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IFSMA NEWSLETTER

The Shipmasters' International Voice

US Coast Guard Cutter *James Rankin* setting the historic Francis Scott Key Memorial Buoy in the Patapsco River, Maryland.

See page 26 for details



Contents

Secretary General's Message	2
The IMO Digest	3
IMO announces regional team to deepen on-the-ground impact	3
American maritime expert and diplomat to receive International Maritime Prize 'Consensus-builder' Jeffrey Lanz selected for top global recognition	4
The 2026 Exceptional Bravery Awards	5
Commitment to protecting vital shipping lanes	7
Maritime security strategy	9
Sub-Committee on Implementation of IMO Instruments	9
IMO Secretary-General	10
Strengthening global Port State Control data exchange	10
Jamaica	11
Latin America, A new path for maritime cooperation	12
Ocean Network Express	13
For boats and yachts: Electrification of ports and marinas	13
MEGURI2040	14
Landmark report: Strengthening submarine cable resilience	15
Samskip strengthens hydrogen ambitions	17
When compromise is not an option by Michael Grey	18
World Shipping Council	19
Trinity House awards new tonnage contract to VARD	20
UK Maritime Innovation Hub	21
Ancient volcanoes shape New Zealand's Banks Peninsula	22
Canadian wildfire smoke over the Atlantic	23
CMA CGM <i>Notre Dame</i>	23
100 Years of the Voith Schneider Propeller	24
African cadets and Wellness at Sea	25
Port of Baltimore	26
Making maritime memories by Michael Grey	26
Shipwreck of Cook's <i>Endeavour</i> identified	27
Ocean Network Express	30
Revised IMO requirements for pilot transfer arrangements	30
EU 21st Sanctions package against Russia	31

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

Secretary General's Message

From the Secretariat at IFSMA, we hope you are all well.

The news in the maritime media continues to focus on the conflicts that have a direct impact on commercial shipping.

In the Persian Gulf and Strait of Hormuz ships continue to be targeted. Two ships have recently been hit with one seafarer reported to be missing and mine clearance efforts continue in the Strait of Hormuz Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS).

In the Red Sea, a ship was attacked off the coast of Yemen. It is reported that all 14 seafarers were rescued but the ship eventually sank and there is overall concern that the level of attacks could increase.

Meanwhile in the Black Sea, the number of attacks on merchant ships is high with the number of seafarer fatalities becoming a very serious concern.

Our Executive Council met at the end of July and discussed the continued attacks on seafarers that have resulted in multiple fatalities. As a result, IFSMA has issued an open letter, demanding stronger protection of merchant seafarers operating in areas affected by armed conflict.

IFSMA stresses that merchant seafarers are civilians and must not be treated as legitimate military targets. It urges governments, the IMO, ILO, flag States, shipowners, charterers, insurers and other stakeholders to take immediate measures to safeguard crews and ships.

Seafarers should receive accurate security information and have the right to decline or safely withdraw from high-risk voyages without penalty. IFSMA also reaffirms that shipmasters must retain overriding authority to protect their crews and ships. Readers are invited to visit www.IFSMA.org to read the open letter.

In addition to this, many industry bodies have issued a joint open letter urging the Secretary-Generals of the United Nations and the International Maritime Organization to oppose any tolls or compulsory service fees on ships transiting the Strait of Hormuz. Such charges could undermine freedom of navigation and international maritime law, particularly UNCLOS, while increasing shipping, energy and inflation costs and creating wider risks for global trade, supply chains and economic stability.

As the worldwide focus is on the maritime conflict

areas, ships are being hijacked in the Gulf of Oman with the seafarers being held hostage. The IMO says crews continue to face critically low food and water supplies and an urgent humanitarian situation is developing. In general, ships transiting the region continue to take all recommended security precautions to protect their seafarers.

During July, the twelfth meeting of the IMO Sub-Committee on Implementation of IMO Instruments (III12) was held and IFSMA were in attendance. The Sub-Committee approved the publication of IMO Circulars on marine casualties and on ruptured high-pressure cylinders, while developing recommendations on fire safety and inflatable lifejackets.

Work also began on revising the Casualty Investigation Code and ISM Code implementation guidelines. Port State Control (PSC) activities focused on improving inspection guidance and PSC inspector training. A paper concerning the requirement for tanker cargo spaces CO₂ testing was debated. Following consultation with Members, IFSMA intervened on this issue. However, the Sub-Committee's opinion was split and it will be further debated at the next Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 112) in December.

To obtain more information on these topics and other maritime news, please explore our website at www.ifsma.org and follow us on LinkedIn and Facebook, where we highlight our latest news, initiatives and updates.

We wish you the very best and safe sailing in these troubled times.

The IMO Digest

Appearing below is a summary of some of the news received with grateful thanks from the excellent IMO Media service in recent weeks.

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IMO announces regional team to deepen on-the-ground impact

Seven regional coordinators will serve as ‘the face of IMO’ in the field.

On 6 July the IMO announced the full team of Regional Coordinators who will lead its seven Regional Presence Offices (RPOs), providing targeted technical support to Member States across the globe.

Regional Presence Offices ensure that IMO support responds directly to the needs and priorities of countries in different regions, while aligning with wider strategic goals of the organization. This includes tailored support for Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS).

As part of a major update to IMO's approach to technical cooperation, Regional Coordinators will now oversee and coordinate IMO activities in their respective regions, across eleven thematic areas ranging from marine environment and ocean governance to maritime safety and security.



Regional Presence Offices serve seven regions including: the Caribbean; East Asia; Eastern and Southern Africa; Middle East and North Africa; Pacific Islands; West and Central Africa (Anglophone); West and Central Africa (Francophone).

IMO Secretary-General Mr. Arsenio Dominguez welcomed the team, stating: ‘*Regional Presence Offices are no longer simply outposts of the Organization; they are the face of IMO in the field and the bridge between our global priorities and the realities of our Member States.*’

Putting policy to practice

Gathering altogether for the first time in London from 15 to 16 June, Regional Coordinators exchanged experiences, strengthened their network, and explored ways to boost regional engagement and capacity-building.

They discussed implementation of thematic programmes under the IMO's Technical Cooperation Programme 2026–2027, including in: maritime safety; maritime security; marine environment; climate action; facilitation and trade; law and governance; gender equality; education and training; compliance under IMO's Member State Audit Scheme (IMSAS); outreach and partnerships for technical cooperation; and regional presence.

The workshop highlighted new digital tools, such as the Technical Cooperation Portal and Dashboard, created to improve transparency and responsiveness in the delivery of IMO support.

Leveraging regional and maritime expertise

As experts in their fields with deep knowledge of the specific maritime challenges and opportunities in their regions, the seven Regional Coordinators include the newly appointed leads for Regional Presence Offices for the Pacific, East Asia and the Caribbean, alongside the coordinators for both Francophone and Anglophone West and Central; the Middle East and North Africa; and Eastern and Southern Africa.

These seven Regional Coordinators are:

Regional Coordinator for East Asia (based in Manila, Philippines)

Johanna Diwa Acallar is an international development and ocean governance specialist with over 20 years' experience in maritime affairs, sustainability science, capacity development and international cooperation.

Regional Coordinator for the Pacific (based in Suva, Fiji)

Sitalingi Payne is a seasoned maritime professional with more than 20 years' experience in maritime safety, security, port operations, technical cooperation and regional capacity development across Pacific Island countries.

Regional Coordinator for Eastern and South Africa (based in Nairobi, Kenya)

Captain Dave Muli is a Master Mariner and maritime transport specialist who manages IMO's regional presence and technical cooperation programmes across 23 countries in Eastern and Southern Africa.

Regional Coordinator for West and Central Africa Anglophone (based in Accra, Ghana)

Captain Dallas Eric Laryea is a Master Mariner and maritime affairs expert with extensive seafaring, surveying and maritime education experience across West and Central Africa.

Regional Coordinator for West and Central Africa Francophone (based in Abidjan, Côte d'Ivoire)

Eru Amem Takem is an international maritime lawyer who coordinates maritime development initiatives across 15 Gulf of Guinea Member States.

Regional Coordinator for the Caribbean (based in Port of Spain, Trinidad and Tobago)

Vivian Rambarath Parasram is a maritime lawyer, academic and capacity-building leader with over 25 years' experience in maritime law, environmental governance, research and maritime education.

Regional Coordinator for the Middle East and North Africa (based in Alexandria, Egypt)

Eng. Refaat Armanios is a marine engineer and maritime safety specialist with extensive experience in flag State administration, IMO auditing and maritime regulatory oversight.

The Regional Coordinators will work closely with thematic leads and technical officers at IMO headquarters to ensure regional ownership and coordination, while linking to global frameworks.

For more information

To learn more about Technical Cooperation delivered by IMO readers are invited to use the link here: <https://tinyurl.com/y2kxbu79>

American maritime expert and diplomat to receive International Maritime Prize 'Consensus-builder' Jeffrey Lantz selected for top global recognition

Grant of a Letter of Commendation to Rear Admiral Peter Brady, Jamaica

Mr Jeffrey G Lantz – a naval architect, marine engineer and former United States Coast Guard captain with more than 50 years of maritime experience – has been selected as the recipient of the 2025 International Maritime Prize.

