to the environment and firefighters. However, GAO found the Coast Guard's existing regulations for requiring vessel response plans do not cover certain vessels that use alternative fuel sources—such as ferries powered by lithium-ion batteries or container ships powered by ammonia. Not having a response plan for such vessels can delay firefighting efforts. For example, representatives of the resource providers said they could not respond to a marine fire on one of these vessels for 3 to 4 days until contract details were finalized with vessel owners. Additionally, one fire chief told us that land-based firefighters may not be trained for the hazards associated with vessels using alternative fuels, which could lead to career-ending injuries.

GAO recommended that the Coast Guard engage with fire departments and maritime stakeholders to coordinate shipboard training opportunities and distribute information on factors to consider when determining when vessel response plans should be activated for marine fires. GAO also recommended that Congress consider amending the law to ensure vessels using alternative fuels prepare vessel response plans.

Download the full report at **https://bit.ly/4B17iZV**.



WSC data shows one in ten inspected cargo units found with safety deficiencies

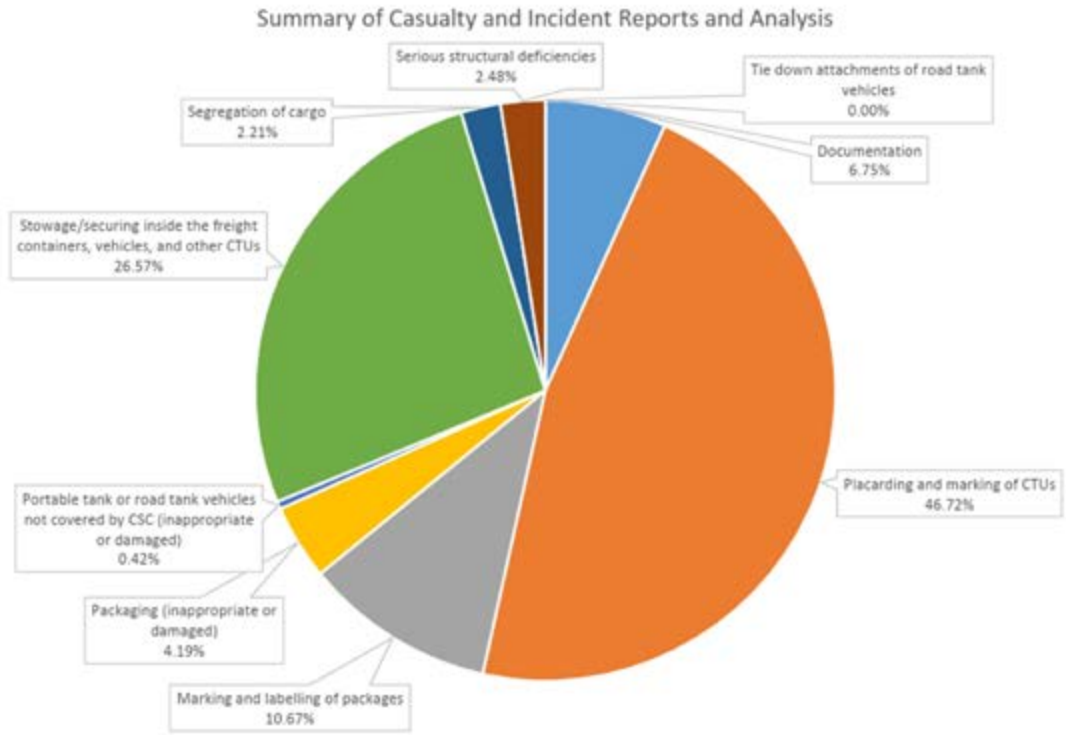
More than one in ten cargo transport units inspected during 2025 had safety deficiencies, according to data published by the World Shipping Council (WSC).

WSC reported that government authorities in seven countries reported 93,079 unit inspections in 2025 and identified deficiencies in 9,645, a rate of 10.36%. Problems included incorrect documentation, marking and labelling, improper packing and inadequate cargo securing, all of which can increase the risk of cargo damage, container losses and ship fires.

“Finding deficiencies in more than one in ten inspected units is far too high,” said Joe Kramek, President and CEO of the World Shipping Council. “Correct declaration, packing, securing and marking are fundamental safety obligations. When these requirements are not met, people’s lives are put at risk.”