This decision was endorsed by the IMO Council on 7 July during its 137th session at IMO HQ in London. He was nominated by the Government of the United States of America.

In nominating Mr Lantz, the US Coast Guard highlighted his long, distinguished career and outstanding technical expertise, including over two decades spent advancing the mission and objectives of the IMO stating: *'His leadership has been instrumental in the development of landmark IMO regulations and in driving international consensus on complex issues facing the maritime sector.'*

Mr Lantz will receive his award during the annual IMO Awards Ceremony scheduled for 14 December.

Distinguished career in maritime leadership

Mr Lantz most recently served as the Director of Commercial Regulations and Standards for the US Coast Guard. He retired in 2025, having reached the US government's highest civil service rank.

He is a naval architect, marine engineer, and port state control and flag state surveyor, holding a Bachelor of Science in Ocean Engineering from the

US Coast Guard Academy and Master of Science degrees in Naval Architecture, Marine Engineering, and Mechanical Engineering from the University of Michigan.



Mr Jeffrey G Lantz served as Chair of the IMO Council from 2009 to 2017 and headed the United States delegation to IMO for more than a decade.

He led, managed and directed the development of United States policy positions and the US Government's representation on maritime matters at the IMO and the International Labour Organization (ILO). He served as head of the US delegation at IMO for more than ten years, and was elected as Chair of the IMO Council, holding this position from 2009 to 2017.

Key contributions

The IMO Council noted Mr Lantz's significant contributions to the development of landmark global maritime policies, on safety, security and environmental protection. He led efforts in advancing key frameworks, including:

- Development and global adoption of the International Ship and Port Facility Security (ISPS) Code, which transformed maritime security standards and extended IMO's regulatory reach ashore to port facilities.
- Development of the International Code of Safety for Ships Using Gaseous Fuels (IGF Code), supporting innovation and environmental protection through safe standards for alternative fuels.
- Advancing the International Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters (Polar Code), which established robust safety and environmental requirements for vessels operating in the Arctic and Antarctic.
- Revising training standards and addressing seafarer welfare, including the Manila

Amendments to the International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification, and Watchkeeping for Seafarers (STCW Convention) and solutions for hours of rest and working arrangements.

These achievements, among others, along with his commitment to service, consensus-building and integrity, have left a lasting impact on the IMO and the global maritime community.

Recognising service to the global maritime community

In addition to endorsing Mr Lantz for the Prize, the Council agreed to grant a Letter of Commendation to Rear Admiral Peter Brady, in recognition of his contributions to the development of the maritime sector in Jamaica and the wider Caribbean, as well as his sustained commitment to capacity-building, regional cooperation and the work of IMO.

International Maritime Prize

Established in 1980, the International Maritime Prize has been awarded annually by IMO to an individual or organization that has made a significant contribution to its work and objectives. The recipient is selected by a panel of judges chaired by the IMO Secretary-General, comprised of representatives from the IMO Council, as well as intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations.

The 2026 IMO Exceptional Bravery Awards

The 2026 IMO Award for Exceptional Bravery

Mr Adrian Willyson Brask (Norway)

The 2026 IMO Award for Exceptional Bravery at Sea will be presented posthumously to Mr Adrian Willyson Brask, in recognition of his extraordinary courage and self-sacrifice during an attempt to rescue a young girl from a capsized fishing vessel in the waters of Nappstraumen in Norway in 2025.

Mr Brask, Chief Mate and diver of the rescue vessel *RS 125 Det Norske Veritas* of the Norwegian Society for Sea Rescue, was nominated for the award by the Government of Norway and by the International Federation of Shipmasters' Associations (IFSMA).

Following a review of more than fifty nominations by an Assessment Panel and further scrutiny by a distinguished Panel of Judges, the IMO Council, during its 137th session in London on 7 July, endorsed the recommendation to bestow Mr Brask with the honour.

In his submission to the Council, IMO Secretary-General Mr Arsenio Dominguez said: *'By knowingly accepting extraordinary personal risk in an effort to save a young life, Mr. Brask made the ultimate sacrifice and embodied the highest traditions of maritime search and rescue service.'*

The award will be presented posthumously at the IMO Awards Ceremony scheduled for 14 December.

A selfless act of bravery

On 26 September 2025, in the Lofoten archipelago in Norway, a chartered fishing vessel carrying four adult tourists, two children and a fishing guide, suddenly capsized due to strong tidal currents.

Following a distress call, a rescue helicopter from the 330 Squadron and the rescue vessel *RS 125 Det Norske Veritas*, with Mr Brask on board, were dispatched to the scene.

They found six survivors on the overturned hull, while one child remained missing in the water. Mr Brask braved extremely cold waters and powerful, unpredictable currents to search for the young girl.

Operating with limited communications and challenging underwater conditions, he conducted a determined search beneath and around the capsized vessel.

After a short while, he was recovered from the water unresponsive and could not be revived despite sustained efforts to save him. The child remains missing.

The Council recognized Mr Brask's exceptional courage, selflessness and self-sacrifice during the underwater rescue attempt.



Certificates of Commendation

The Council also agreed that Certificates of Commendation be awarded to the following nominees, recognizing their acts of bravery at sea:

SN2 Nick-Nick S. Udasan and SN2 Ian Glenn B. Morfe, members of the Coast Guard Sea Marshal Force, Philippine Coast Guard

Nominated by the Philippines for their leadership during the evacuation of the M/V *Trisha Kerstin 3*, which suffered structural failures and sank at night. The two officers alerted rescue authorities, distributed life jackets and, after the ship sank, spent more than two hours in the water helping other survivors, contributing to the survival of 316 passengers.

Captain Thomas Michael Leaf and the crew of the M/T *Stena Immaculate*

Nominated by the United States for their firefighting response after their tanker collided with a container vessel, triggering an explosion and fire involving aviation fuel cargo. Their disciplined response enabled the safe evacuation of all 23 crew members and averted a major environmental disaster.

Letters of Commendation

The Council agreed to award Letters of Commendations to the following:

Captain Asif Ahmed, Assistant Harbour Master, Chittagong Port Authority

Nominated by Bangladesh, for his ship-handling skills in averting a major collision after the LPG carrier *Gas Harmony* lost propulsion in the Karnaphuli Channel.

Captain Swadesh Tripathi and the crew of the M/V *Maersk Karachi*

Nominated by China, for recovering nine survivors from the tug *Leo* in severe weather in the Indian Ocean.

Petty Officer Elise Massin, diver of the Dauphin helicopter detachment of Flotilla 35F, Tahiti, French Navy

Nominated by France, for her role in two rescue operations spanning over seven hours, helping save three people in distress in rough seas in the South Pacific.

Crew members of the helicopter detachment of Flotilla 2F, Maupertus, Lanvéoc-Poulmic Naval Air Base, French Navy

Nominated by France, for rescuing four fishers from the vessel *Perle D'Albâtre* during Storm Benjamin.

Captain Ioannis-Eleftherios Alexiou and the crew of the M/V *Akti*

Nominated by Greece, for rescuing five people from the sinking speedboat SN V near the Port of Itaqui, Brazil.

Captain Sachin Kulkarni and the crew of the INS *Trikand*, Indian Navy

Nominated by India, for nearly three hours of firefighting aboard the M/T Falcon in the Gulf of Aden after an explosion, recovering the remains of two missing crew members and averting a pollution incident.

Captain Atla Mohan and the crew of the INS *Tabar*, Indian Navy

Nominated by India, for a two-day firefighting and rescue operation after fire broke out in the engine room of the oil tanker M/V Yi Cheng 6 in the Gulf of Oman, evacuating eight crew members.

P/Adh Preetam Singh Yadav, diver of the ICGS C-147, Coast Guard Station Mayabunder, Indian Coast Guard

Nominated by India, for diving into near-zero-visibility waters to help rescue all seven survivors, including a five-month-old infant, of a helicopter that crash-landed in a mangrove creek.

Crew of helicopter Rescue 115, Irish Coast Guard

Nominated by Ireland, for a complex winching operation that saved 14 fishers from the foundering vessel *Fastnet* near Dingle Harbour.

Captain Fumitaka Okamura and the crew of the LNG carrier *LNG Saturn*

Nominated by Japan, for manoeuvring their 288-metre vessel to rescue six survivors from the sunk cargo ship KM. Limadai 8 in the Malacca Strait.

Captain Mandeep Singh Bakhshi and the crew of the M/T *Horten*

Nominated by Liberia, for diverting more than 110 nautical miles to rescue a solo rower adrift in a life raft in the mid-Atlantic Ocean.

Special recognition for merchant vessels involved in migrant rescue

Four nominations of merchant vessels involved in rescuing migrants at sea, submitted by the Islamic Republic of Iran, Kuwait (two nominations) and Poland, would receive Special Recognition certificates for merchant vessels and crew involved in the rescue of mixed migrants at sea.

About the Award

The IMO Honours for Exceptional Bravery at Sea are awarded annually to recognize individuals or groups who, at risk to their own lives, perform acts of exceptional bravery in attempting to save life at sea or to prevent or mitigate damage to the marine environment.