The report consolidates information submitted to the International Maritime Organization by Chile, Finland, Germany, the Kingdom of the Netherlands, the Republic of Korea, Sweden and the United States.

WSC took on the consolidation and publication of the results after the IMO discontinued its annual consolidated report in 2024, keeping this important safety information accessible to governments and industry.



Source: World Shipping Council

Also concerning is that only seven of the IMO’s more than 170 Member States reported container inspection results for 2025, leaving significant gaps in the global safety picture.

“States have a responsibility to enforce cargo safety rules, including through effective inspections,” said Joe Kramek. “The fact that only seven Member States reported results is concerning. More governments need to report their inspections so that risks can be consistently identified and action taken.”

WSC said gaps in compliance and enforcement reinforce the importance of the WSC Cargo Safety Program, which uses shared screening technology, common inspection standards and operational feedback to help identify misdeclared and undeclared dangerous goods before they are loaded aboard ships.

Read the report: **https://bit.ly/4ickC6t**.

Failed engine control transfer led ferry to hit wharf



Passenger ferry Radisson after striking the wharf upon arrival at the port of Québec, Quebec, on October 18, 2024. Source: Transportation Safety Board of Canada.

An investigation by the Transportation Safety Board of Canada (TSB) revealed failed engine control transfer led to passenger ferry Radisson to hit a wharf at the Port of Québec, injuring five people.

TSB said the investigation highlighted the need to better manage safety risks following changes to shipboard equipment and to require passenger safety management training for crew members of all passenger vessels.

What happened
On 18 October 2024, while the passenger ferry Radisson was approaching wharf 92 at the Port of Québec, Quebec, bridge personnel noticed that the engine control was not responding. Less than 1 minute later, the vessel struck the wharf at a speed of approximately 6 knots. The master was able to bring the vessel alongside the wharf using the bow thruster. Four passengers and 1 crew member were injured. The vessel sustained minor damage. No pollution was reported.

The investigation
In 2023, after the Radisson's engine and control system were replaced, a new procedure was developed to transfer engine control between bridge stations. The investigation found that the procedure did not provide sufficient guidance to support crew members during the transfer and that the system did not provide clear cues to confirm whether it had been successful. Although a formal risk assessment had identified hazards associated with the change, crew training was the only step taken to reduce the risks. As a result, previously identified risks remained unmitigated, allowing unsafe conditions to persist.

The investigation also found that gaps in passenger safety management limited the crew's ability to respond effectively to an emergency, including the absence of realistic emergency drills and the lack of an effective warning to passengers before impact.

The TSB has investigated similar occurrences that identified shortcomings in passenger safety management on ferries including the occurrence involving the passenger ferry Sam McBride, following which the Board recommended that Transport Canada implement a requirement for crew members of all passenger vessels to complete appropriate training in passenger safety management.

Since the occurrence, the Société des traversiers du Québec, owner and operator of the Radisson, has taken several safety actions, including posting remote engine control transfer procedures at control stations, reconfiguring control station panels, and introducing an aural signal that sounds when the transfer process is active.

Read the final report: **https://bit.ly/4hUqArl**.

ONE and ClassNK launch study to assess roll damping tanks on container ships



Photo credit: Ocean Network Express

Ocean Network Express (ONE) and Nippon Kaiji Kyokai (ClassNK) have launched a joint research project to evaluate the effectiveness of roll damping tanks (RDTs) on large container ships. Under the project, ONE will provide onboard measurement data collected from vessels in its fleet, while ClassNK will analyze the data alongside numerical simulations to assess RDT performance under actual operating and sea conditions. RDTs reduce a ship's rolling motion through the controlled movement of liquid within a tank.

While the technology has long been used on passenger ships, research vessels and other specialized vessels, its application to container ships has increased in recent years.

Roll reduction is particularly important for large container ships, as excessive rolling can increase the forces acting on containers and their securing systems. Effective roll reduction can support safer vessel operations and cargo transportation, while potentially allowing more efficient stowage and greater operational flexibility. However, despite the growing use of RDTs on containerships, their performance has primarily been assessed through model tests and numerical simulations. Full-scale verification using onboard measurements under actual operating and sea conditions remains limited.

The collaboration between ONE and ClassNK aims to address this gap by combining operational data from active container ships with ClassNK's expertise in testing, numerical simulation and technical analysis.