Nominations are first reviewed by an Assessment Panel, chaired by the Secretary-General or his nominee and comprising representatives of the International Chamber of Shipping (ICS), the International Maritime Pilots' Association (IMPA), the International Federation of Shipmasters' Associations (IFSMA), the International Salvage Union (ISU), the International Maritime Rescue Federation (IMRF), and the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF).

The recommendations are then considered by a Panel of Judges, chaired by the Chair of the IMO Council and composed of the Chairs of the Maritime Safety Committee, the Marine Environment Protection Committee, the Legal Committee, the Technical Cooperation Committee and the Facilitation Committee, before being submitted to the Council for endorsement.

Commitment to protecting vital shipping lanes

Highlights from IMO Council 137

6 to 10 July 2026

Meeting from IMO HQ in London from 6 to 10 July the Council concluded its 137th session by reaffirming the importance of preserving navigational rights and freedoms in accordance with international law.



The Council condemned the attacks on civilian commercial ships in and around the Strait of Hormuz and called for the de-escalation of tensions in the region.

In a resolution adopted during the session, the Council stressed that the right of transit passage through straits used for international navigation should not be threatened, impeded, denied, hampered, impaired or suspended.

In addition, the Council reiterated that any measures taken by coastal States to regulate traffic in vital shipping lanes should be done with accordance with IMO regulations under the International Convention on the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS).

Strait of Hormuz

With regards to the ongoing challenges facing international shipping in and around the Strait of Hormuz, the Council condemned the attacks on civilian commercial ships and called for the de-escalation of tensions in the Middle East region.

The Council stressed that any arrangement between the littoral States of the region shall guarantee the non-discriminatory and unimpeded right of transit passage of all ships, through the internationally recognised traffic separation scheme adopted by IMO in 1968.

The Council reaffirmed that passage through the Strait should remain free of any tolls and charges, in accordance with international law, including the IMO Convention.

It requested the Secretary-General to explore options that advance safe maritime traffic and to work with littoral States, other Member States and the industry to ensure a coordinated and sustainable return to unhindered navigation through the Strait.

Cooperative mechanism for Straits of Malacca and Singapore

The Council noted the information shared by Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore on their experience in co-managing the Straits of Malacca and Singapore through a 'Cooperative Mechanism' that brings governments and industry together to share the burden.

The Council invited interested Member States and other stakeholders to consider making financial or in-kind contributions to the mechanism's two funds - the Aids to Navigation Fund and the IMO Straits of Malacca and Singapore Trust Fund to support the Co-operative Mechanism.

Other key decisions

Annual report

The Council approved the Organization's annual report for 2025 to be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/yrvtxejy>

Financial report

Assessed contributions from Member States remains the Organization's most important source of funding.

The assessment collection rate of 99.10% in 2025 is among the highest in the UN system.

The Organization delivered a strong financial performance in 2025. Total revenue increased by 2.97% to £77.96 million, driven by a growth in publication and cafeteria sales, and assessed contributions.

Managing risk

The Council approved the updated Risk Management Policy and its new Strategic Fraud Risk Management Annex, giving the Organization clearer tools to manage risk and reinforcing IMO's zero-tolerance approach to fraud and corruption.

IMSAS update

The Council welcomed the successful completion of the first audit cycle of the IMO Member State Audit Scheme (IMSAS). Since the commencement of mandatory audits in February 2016, 168 audits of 165 Member States and three Associate Members had been conducted.

Of the five audits scheduled for 2026, three have been completed (Belarus, Haiti and Mozambique) with the remaining two (Eritrea and Yemen) progressing as planned.

The Council encouraged audited Member States to authorize the Secretariat to release their audit reports to the public, including the audit final report, for full transparency.

Non-governmental organizations

The Council granted consultative status to the following non-governmental organizations:

- International Electric Marine Association (IEMA).
- Mærsk Mc-Kinney Møller Center for Zero Carbon Shipping (MMMCZCS).
- SEA-LNG.
- The Ocean Foundation (TOF) was granted consultative status on a provisional basis for up to two years, after which it will be reviewed.

World Maritime Day and Parallel Event

The Council welcomed the offer by the Government of Qatar to host the World Maritime Day Parallel Event in 2028. The event is held in a different IMO Member State every year with the aim of celebrating World Maritime Day among a wider international audience.

This year's World Maritime Day will be celebrated at the IMO Headquarters on Thursday, 24 September,

observing the theme: ***From Policy to Practice: Powering Maritime Excellence***. The 2026 World Maritime Day Parallel Event would take place in Busan, the Republic of Korea (26 and 27 October), then in the Philippines in 2027.

IMO Awards

The 2026 IMO Awards Ceremony is scheduled to take place in London at the IMO Headquarters on 14 December 2026.

Details of awards approved by the IMO Council are dealt with elsewhere in this edition.

Maritime security strategy

Kenya advances

Kenya has taken a significant step towards finalizing its National Maritime Security Strategy (NMSS), following an IMO-supported workshop held in Mombasa from 6 to 10 July, under the European Union-funded Safe Seas for Africa (SSA) programme¹. This was reported by the IMO media service on 16 July.

Key representation

The workshop brought together representatives from key government ministries, agencies and maritime institutions* to review and strengthen the draft Strategy, ensuring it reflects Kenya's evolving maritime security priorities, governance requirements and operational needs.



Participants considered recommendations from earlier consultations and refined the Strategy's vision, strategic objectives, implementation framework and performance arrangements.

Discussions focused on strengthening inter-agency cooperation, enhancing maritime domain awareness and reinforcing the role of Beach Management Units and coastal communities as partners in maritime

safety and security. They also addressed emerging challenges such as cyber threats, uncrewed systems, threats to critical underwater infrastructure, climate change and the evolving geopolitical environment.

International cooperation strengthening

Built around the goals of protecting Kenya's sovereignty, safeguarding its Blue Economy and strengthening national, regional and international cooperation, the NMSS will provide a coordinated national framework to strengthen maritime security. It will guide implementation across government while supporting collaboration with regional and international partners.

Kenya, Tanzania and Comoros supported

Through the Safe Seas for Africa programme, IMO supports Kenya, the United Republic of Tanzania and Comoros in strengthening maritime governance, enhancing regional maritime security cooperation and promoting a safe, secure and sustainable maritime sector.

*Participants attended from State Department for Shipping and Maritime Affairs (SDSMA), Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA), Kenya Ports Authority (KPA), Office of the Attorney General/State Department of Justice (OAG&SDOJ), State Dept. for Blue Economy & Fisheries, Kenya Coast Guard Service (KCGS), Kenya Wildlife Service (KWS), National Intelligence Service (NIS), Directorate of Immigration Services, Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA), Kenya Navy (KN), Kenya Forest Service (KFS)

¹Safe Seas for Africa is a three-year EU-funded initiative implemented by IMO to strengthen intra-agency, inter-agency, and inter-regional coordination across the Western Indian Ocean through improved maritime governance, enhanced information sharing, and more effective capacity building.

For more information on the initiative readers are invited to use the link see here:

<https://tinyurl.com/3v5y3akf>

Sub-Committee on Implementation of IMO Instruments (III 12)

Highlights of the opening remarks by Secretary General

20 July 2026

'Recent maritime incidents continue to remind us that effective implementation of IMO instruments, together with the timely sharing of lessons learned, remains essential to preventing casualties and strengthening maritime safety. Flag States, Port States, and Recognized Organizations all have a crucial role in upholding the Organization's global standards.'

'At the same time, ongoing geopolitical developments continue to present operational challenges for shipping, reinforcing the need for international cooperation and the uniform implementation of IMO standards.'

'Before turning to the work of this session, unfortunately I must once again address the situation in the Strait of Hormuz, which remains deeply concerning.'

'Just last evening, we witnessed another attack on a civilian merchant ship, resulting in a devastating fire and forcing the crew to abandon ship. Over the past week, recent attacks on shipping in and around the Strait of Hormuz have claimed the lives of at least two seafarers and injured several others. Our thoughts are with the victims, their families and loved ones, and all those affected by these tragic incidents.'



'Beyond the Strait of Hormuz, on 17 July 2026, the Tanzania-flagged tanker Asana was hijacked by pirates while transiting eastward through the Gulf of Aden.'

'We are closely monitoring the situation and remain in contact with relevant partners, industry stakeholders and other sources to receive updates as they become available.'

'We sincerely hope for the safe and swift resolution of the incident and, above all, for the safety and well-being of the 22 seafarers on board.'

'I am also aware of reports of continued violence against merchant shipping in the Black Sea and Sea of Azov region over the last few days, which have continued to claim innocent seafarers' lives.'

'These actions carry profound human costs and consequences that will be felt across the region and far beyond its borders. All parties in these conflicts, without exception, have a responsibility to show restraint, avoid further escalation, and return to dialogue.'

'I will continue to engage with all relevant stakeholders, and I welcome any initiative that can help bring about a peaceful and practical resolution of

the current crisis, provided it fully respects freedom of navigation and established international law.'

*'The IMO World Maritime Day theme for 2026-2027, **From Policy to Practice: Powering Maritime Excellence**, reinforces the importance of the effective and harmonized implementation of IMO instruments; an objective that lies at the heart of the work of this Sub-Committee.'*

IMO Secretary-General

Statement on recent attacks on ships in the Red Sea

On 23 July the Secretary-General of the IMO Mr Arsenio Dominguez, issued the following statement:

I unequivocally condemn the latest reported attacks on international shipping in the Red Sea area. These attacks are indefensible. They endanger the lives of seafarers, while threatening the security of international shipping, the marine environment and the stability of global supply chains.'

'Seafarers are civilians performing essential work that sustains economies and communities worldwide. Ship operators must thoroughly assess risks before transiting the region. Seafarers must never be placed in harm's way or targeted in situations of conflict or instability.'

'I also renew my call for the immediate and unconditional release of all seafarers who continue to be held captive following piracy attacks in the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden region. Ensuring their safety is a fundamental obligation under international law and a shared responsibility of the global community.'

'The Red Sea is a critical maritime corridor for international trade. Continued attacks on shipping in this region risk escalating tensions, further disrupting commercial routes and undermining the principle of freedom of navigation.'

'De-escalation is the only solution.'

'I am equally concerned about the potential pollution from these reported incidents in the Red Sea and previous incidents in the Strait of Hormuz area. IMO will continue to monitor the situation and stands ready to assist as necessary.'

Picture captions

IMO Secretary-General Mr Arsenio Dominguez addressing IMO III 12.

The Red Sea is a critical maritime corridor for international trade.'

Strengthening global Port State Control data exchange

Latest MoUs

IMO has concluded the latest updated data-exchange agreements with the Black Sea and Caribbean Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) on Port State Control (PSC) in order to strengthen the global exchange of PSC inspection information.

Black Sea and Caribbean signing

These agreements were signed at IMO HQ on 21 July) by Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez, Mr Onur Turhan, Secretary of the Black Sea MoU Secretariat, and Mrs Jodi Munn Barrow, Secretary General of the Caribbean MoU Secretariat.



The signings strengthen cooperation by expanding the exchange of PSC inspection information and supporting the continued development of the PSC module within IMO's Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS).*

With these agreements, IMO has now concluded updated data-exchange agreements with eight regional PSC regimes. Similar agreements have previously been signed with the Abuja, Indian Ocean, Tokyo, Mediterranean, Paris and Riyadh MoUs, while discussions continue with the Viña del Mar Agreement and the United States Coast Guard.

Supporting the PSC Overarching Database

The updated agreements represent another important milestone towards the development of a PSC Overarching Database (ODB), which will enable more comprehensive, harmonized and efficient sharing of PSC inspection data worldwide. The expanded exchange of validated inspection data will improve transparency, consistency and data integrity, while reducing duplication in reporting by Member States.

The IMO-led ODB project aims to facilitate near real-time information sharing among PSC regimes, strengthen risk-based inspection planning and support the effective implementation of IMO instruments.

Strengthening global PSC cooperation

Port State control regimes inspect foreign-flagged ships visiting ports to verify compliance with internationally agreed safety, security and environmental standards.

The updated agreements enhance cooperation between IMO and regional PSC regimes. They will increase transparency, support the harmonization of PSC activities, improve monitoring of implementation by Member States and contribute to safer, more secure and environmentally sound shipping worldwide.

*For more see here, entry on application to Web Accounts: <https://qisis.imo.org/public/default.aspx>

Jamaica

International Seabed Authority Assembly 31st session

Address by S-G IMO

To highlight the opening address delivered on 27 July we record the following:

'Excellencies, Madam Secretary-General, Distinguished delegates, Ladies and gentlemen,

'It is a privilege to join you here today, cementing our shared commitments to support safe navigation and protect the ocean and the marine environment.

'By way of introduction, the International Maritime Organization's instruments, some going back to the 1960s and 1970s, ensure ships operating across the world's oceans are subject to stringent environmental, safety and security regulations, which apply throughout their voyage. Navigational safety and minimizing environmental impacts are critical for any activity involving ships.

'Numerous protective measures, including Particularly Sensitive Sea Areas (PSSAs), Special Areas and Emission Control Areas set by IMO, set a higher level of protection and stricter rules apply to prevent sea pollution.

'IMO's experience in addressing waste management at sea – under the London Convention and its Protocol – has particular relevance to the work of ISA on seabed exploitation, including deep sea mining and carbon capture and storage.

'Since the formation of ISA in 1994, IMO has been pleased to share our longstanding expertise in regulating maritime activities.

'This cooperation was formally recognized in 2016 with the signing of the IMO-ISA Agreement of Cooperation, cementing the many issues of common interest and concern between IMO and ISA, including several matters that may relate to the mandates of both organizations.

'This year, we have celebrated the entry into force of the Biodiversity Beyond National Jurisdiction (BBNJ) Agreement, following several years of development, with input from both IMO and ISA, sometimes jointly.

'As the BBNJ Agreement now moves to its implementation phase, there will be many areas where discussion will relate to both our organizations. The BBNJ Agreement explicitly states that it must not undermine existing relevant legal frameworks. As sectoral bodies with regulatory responsibilities in areas beyond national jurisdiction, we share many concerns and experiences - even as our mandates differ in important ways.

'I note the ongoing work of ISA to develop a regulatory framework on deep-sea mining – the Mining Code. While deep-sea mining is explicitly excluded from the London Convention and Protocol, the LC/LP has a long experience of regulating the wastes associated with similar activities, including the development of Waste Assessment Guidance for permissible wastes – such as inert, geological material – as well as procedures for permitting and monitoring.

'I can assure you that IMO stands ready to share its experiences and expertise as needed, to ensure complementarity and harmonization, as appropriate.

'I would also like to take this opportunity to acknowledge ISA's strong and constructive engagement with the Joint Group of Experts on the Scientific Aspects of Marine Environmental Protection or GESAMP. IMO provides the main Secretariat functions of GESAMP since its inception in 1969.

'Since becoming a sponsoring organization in 2018, the Authority has brought valuable expertise to the UN system's scientific work. Your hosting of the 50th annual GESAMP session in Kingston in 2023 demonstrated your determination to advancing collective scientific understanding.

'I also want to commend and appreciate ISA for leading the ongoing GESAMP scoping study on cumulative impacts assessment. This is an area of growing importance for all of us. Understanding cumulative impacts – especially in areas beyond

national jurisdiction – is essential for safeguarding marine ecosystems.

'Ultimately, the ocean connects us all. Its health underpins climate stability, biodiversity, food security, and the well-being of billions of people. Responsible use of the ocean and its resources is a remit we all share.

'I wish you a productive and successful session.

'Thank you.'

Latin America, A new path for maritime cooperation

IMO Regional Presence Office agreed

Directors and Heads of Maritime Administrations from across Latin America have agreed on a common regional agenda for maritime cooperation at the First Joint Meeting of Directors and Heads of Maritime Administrations of Latin America (DAMLA 1), held in Guatemala City from 27 to 29 July.

This meeting culminated in the adoption of an outcome resolution and a regional work plan that establishes the region's shared priorities and actions under IMO's thematic approach to technical cooperation.



Developed by and for Member States, the framework will guide future technical cooperation activities in Latin America. The meeting report will be submitted to the seventy-seventh session of IMO's Technical Cooperation Committee (TC 77), to be held in June 2027.

Among its key outcomes, Member States agreed to establish an IMO Regional Presence Office for Latin

America to strengthen regional coordination and support the delivery of technical cooperation, reinforcing a more coordinated regional approach to addressing shared maritime priorities.

DAMLA 1 also featured a workshop on gender-responsive leadership, inclusive governance and institutional culture, recognizing that strong maritime administrations are built through both technical capacity and inclusive leadership. Participants welcomed the workshop and supported its continued inclusion in future regional meetings.

By agreeing, for the first time, a common regional agenda supported by clear actions and follow-up, DAMLA 1 has provided the framework for translating regional priorities into coordinated technical cooperation across Latin America.

Ocean Network Express

New Mediterranean-Africa service

Strengthening direct global connections

At the end of June 2026 Ocean Network Express (ONE) announced the launch of its new Mediterranean Africa Express Service (MAX), providing customers with dedicated direct connections linking West Africa with key global trade lanes.



The new MAX service will operate on a rotation of Algeciras (Spain), Tangier (Morocco), Dakar (Senegal), Tema (Ghana), Lekki (Nigeria), and Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire), returning to Algeciras, offering customers reliable access to international markets through ONE's established Mediterranean hub network.

Designed to support growing trade demands and increasingly complex supply chains, the service will strengthen links between West Africa and major markets across Far East Asia, Northern Europe, the Indian Subcontinent, North America and Latin America through the Algeciras and Tangier hubs.

This launch comes as demand for reliable connections between West Africa and major international markets continues to grow, with shippers increasingly seeking flexible routing options and dependable transit times.

It is reported that customers using the MAX service will benefit from convenient onward connections to ONE's wider global network, including services to North and South America, Northern Europe, the Mediterranean and Asia, helping to simplify cargo movements and improve supply chain flexibility.