Thames Clippers warns fuel rules are hindering cleaner river transport

Uber Boat by Thames Clippers is calling on the UK government to reinstate Renewable Transport Fuel Certificate (RTFC) eligibility for vessels operating on tidal rivers and estuaries, arguing that current rules are pushing up the cost of lower-carbon fuel for river transport operators.

The company says amendments to the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation (RTFO) made in late 2025 resolved eligibility questions for aviation and certain non-biological maritime fuels but left the status of tidal-river vessels using Hydrotreated Vegetable Oil (HVO) unaddressed.

Uber Boat by Thames Clippers argues that the distinction creates an inconsistency between river transport and other public transport modes. It points to journeys in London where a bus and a scheduled river service can provide comparable public transport connections while using the same transition fuel, but only the bus remains eligible for RTFCs.

According to Thames Clippers, removing RTFC eligibility has increased the cost of using HVO relative to conventional marine diesel. The company estimates that using HVO across its fleet has the potential to save an estimated 17,152 tonnes of CO2e, but that the fuel is currently nearly 50 per cent more expensive per litre than marine diesel.

DNV paper says LNG bunker fleet may need to double by 2030



The global LNG bunker vessel fleet may need to more than double by 2030, according to a new white paper from classification society DNV.

The report estimates that between 165 and 208 bunker vessels could be needed globally by the end of this decade.

As LNG-powered shipping continues to grow, demand for bunkering capacity is rising rapidly. Although the LNG bunker fleet is expanding steadily, demand from LNG-fuelled vessels is expected to grow even faster, placing increasing pressure on bunker vessels and the wider bunkering ecosystem.

Without additional investment across this value chain, fuel supply could become a constraint on further LNG adoption in shipping. DNV's white paper, Gas bunker vessels: facilitating the transition to alternative fuels, highlights how gas bunker vessels are evolving from specialist fuel delivery assets into critical infrastructure supporting shipping's fuel transition.

Cristina Saenz de Santa Maria, CEO, DNV Maritime, said: "Shipping's fuel transition depends on more than ships and fuel choices. It also depends on the infrastructure, supply chains, and operational capabilities needed to make alternative fuels available safely and at scale. As the fuel landscape continues to evolve, investment in flexible, reliable, and future-ready bunkering infrastructure will be essential."

The white paper examines market developments, regulatory requirements, vessel design considerations, gas bunker vessel technical specialities, and operational best practices, while outlining the role gas bunker vessels will play in supporting both current LNG demand and the future adoption of alternative fuels.

It also highlights opportunities to accelerate market development through the conversion of suitable small-scale LNG carriers into bunker vessels. In addition, the white paper examines the growing importance of operational readiness, structured safety management, and competence development as bunkering operations become more frequent and geographically widespread.

Martin Cartwright, Global Business Director, Gas Carriers & FSRUs, DNV Maritime, said: "LNG-fuelled shipping is growing faster than the bunkering network needed to support it. Closing this gap will require coordinated investment across the bunkering ecosystem, underpinned by robust safety standards, operational readiness and competence. These elements must advance together if gas bunkering is to scale safely and reliably, while also supporting future pathways, such as biomethane."

While the white paper focuses primarily on LNG, it also considers the emergence of ammonia as a potential marine fuel. The infrastructure, operational experience, and safety frameworks being developed for LNG bunkering today are expected to play an important role in supporting the future deployment of ammonia bunkering solutions.

Find out more: **https://bit.ly/4emHUnJ**.



Bosun died on bulk carrier after enclosed space entry



Avra. Source: RMI Maritime Administrator

The bosun of bulk carrier Avra was found collapsed and later pronounced deceased after he entered a space that was part of a fully loaded cargo hold, according to the Republic of the Marshall Islands Maritime Administrator.

What happened

On 25 July 2025, the Republic of the Marshall Islands-registered bulk carrier Avra, managed by A.M. Nomikos Transworld Maritime Agencies S.A., was berthed at MB5, Daesan Port, Republic of Korea.

The ship was discharging the bulk cargo of wood pellets when the Bosun was found collapsed inside the CH No. 4 aft access hatch space.

At 1033, the crew rescued the Bosun and brought him out onto the main deck, where medical first aid and CPR were immediately commenced. At 1120, the shore emergency team arrived and transported the Bosun to the local hospital. However, at 1216, the ship received information from the local agent that the Bosun was deceased.