The service will commence on 7 July 2026 and all MAX schedules can be found on the ONE website at: www.one-line.com

Mr Hosaka, Managing Director of ONE (Europe), said: *'We are committed to investment and growth in Africa. The MAX service is a vital addition to our network, strengthening the links between West Africa and key global trade routes while providing our customers with seamless access to ONE's extensive international network.'*

About Ocean Network Express (ONE)

Ocean Network Express (ONE), headquartered in Singapore, is one of the world's leading liner shipping companies. It operates a fleet of over 280 vessels with a capacity exceeding 2.2 million TEUs. Through its extensive global network, ONE provides reliable container shipping services to over 120 countries.

For boats and yachts: Electrification of ports and marinas

NatPower Marine acquires Aqua superpower

On 10 July during the Monaco Energy Boat Challenge (MEBC) it was reported that NatPower Marine, a NatPower Group company enabling the energy transition in the maritime sector, had signed a strategic agreement to acquire the Aqua superPower international charging network from ATV Power, a provider of marine electrification technologies and charging infrastructure.

Across Europe and US charging points: 80 ports and marinas

Aqua superPower currently represents the largest international network of electric charging points for boats and yachts in Europe, spanning multiple markets worldwide and comprising more than 80 ports and marinas across Europe and North America, including the French and Italian Rivièras, Venice, Trieste, Genoa, Lake Maggiore, Lake Geneva, Sweden, the Port of Barcelona, the UK South Coast, San Francisco Bay, Lake Tahoe, San Diego, and Lake Michigan.

It is understood that this acquisition aims to integrate such expertise and operational capability into the NatPower Marine platform, supporting its ambition to expand this electrification model beyond recreational boating to include large commercial ports and maritime hubs.

Integration marks a significant step in the evolution of NatPower Marine, strengthening its ability to deliver energy infrastructure as a coordinated and scalable system.

Comment

Fabrizio Zago, CEO of NatPower, commented: *'This transaction marks a decisive step forward for us: we are no longer just developing infrastructure, but building a platform capable of operating on an international scale.'*

'The addition of Aqua superPower to our ecosystem provides us with an immediate operational presence in key markets and strengthens our ability to deliver projects effectively and at scale on a global level.'

Stewart Wilkinson, CEO of ATV Power, added: *'Joining NatPower Marine enables us to scale our platform faster and extend our reach, building on the network we have already developed.'*

Towards a Global Platform

Electrification in the maritime sector is no longer limited by technology or capital.

The constraint lies in execution.

Deploying infrastructure at scale requires alignment between energy supply, grid access, permitting, financing and operations. When these elements remain fragmented, deployment slows down and remains localised.

By integrating Aqua superPower's operational footprint with NatPower Marine's execution capabilities, the combined platform is designed to overcome this fragmentation and enable coordinated deployment across multiple markets.

Achieving this goal requires the coordination of multiple factors, including access to energy and grid infrastructure, permitting processes, investment capacity, engineering expertise, and operational management. When these elements are managed independently, infrastructure development tends to slow down and remain confined to isolated initiatives.

The new platform combines: an existing network of operational charging infrastructure, a structured pipeline of projects across ports and marinas, access to capital and development capabilities, a coordinated execution model

Monaco Energy Boat Challenge

The agreement was formally presented during the Monaco Energy Boat Challenge (MEBC), one of the leading international events dedicated to sustainable marine technologies and energy solutions.

As part of the event, NatPower Marine participated in a dedicated discussion focused on sustainable energy solutions for the maritime sector. A live hydrogen refuelling demonstration also took place, showcasing NatPower's broader strategy of integrating multiple energy technologies within a single infrastructure model.

Aqua superPower is supporting the Monaco Energy Boat Challenge for the 4th year running with its floating E-Dock supplying DC and AC charging for electric boats.

The Yacht Club de Monaco was the first location worldwide to install an Aqua fast charger in 2019, demonstrating how commitment to infrastructure leads to the adoption of electric marine technology.

MEGURI2040

The Fully Autonomous Ship Program

Nippon Foundation presentation to IMO MSC111

In February 2020 The Nippon Foundation launched the MEGURI2040 Fully Autonomous Ship Program to address the issue of crew shortages from population decline and reduce accidents caused by human error.

This year on 15 May a presentation on the project's Stage 2 (social implementation) progress was made at the IMO Maritime Safety Commission (MSC111).



Held at the IMO HQ in London the meeting was attended by in the region of 300 delegates from around the world, with The Nippon Foundation Executive Director Mitsuyuki Unno and other project participants providing updates on the project's achievements to date including overall progress, inspection frameworks for autonomous vessels, and crew training.

Container vessel application

During 2025, the Foundation successfully introduced autonomous container vessels, which play a key role

in Japan's domestic logistics, and an autonomous Ro-Ro vessel that connects remote islands in Japan's Inland Sea by delivering dairy and agricultural products, into commercial service.

Going forward, the project will collect navigational data to promote the use of autonomous navigation, with the aim of having autonomous navigation account for 50% of Japan's coastal shipping by 2040.

This is seen leading to the resolution of the international social issue of crew shortages and enhancement of ship safety. Japan is leading the world in the social implementation of autonomous navigation, and the presenters received many questions from the meeting's participants.

Collection of data

MSC111 also finalized and adopted a set of non-mandatory international safety rules for autonomous vessels (MASS Code). In this connection verification data collected by MEGURI2040 will be used when the MASS Code becomes binding after participating countries have conducted their own trial operations.

You Tube introduction

An excellent corporate video at 7:52 produced by the Nippon Foundation is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/4w96w8cr>

Following the presentation, a ceremony has held to mark The Nippon Foundation's additional donation to the IMO Technical Cooperation Programme being administered by the Japan Ship Technology Research Association.

International training

This fund uses Japanese expertise to train ships' crew members from developing countries, who play an important role in international marine transport, in the operation of LNG-fuelled vessels, autonomous vessels, and hydrogen-fuelled vessels.

In addition to Mr Unno, the ceremony was attended by Japan's Ambassador to the UK HE Hiroshi Suzuki and the IMO's Maritime Safety Division Director Damien Chevallier, who expressed his expectations and appreciation for the contributions being made by The Nippon Foundation.

Afterward, Mr Unno and Ambassador Suzuki paid a courtesy visit to IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez, where they discussed the MEGURI2040 project, the current international situation, the IMO's recent activities, and other maritime issues. In addition to confirming their common approaches to various maritime issues, they confirmed their intention to work even more closely together.

On May 15, a presentation on the MEGURI2040 Fully Autonomous Ship Program's Stage 2 (social implementation) progress was made at the 111th meeting of the Maritime Safety Commission of the U.N.'s International Maritime Organization at the IMO's headquarters in London. Roughly 300 delegates from around the world were updated on the project's achievements to date including overall progress, inspection frameworks for autonomous vessels, and crew training.

Landmark report: Strengthening submarine cable resilience

International Advisory Body approval

Global recommendations will help safeguard vital telecommunications infrastructure

From Geneva on 10 July the International Advisory Body on Submarine Cable Resilience approved its final report, including explanations of recommendations to strengthen the resilience of submarine telecommunication cables — the critical infrastructure that carries more than 99% of data traffic worldwide.

Submarine telecommunication cables are the lifeline of the global digital economy, supporting international communication and finance among other key services. Disruptions to the cables from human activity and natural hazards can affect essential government and industry operations as well as individual access to education, healthcare and banking.

High exposure to physical risks

Key challenges to submarine cable resilience highlighted in the report include high exposure to physical risks, increased time needed for repair, geographical concentration of infrastructure, and high dependence of many countries on a small number of cable systems—particularly small island developing states (SIDS), Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and other underserved regions.

The report further develops Advisory Body recommendations agreed earlier this year across three key areas: timely deployment and repair; risk identification, monitoring and mitigation; and fostering connectivity and geographical diversity.

Comment

In the words of ITU Secretary-General Doreen Bogdan-Martin: *'The world relies on connectivity, and thanks to the International Advisory Body on Submarine Cable Resilience, we now have a practical roadmap to keep undersea networks reliable.'*

'These reports reflect a shared commitment across governments, industry, international organizations, academia and other stakeholders to safeguard this critical infrastructure that serves us all.'

By bringing together diverse expertise and perspectives from across the submarine cable ecosystem, the report provides a common reference to support international cooperation, inform policy development, and strengthen the resilience of one of the world's most critical digital infrastructure systems.

Jointly developed by governments, international organizations, industry and academia, the report reinforces several priorities for action including:

- Strengthening coordination between governments and industry.
- Streamlining regulatory and permitting processes.
- Improving risk identification and monitoring.
- Increasing route diversity and infrastructure redundancy.
- Enhancing preparedness and response capabilities.
- Addressing the needs of vulnerable regions.
- Integrating climate and environmental considerations.

Sandra Maximiano, Chairwoman of Portugal's ANACOM and Co-Chair of the International Advisory Body reflected: *'What began two years ago as a debate has grown into a global movement.'*

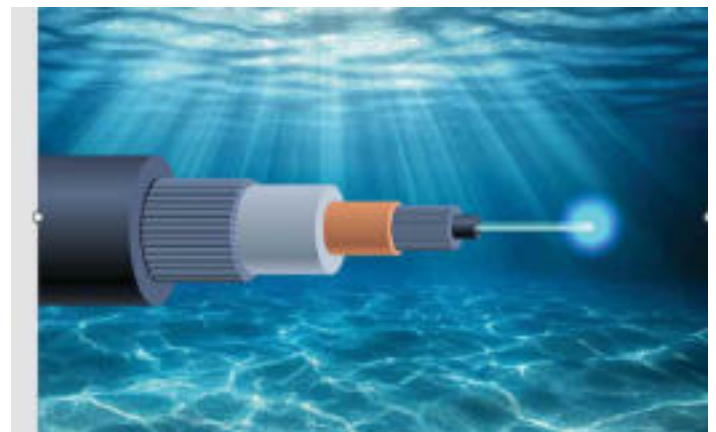
'The Advisory Body and its outcomes show that, when diverse stakeholders come together with a shared purpose, global challenges can be transformed into shared solutions.'

'Our task now is clear: to turn cooperation into lasting resilience for the infrastructure that keeps the world connected. Our legacy will be measured by the resilience the adopted recommendations help build into the world's digital infrastructure for decades to come.'

HE Bosun Tijani, Minister of Communications, Innovation and Digital Economy of the Federal Republic of Nigeria and Co-Chair of the Advisory Body commented: *'Submarine cables are the invisible infrastructure that powers our connected world, carrying the vast majority of global data traffic and underpinning everything from digital commerce and financial services to healthcare, education and government operations.'*

'The recommendations adopted by the International Advisory Body represent an important milestone in strengthening the resilience of this critical infrastructure through greater international cooperation, practical policy guidance, and shared responsibility.'

The International Advisory Body on Submarine Cable Resilience was established in 2024 by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) – the United Nations agency for digital technologies – and the International Cable Protection Committee (ICPC), the leading industry organisation promoting submarine cable protection. ITU Deputy Secretary-General Tomas Lamanauskas and ICPC Legal Advisor Kent Bressie served as the Advisory Body's executive secretaries.



Adoption of the reports marks the completion of the Advisory Body's two-year work programme and leaves a legacy of combining international efforts to strengthen submarine cable resilience, including through summits in Abuja, Nigeria in 2025 and Porto, Portugal earlier this year.

The Advisory Body's final meeting took place on 10 July during ITU's WSIS Forum 2026, part of Geneva Digital Week, alongside the AI for Good Global Summit held from 7 to 10 July, and the first UN-mandated Global Dialogue on AI Governance convened over 6-7 July.

Report

The full report with information on the work of the Advisory Body's Working Groups is available using the link here: <https://tinyurl.com/2n42yc73>

About ITU

The International Telecommunication Union (ITU) is the United Nations agency for digital technologies, driving innovation for people and the planet with 194 Member States and a membership of over 1,000 companies, universities, civil society, and international and regional organizations. Established in 1865, ITU coordinates the global use of the radio spectrum and satellite orbits, establishes international technology

standards, drives universal connectivity and digital services, and is helping to make sure everyone benefits from sustainable digital transformation, including the most remote communities. From artificial intelligence (AI) to quantum, from satellites and submarine cables to advanced mobile and wireless broadband networks, ITU is committed to connecting the world and beyond. Learn more: www.itu.int

About ICPC

The ICPC is the world's leading non-governmental organisation promoting submarine cable protection and resilience. To promote submarine cable protection and resilience, the ICPC works with its members, governments, international organisations, other marine industries, and the scientific community to: mitigate risks of natural and human damage to cables; develop recommendations and best practices for industry and governments throughout the cable project life cycle; promote scientific research addressing how cables exist in the marine environment; and promote the rule of law for the oceans. The ICPC convenes the global submarine cable industry and has more than 270 Member organisations from over 75 countries who build, operate, and maintain submarine telecommunications and power cable infrastructure. To learn more about the ICPC, visit: www.iscpc.org

Samskip strengthens hydrogen ambitions

Rotterdam – Oslo and beyond

It was announced from Rotterdam on 15 July that Samskip is taking another significant step towards the future of sustainable maritime transport by bringing its pioneering SeaShuttle project into the European HyShip initiative, strengthening collaboration to accelerate the development of liquid hydrogen infrastructure and support the commercial deployment of zero-emission shipping.

Two vessels under construction

This collaboration connects Samskip's two hydrogen-powered SeaShuttle vessels, currently under construction for operation between Rotterdam and Oslo, with a consortium of leading European maritime, energy, research and regulatory partners working to develop the technologies, infrastructure and operational standards needed to scale hydrogen-powered shipping across Europe.

Vessels designed with commercial operation in mind

Unlike many demonstration projects, the Samskip SeaShuttles have always been designed with commercial operation in mind. Once introduced into

service in 2027, the vessels will transport containerized freight between Rotterdam and Oslo using liquid hydrogen as energy source, creating one of Europe's first green shipping corridors. Each vessel is expected to reduce CO₂ emissions by approximately 25,000 tonnes annually when operating in zero-emission mode, while demonstrating that sustainable shipping can become a practical reality for customers and supply chains.

Comment

To quote Jeroen Hollebrands, Head of Newbuilding & Projects, Samskip: *'Our SeaShuttles have always been about proving that hydrogen-powered shipping can work in everyday commercial operations, not just as a concept.'*

'By joining HyShip, we are taking an important step beyond the vessel itself. Together with our partners, we are helping develop the liquid hydrogen supply chain, bunkering infrastructure and operational knowledge needed to make hydrogen-powered shipping scalable across Europe.'

An end-to-end hydrogen ecosystem

The HyShip project addresses one of the industry's most important challenges: creating an end-to-end hydrogen ecosystem that connects fuel production, port infrastructure and vessel operations. This integrated approach is essential to making hydrogen-powered shipping commercially viable on a larger scale.



Samskip SeaShuttle.

Samskip's SeaShuttles form an important part of Samskip's broader sustainability strategy, which combines one of Europe's most energy-efficient multimodal logistics networks with continued investment in alternative fuels and zero-emission technologies.

In Samskip's view hydrogen-powered shipping represents a key milestone in delivering the

company's ambitions while helping customers reduce the environmental impact of their supply chains.

About Samskip

Samskip is a European multimodal logistics and global freight forwarding company offering reliable services connecting destinations across Europe, the UK and Morocco, both door-to-door (including collection) and quay-to-quay, using a wide range of owned vessels, containers, trucks and trailers and worldwide logistics services through Samskip Logistics.

Samskip integrates more sustainable transport solutions across all modes and consistently invests in alternative fuels and low-emission technologies. The company has committed to reducing greenhouse gas emissions by 50% by 2030 and achieving net-zero by 2040, targets validated by the Science Based Targets initiative (SBTi).

The SeaShuttle project, two liquid hydrogen-powered container vessels serving the Rotterdam-Oslo corridor, represents their flagship step in delivering on these commitments.

When compromise is not an option

By Michael Grey, IFSMA Honorary Member

There is an open season on merchant mariners at present, and not in a nice way, with the warring parties around the Strait of Hormuz accompanying their confusing messages with a willingness to fire into innocent merchant ships in international waters. At least twenty seafarers have been killed in these incidents, which scarcely show the various parties in any positive moral light. Only people with no sense of humanity would fire into a fully laden LNG carrier at point-blank range, or precisely guide their ordnance into the machinery space of a vessel navigating in a narrow waterway.

Of course, those with their fingers on their triggers will justify their action by claiming that the ship was not obeying their orders and will not be amenable to any reasoned arguments that taking lives can never be justified in such circumstances. And far beyond these dire straits, in the Black Sea, Sea of Azov and other waters where Russian and Ukrainian combatants grind on with their war of attrition, merchant mariners have been in their sights. Indeed, one might suggest that attacks on merchant ships have become normalised; legitimate targets as in earlier wars and those aboard, the non-combatants, can be dismissed as just collateral. In the Middle East, there is very little sign of any form of meaningful compromise, perhaps for the very real reason that none is available.

Absolute control of the waterway is Iran's only trump card, which the hard-line factions in their

administration are determined to retain. But to the US, the international community and indeed to the UN and its expert agency the IMO, the ceding of this important issue is totally unacceptable. It is as daft as the French or the UK being given exclusive rights over the English Channel; Malaysia or Indonesia requiring absolute control of the passage through the Malacca Strait, with the riparian state prepared to kill those who disobey their instructions. Cave in to the Iranian demands and an appalling precedent will be established, but is this really understood by the US negotiators, who seem more fixated on the Iranian nuclear ambitions? And what of the prosperous states on the other side of the Gulf, which have been targeted by the Iranian missile bombardment to put pressure on the US? How resolute are they in their objections to their maritime trade being policed by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps and the extraction of tolls for its access? And do the lives of seafarers really feature in the diplomatic debates, as they focus about commodity shortages and trade flows?