The investigation

The Republic of the Marshall Islands Maritime Administrator's marine safety investigation determined that the Bosun had entered the CH No. 4 aft access hatch space to gain access to the CH No. 5 forward inspection platform to sweep off cargo residues on the platform without complying with the Company's enclosed space entry procedures.

Causal factors that contributed to this very serious marine casualty included:

a) the Bosun's decision to enter the CH No. 4 aft access hatch space, an adjacent connected space to CH No. 4; and
b) lack of oversight by the C/O of the Bosun's movement and work activities during cargo operations in port due to the Bosun's perceived level of experience.

Additional causal factors that may have contributed to this very serious marine casualty included:

a) there were no requirements for the reporting of personnel entry into enclosed spaces where the spaces were identified as low risk (Appendix I – MLC Crew Manual); and
b) poor and/or lack of warning signs or physical barriers to prevent unauthorized entry into the cargo holds access hatch spaces.

Lessons learned

The following lessons learned were identified:

- Entering a space that is part of a fully loaded cargo hold without authorization and without following established shipboard enclosed space entry procedures is extremely hazardous and should not be attempted.
- Physical barriers and warning signs are critical for preventing unauthorized access into an enclosed space.
- Compliance with established safety procedures is paramount and should always be prioritized to ensure personal safety.

Download the report: **https://bit.ly/4yP5GRG**.

WSC calls for governments to close battery cargo safety gap

The World Shipping Council (WSC) is urging governments to close a gap in international dangerous goods rules that allows containers carrying thousands of lithium batteries to be transported without carriers being informed of the hazard.

The call comes as battery transport grows rapidly and cargo fires remain a persistent risk at sea.

Global lithium-ion battery deployment in 2025 was six times higher than in 2020, according to the International Energy Agency, with battery demand expected to double by 2030. Latest statistics by insurer Allianz show that a container ship fire occurs every 17 days.

Special Provision 188 of the International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code exempts smaller batteries from certain requirements when they meet specified testing, packaging and capacity criteria. However, there is no limit on how many exempt batteries can be consolidated in one container.

A container carrying around 4,200 laptops could therefore contain approximately 416 kWh of stored energy, equivalent to three or four electric vehicles, without requiring dangerous goods documentation or container placarding.

“Right now, a container can be packed with thousands of lithium batteries and still travel without being declared as dangerous goods,” said Joe Kramek, President and CEO of the World Shipping Council. “The SP188 exemption was intended to simplify the transport of individual devices with small batteries, not to make entire container loads invisible.”

Batteries are transported safely every day when they are properly declared and the risks are appropriately managed. The problem arises when carriers, crews, ports and emergency responders do not know the hazard is present.

Without that information, carriers cannot properly assess the risk, choose appropriate stowage, separate the container from other cargo or prepare an informed emergency response.

“We know what can happen when hazards are invisible,” Kramek said. “Batteries shipped under the exemption have caused serious container fires, putting people, ports, ships and the marine environment at risk.”

The WSC has been supported by five governments and a broad coalition of industry organisations in submitting a paper for consideration by the IMO. It sets out a potential maximum container-level threshold, above which battery shipments would have to be declared and potentially placarded.

“The current rules are not working as intended,” Joe Kramek said. “As battery shipments continue to grow, we need a better solution that makes these cargoes visible and allows the risks to be properly managed.”

Italy, Croatia and Slovenia hold joint search and rescue exercise in Gulf of Trieste



Photo credit: avditaly

The maritime authorities of Italy, Croatia and Slovenia held a joint search and rescue exercise (SARex) in the Gulf of Trieste on 22 September, with

the participation of EMSA, the European Fisheries Control Agency (EFCA) and the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (Frontex). The exercise took place within the framework of the Multipurpose Maritime Operation (MMO) ADRIA 2026.

The Italian Coast Guard hosted the exercise and coordinated it from the Maritime Rescue Sub-Centre (MRSC) in Trieste. EMSA coordinated the preparation of the exercise, together with EFCA, Frontex and the maritime authorities of Italy, Croatia and Slovenia. The scenario was a simulated collision involving a fishing vessel. It required the Maritime Rescue Coordination Centres in Rome, Koper and Rijeka, and MRSC Trieste to exchange information across their Search and Rescue regions, plan the search and coordinate the participating units. They followed the IAMSAR Manual and the existing bilateral agreements between Italy and Croatia and between Italy and Slovenia.

Training manikins or dummies represented persons in the water. The exercise also included a simulated medical evacuation by helicopter, following telemedical advice from Italy's Telemedical Maritime Assistance Service (CIRM).

EMSA chaired the Joint Coordination Team, which monitored the exercise and introduced additional scenario inputs to test procedures. EMSA also chaired the pre-exercise briefing and the debriefing that followed the exercise. A communications exercise (COMex) ran at the same time on the Common Information Sharing Environment (CISE). The nodes of Italy, Slovenia, EMSA and EFCA exchanged situation reports, requests for assistance and images from the scene.



Australia launches campaign for re-election to IMO

The Australian Government has marked World Maritime Day by announcing it will seek another two-year term on the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Council.

As a founding member of the IMO, Australia has helped shape international maritime standards for almost 75 years.

Australia is nominating for re-election to 'Category B' of the IMO Council, which is comprised of states with the largest interest in international seaborne trade. Re-election will allow Australia to continue bringing practical expertise, a consensus-building approach and a regional voice to decisions that shape global maritime safety, environmental protection, international trade and sustainable shipping.

Working closely with IMO Member States and industry, Australia is widely recognised for its active leadership on maritime safety, digital maritime services, seafarer welfare, search and rescue and environment protection.

Australia is helping shape international responses to some of the maritime sector's most significant challenges, including the transition to low-carbon liquid fuels, the safe adoption of emerging technologies and the prevention of marine pollution.

Australia is also working closely with its Indo-Pacific neighbours, including Small Island Developing States to ensure their needs and concerns are heard, and so Australia is strengthening maritime capability, resilience, sustainability and safety across the region.

Australia's campaign will continue through to the 35th IMO Assembly in December 2027, when Member States will elect Council members for the 2028-29 biennium.



What caught my eye...

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



Photo credit: Mr Boat Ramp YouTube

The $2,000 toilet that inspired a homemade boat

This bizarre story ranks of one of my "top finds" this year. It is a bit of fun but completely bonkers! The stupidity of the two men, mixed with their sheer initiative has to be admired, although their antics are not recommended to be attempted or replicated. Here's the story.

Two Australian boating enthusiasts built a homemade barge to transport a toilet across open water after deciding the AUS $2,000 cost of transporting it was too much. The four-hour crossing was powered by a 9.9 hp outboard and included a barbecue on the open water.

The two men crossed the Backstairs Passage to Kangaroo Island in Australia aboard a homemade barge carrying an old-fashioned toilet, a barbecue, and a small outboard motor. Why? To avoid a $2,000 transport fee.

Alex Craig and Paul Graham made the crossing from Cape Jervis on the South Australian mainland to Christmas Cove near Penneshaw on Kangaroo Island. The viral video of their adventure has received the full attention of the boating community.

Craig said that the barge was constructed using eight 44-gallon drums, arranged four on each side, then rafted together. The outhouse-style toilet was installed on top, with a 1980 Johnson 9.9 outboard giving them the necessary horsepower to cross Backstairs Passage. He also told local media that the toilet-barge crossing would not be the last of the pair's adventures. Graham said further trips were planned to bring more supplies across to Craig's property.

Tamworth childminder brings canal wildlife to life in new children's book

Enthusing the next generation of boaters is an important consideration. So, it was interesting to read about the motivation of a UK based childminder (and now author) with a passion for Britain's canals and waterways. She has turned her enthusiasm into a children's book designed to introduce young readers to counting and waterside wildlife.

Sophie Hendrick has written Adventures of Charlotte Rose, an educational counting and rhythm picture book which follows its young character on a canal



boat adventure. Along the way, Charlotte Rose counts the wildlife she encounters, using rhythm and gentle repetition to encourage early learning while introducing toddlers and pre-schoolers to some of the wildlife found around waterways.

Sophie said she has a "huge passion for the life on the canal and waterways" and wanted to combine this with her experience working as a childminder. Describing the book, she said, "Join Charlotte Rose on a magical canal boat adventure as she counts wonderful wildlife along the waterways."

With Christmas looming, what a great gift idea for a youngster. Adventures of Charlotte Rose is available to order online through Amazon: **https://amzn.eu/d/03OQpEZ1**.



Photo of creels from Pixabay

Project proposes use of underwater drones to help recover lost fishing gear

These days, sadly, we seem to associate drones with warfare more than anything else. That's a shame, as it masks some of their other remarkable uses. Here's just one such example. Scotland's Heriot-Watt University and the Orkney Fisheries Association have secured European Horizon funding for a five-year initiative to test underwater drones for locating and recovering lost creels in Orkney waters.