You might argue that there might be one single reason for the control of this international waterway. And that, of course, revolves around the safety of those ships passing through it, and the freedom from pollution on the coastal states which could result from any marine accident. It is why there is the internationally approved separation zone between the deep draught routes on the Omani side, which has been an effective safety measure in this teeming waterway. It has also served to keep traffic away from Iranian waters, with the risk of harassment from Iranian forces, which for years have been throwing their weight around. It is clear that the present situation, of conflicting messaging, and the constant risk of fatal attack, is not one that can be tolerated and the rights of innocent passage in an international waterway must be restored. It might seem a long shot, but might some sort of face-saving resolution be worked around a jointly operated navigational safety organisation, with VTS stations and emergency services providing advice to ships in transit?

The close collaboration between UK and French authorities in the narrow seas between Dover and Calais is a perfect example. There are plenty of other successful examples around the world and the existing regional navigational agency, which maintains navigational aids throughout Gulf and near-Gulf waters could be a helpful template. Goodwill, presently in such short supply between potential participants would be a pre-condition. Throwing missiles at merchant ships is not the right step towards de-escalation and the desperate need to make these waters safer for seafarers.

Sunset for the Old Worcesters

After 150 years the Association of Old Worcesters will finally cease to exist in October when the ensign of the

famous old training ship will be laid up in St. Paul's Cathedral. A very fitting last hurrah took place earlier this year over three days concluding with a reception and a Beating of the Retreat aboard HMS Warrior in Portsmouth Harbour.

The ensign aboard *Warrior* was lowered by AOW member Bob Linekar, who lowered the ensign of HMS Worcester in the Thames for the final time in 1968. He was accompanied by one of the new WMNCS/Trinity House cadets Alex Barlow, demonstrating both past and future of the Worcester's contribution to maritime training. They will also parade the ensign in the St. Paul's ceremony. The alumni of HMS Worcester over her years as a training ship contain illustrious names in maritime Britain, along with distinguished foreigners, including Admiral Togo of the Imperial Japanese Navy.

Although the AOW will cease to exist in October, its funds and responsibilities will be transferred to a new Worcester Association to which all OWs will be transferred and which will be run for the benefit of the association's new cadets as they move through their careers. The story of this famous name thus continues.

Michael Grey is former editor of *Lloyd's List*

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World Shipping Council

Containers Lost at Sea Report 2026 Update

At the end of June the World Shipping Council released its annual *Containers Lost at Sea Report*, showing that an estimated 1,478 containers were lost at sea in 2025 out of approximately 280 million transported globally.

This is equivalent to 0.0005 percent of global containers transported.

The 2025 figure is an increase from the 576 containers lost in 2024 and is above the recent three-year average. This was strongly influenced by several discrete but significant incidents, with one major vessel loss accounting for 640 containers, or approximately 43 percent of all containers lost during the year.

Challenging weather

The report identifies challenging weather and ocean conditions, particularly in the North Atlantic and North Pacific, as well as fire-related incidents, as key contributors to container losses.

The report also shows that 128 containers were recovered in 2025, the highest recovery figure recorded since WSC began gathering recovery data in 2023.

WSC surveys commenced in 2011

WSC has conducted its *Containers Lost at Sea* surveys since 2011, covering losses from 2008 onwards. From 1 January 2026, new mandatory international reporting requirements entered into force, with amendments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea requiring all containers lost or observed drifting at sea to be reported. Flag states must also report the number of containers lost at sea to the IMO.



The report highlights ongoing work to improve container and cargo safety, including the WSC Cargo Safety Program designed to help prevent misdeclaration of dangerous goods, a revised CTU Code, the Top Tier Joint Industry Project and new international rules for charcoal shipments under the IMDG Code.

To download

The full *Containers Lost at Sea Report: 2026 Update* is available to download on the WSC website available here: <https://tinyurl.com/yurcpwtv>

Data Transparency and Industry Participation

WSC's *Containers Lost at Sea Report* is based on direct input from member companies representing

approximately 90% of the global container vessel capacity.

Data is extrapolated to provide an industry-wide estimate, assuming comparable performance from non-participating carriers.

While industry-wide reporting will become mandatory from 2026, WSC is committed to continuing the Containers Lost at Sea report for consistency and transparency.

Trinity House* awards new tonnage contract to VARD

Two multi-functional vessels have been ordered, marking a major milestone in the Lighthouse Service's Fleet renewal programme

Trinity House has awarded a contract to leading international shipbuilder VARD for the design and construction of two new multi-functional vessels, marking a major milestone in the organisation's Future Afloat fleet renewal programme. This news was reported on 22 July.

A short video has been produced showing the Deputy Master Iain Lower, Damien Oliver the Senior Responsible Owner for Futures Afloat, Neil Grant the Programme Manager for Futures Afloat, and Engineer Cadet Matthew Kipping and Deck Cadet James Phillips.

The video is available to view using the link here:
<https://tinyurl.com/mr2an2bb>

Future Afloat Programme – Key Facts

- Two new multi-functional vessels.
- Replacing THV *Patricia* and THV *Galatea*.
- Delivery scheduled for Q2 and Q4 2029
- Hybrid propulsion with battery capability and future methanol conversion potential.
- UK supply-chain commitments included within the contract.
- Apprentice and student exchange programme with VARD and Vard Marine Canada.

Supporting the Trinity House mission into the future

Following a competitive procurement process, the contract will see VARD deliver two highly capable and environmentally efficient vessels to replace THV *Patricia* and THV *Galatea*, helping Trinity House continue to provide vital aids to navigation services

around the coast of England, Wales, the Channel Islands and Gibraltar.

The new vessels will be based on an original VARD design and will undertake a range of operational duties including buoy maintenance, hydrographic surveying and emergency response to navigational hazards. Equipped with advanced dynamic positioning technology, specialist deck equipment, workboats and a helideck, the vessels will provide enhanced operational capability while maintaining the highest standards of safety and efficiency.

Sustainability

Sustainability has been a key consideration throughout the design process. The vessels will feature hybrid propulsion systems, substantial battery capacity and shore power connectivity, enabling reduced fuel consumption and emissions. They are also being designed with the potential for future conversion to methanol fuel as part of the maritime sector's transition to lower-carbon operations.

Comment

Damien Oliver, Senior Responsible Owner for Trinity House's Future Afloat programme, commented: *'We are delighted to be partnering with VARD to deliver the next generation of multi-functional buoy handling tenders for Trinity House. These new ships will ensure we can continue to fulfil our statutory responsibilities efficiently and effectively for decades to come.'*



Illustration is computer generated image. © Trinity House.

Iain Lower, Deputy Master and Chief Executive Officer of Trinity House, said: *'Following a highly competitive tender process, I am pleased that we have selected VARD, a world-class shipbuilder with an outstanding reputation for quality and innovation, to deliver these vital new vessels.'*

'The replacement of our ageing fleet represents a significant investment in the future of Trinity House and the safety of those who rely on our services.'

Cathrine Kristiseter Marti, Chief Executive Officer of VARD Group, reflected: *'After a long and thorough process, we are thrilled to have been awarded the contract to renew Trinity House's capabilities to maintain and modernise crucial marine infrastructure in UK waters. We look forward to working together to develop maritime competence across borders and support the future of the maritime industry.'*

A training partnership

In addition to vessel construction, the contract includes a training partnership between Trinity House, VARD and Vard Marine in Canada, giving apprentices and students opportunities to develop maritime skills through international collaboration. The agreement also includes commitments to UK supply chain participation throughout the build programme.

Delivery in 2029

The vessels are scheduled for delivery in 2029 and will play a central role in supporting the Trinity House mission to safeguard shipping and seafarers through the provision of reliable aids to navigation and maritime services.

**Trinity House is a maritime safety and welfare organisation that works for the benefit and safety of all mariners as a General Lighthouse Authority and maritime charity.*

As a General Lighthouse Authority, it operates marine aids to navigation that are critical to the safety of ships and seafarers, providing an essential service for the prosperity of our island nation. As a self-funding maritime charity, it provides education, support and welfare to the seafaring community.

UK Maritime Innovation Hub

Establishing a role as focal point for maritime innovation

Since its formal showcase at the Flag Forum in London on 16 April 2026, the Maritime and Coastguard Agency's UK Maritime Innovation Hub has provided a clear route for engagement between industry and the regulator.

The UK Maritime Innovation Hub acts as a single point of entry for innovators seeking to understand regulatory requirements and access expertise across the organisation. It supports technology developers, ship owners and operators across four priority areas:

- Maritime autonomy (Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships or MASS).
- Decarbonisation, including energy efficiency and alternative fuels.

- Digital systems and digitalisation.
- Nuclear propulsion.

In its first three months, the UK Maritime Innovation Hub has seen sustained engagement across its core themes with the numbers of enquiries increasing steadily week on week.



Maritime and Coastguard Agency's UK Headquarters

Early interest has been strongest in decarbonisation, alongside continued activity in autonomy and digital technologies. This focus reflects strong ongoing interest in autonomous vessels, the hybrid navy and UK SHORE funding.

Support for applicants

The UK Maritime Innovation Hub has supported applicants to the Government's UK SHORE Clean Maritime Demonstration Competition (CMDCC) Round 7 and the Zero Emission Vessels and Infrastructure (ZEVI) Round 2 competitions by helping them understand regulatory expectations.