The programme will begin with fishermen and other local residents identifying areas where gear is often lost and considering how it could be retrieved safely. Drone trials are then expected to start in spring 2027. Researchers will test different underwater drones to see whether they can find and film creels. They will then explore whether a drone could attach a hook and line to the gear so it can be winched to the surface.

Fishermen deploy hundreds of pots around Orkney to catch crab and lobster. Losing a creel valued at more than £100 (US$130) increases the financial burden on small fishing businesses, which already face tight margins and high fuel bills.

Orkney Fisheries Association Chief Executive Alistair Buchan said local creels weigh around 25 kg and are usually lost during adverse weather. He said, "Lost gear is an expensive issue for fishermen, and we are extremely keen to explore practical ways to minimise those losses."



Surveying of a different kind: A canal tunnel in Cheshire

And here's yet another story inspired by the UK canal network! Engineers recently surveyed and inspected Preston Brook Tunnel near Dutton in the northwest UK. At 1,138 metres long, it is believed to be one of the world's oldest canal tunnels still in operation. The team undertook this essential work using a combination of traditional techniques and cutting-edge technology.

Built more than 250 years ago, the tunnel dates from a period that transformed civil engineering. While tunnels had long been excavated for mining, the rapid expansion of Britain's canal network drove the development of large-scale tunnelling techniques that helped shape the construction methods still used today.

The team carried out a full hands-on inspection of the tunnel using poles, hammers and spikes, alongside hi-tech equipment including drone fly-through footage and 3D image mapping technology to build a comprehensive picture of the tunnel's condition. Their observations and findings are being analysed to determine whether any major repairs are required.

Construction of the tunnel began in 1766 under the direction of canal pioneer James Brindley, one of the foremost engineers of the Industrial Revolution. Following Brindley's death, the project was completed by his student and fellow engineer Hugh Henshall in 1775.



Marine workforce shortage threatens Canada's trade expansion

This story is not really new news, but once again it is making headlines. We are all becoming increasingly aware of the challenges being presented to the marine industry by a lack of skilled people. Where does the next generation of marine surveyors (as well as fellow industry professionals) come from as ageing practitioners retire and pass away? The answer is not clear and obvious to me - far from it in fact. So, it was interesting to read this news article coming from Canada specifically, although this story could have been written about any number of places around the world.

The facts are stark. Canada's growing marine trade faces a significant workforce challenge, with 86 per cent of marine employers reporting recruitment difficulties and an estimated 8,300 new workers needed by 2029 to meet demand and replace retirees. I read that the shortage is particularly acute on the Pacific Coast, where vessel traffic could increase by 60 per cent by 2040 and skilled mariners such as tug masters and marine pilots can take 10 to 20 years to train and develop. Current marine training capacity is expected to meet only about 40 per cent of employer demand for key seafaring positions over the next five years.

The article argues that Canada must integrate workforce development with trade and infrastructure planning by expanding recruitment, improving access to training, increasing regional and simulation-based training opportunities, and strengthening coordination among governments, industry, labour and educational institutions.

This is not a Canada wide issue alone; it is a wakeup call for the wider world. Those of us involved in all aspects of the maritime sector must take responsibility for identifying and engaging with the next generation of talent for our industry sector and making it an attractive profession in which to make a living from.

More next month.

Mike Schwarz
Chief Executive Officer

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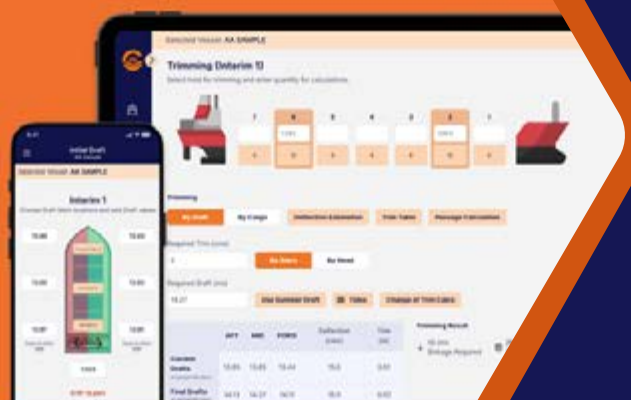
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