Broad range of events

The team has established a presence across the sector through participation in a broad range of events, including Seawork, Posidonia and the UK Flag Forum, as well as wider regional engagement and stakeholder activity.

Primary point of contact

The UK Maritime Innovation Hub also acts as the primary point of contact for innovative vessel trials in Plymouth Harbour. This provides a structured route for early engagement, linking concept development to testing and regulatory pathways.

Comment

Jonty Slater, Assistant Director for the UK Maritime Innovation Hub, commented: *'I am delighted with the progress we have made in the first three months. It has been particularly rewarding to see the UK*

Maritime Innovation Hub quickly establish itself as a focal point for maritime innovation, and I am proud of the team and the effort that has gone into building the service.

'This has only been possible with the support of colleagues across the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, the Department for Transport and wider government, alongside the strong and constructive engagement we've seen from industry.'

'We are now looking ahead to the next phase, building on these foundations to strengthen how we support innovators and ensure there is a clear and consistent route into the regulatory system.'

For more information

To learn more about the UK Maritime Innovation Hub readers are invited to use the link here:

<https://tinyurl.com/msf4va2j>

For an introduction to the innovative vessel trials, including those in the Dockyard

Port of Plymouth see here:

<https://tinyurl.com/4vm652hu>

Ancient volcanoes shape New Zealand's Banks Peninsula

Banks Peninsula extends into the Pacific Ocean from the eastern coast of New Zealand's South Island, beside Christchurch, the largest city on the island. Formed from the eroded remains of two extinct volcanoes, the peninsula has steep ridges, indented bays, and a rugged coastline.

This image, acquired by one of the Copernicus Sentinel-2 satellites on 21 June 2026, shows Banks Peninsula bordered by the turquoise waters of the Pacific. Christchurch is visible to the north-west, while Lake Ellesmere appears to the south-west. To the west, the Canterbury Plains form a patchwork of agricultural fields, contrasting with the peninsula's steep, hilly interior.

The Copernicus Sentinel-2 satellites provide high-resolution optical imagery which supports the monitoring of coastal zones, land cover, and vegetation.

About Copernicus

The EU Space programme's Earth Observation component for monitoring the environment is Copernicus. It provides a massive array of freely accessible data and analysis for all kinds of users.

Its six services, covering land, marine and atmospheric environments, as well as climate change, security, and emergency management, are helping Europe make more sustainable and secure choices every day.

Earth Observation

Earth Observation (EO) is the use of remote sensing technologies, primarily satellite-based systems, complemented by ground-based (*in-situ*) sensors and monitoring stations, to gather, process and analyse data about the Earth's land, rivers and lakes, marine environment and atmosphere.



Credit: European Union, Copernicus Sentinel-2 imagery
EU Copernicus ©.

By integrating these diverse data sources, EO enables us to map current Earth and environment conditions, forecast near-term trends and take informed action—whether for tracking human land use, assessing disaster risks, or supporting a wide range of applications across industries.

Through satellite-mounted payloads, EO captures high-resolution imaging and other critical measurements, transforming raw data into actionable insights for decision-making.

Key figures

There are 772 European companies active in the EO sector, employing 13,796 employees and generating €1.796 billion in revenue. EO market expected to grow rapidly from €3.4 billion in 2023 to almost €6 billion in 2033.

Climate, Environmental and Biodiversity segment accounts for 22% of EO revenues.

It is estimated that SMEs and start-ups account for nearly 96% of European Earth Observation companies.

The European EO industry covers more than a third of the global data processing market.

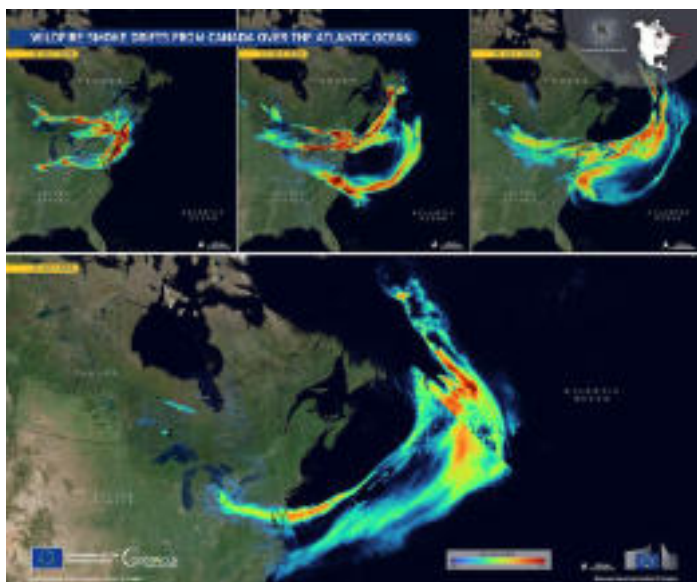
Canadian wildfire smoke over the Atlantic

Wildfires burning across central Canada in mid-July 2026 released large quantities of smoke into the atmosphere, affecting large areas in eastern Canada, the eastern United States, and the adjacent Atlantic Ocean. *

Air-quality warnings linked to the smoke were issued in cities including Ottawa**, Toronto, and New York.

This time series illustration we depict here is based on data acquired by the Copernicus Sentinel-5P satellite between 14 and 17 July 2026.

It shows how the smoke plume developed, as measured by the Aerosol Index, a measure of the amount of light-absorbing particles, such as smoke and dust, suspended in the atmosphere.



Credit: European Union, Copernicus Sentinel-5P imagery
EU ©.

The highest values, shown in orange and red, indicate elevated concentrations of airborne particles. Over the four-day period, the plume moved eastwards across Canada and the United States before curving over the Atlantic, carried far from its source by prevailing winds.

The Copernicus Sentinel-5P satellite provides daily observations of atmospheric composition, supporting the monitoring of aerosols, smoke transport, and air-quality conditions over wide areas.

EU Space Policy

EU Space activities are the result of decades of foresight and an effort at integrating the various EU space flagships under one single umbrella. It supports the EU's mission to:

- Address major challenges such as climate change and security.
- Maintain Europe's leadership in the global competition for cutting edge technology.
- Boost the economic growth of Europe with new industries.

Many of everyday activities in Europe are possible thanks to EU-owned and managed space infrastructure such as the GALILEO and EGNOS satellite navigation systems, Earth Observation satellites and sensors, and secured communications systems. These systems deliver space-based data and services, helping those who grow food, work in urban planning, combat climate change, and provide assistance during natural and humanitarian disasters.

On top of this, the EU supports space businesses and the growth of the space economy with a €1 billion investment fund for space startups; the EU funds space research and innovation with over €1.5 billion in grants for space researchers and scientists; the EU safeguards critical technologies to ensure the European space industry always has access to needed resources and technologies; and the EU works to promote education and skills to ensure young people can enter and thrive in Europe's growing space sector.

Europe's expanding role in space

Over the past two decades, the European Union (EU) has steadily expanded its role in space to ensure that Europe fully benefits from the data and services provided by space-based technologies. From satellite navigation to climate monitoring, EU space capabilities now touch nearly every aspect of daily life and global governance.

*See here for a link to an *abc News* report of 16.07.27/0339: <https://tinyurl.com/mr33kz9s>

**Ditto *Ottawa Citizen* 16.07.26:
<https://tinyurl.com/48mhw8dc>

CMA CGM Notre Dame

Maiden call at Hamburg

CMA CGM Notre Dame, a 400-metre loa and 62-metre-wide vessel operated by the French shipping company CMA CGM, made her first call at the Port of Hamburg on 12 July as part of the rotation of the FAL-3 (French Asia Line) service.

French-flag

With a capacity of 24,212 TEU, *CMA CGM Notre Dame* is currently the largest containership sailing under the French flag and the first in a series of ten

identical LNG-powered ultra-large container vessels operated by CMA CGM.

The vessel was officially named in Le Havre on 2 July 2026 and subsequently entered service on the Asia–Northern Europe trade. FAL is one of CMA CGM's key Asia to Europe services, connecting the ports of Ningbo, Shanghai, Yantian, Singapore, Le Havre, Rotterdam, Hamburg and Tangier Med on a rotation of approximately 105 days.

Comment

In the words of Mirja Nibbe, General Manager CMA CGM Germany: *'The maiden call of CMA CGM Notre Dame in Hamburg highlights the strategic importance of the Port of Hamburg for the CMA CGM Group. By deploying modern and energy-efficient vessels, we continue to invest in more sustainable transport solutions while strengthening our long-term commitment to Hamburg. We are pleased to celebrate this milestone together with our partners in the port.'*



With a capacity of 24,212 TEU, CMA CGM Notre Dame is currently the largest containership sailing under the French flag and the first in a series of ten identical LNG-powered ultra-large container vessels operated by CMA CGM.

*Illustration per Port of Hamburg press.
With grateful thanks. ©*

Axel Mattern, CEO of Port of Hamburg Marketing, added *'We are delighted that CMA CGM is calling at the Port of Hamburg with its latest generation of vessels. The innovations and environmental friendliness of this new series of vessels also reflect Hamburg's commitment to being a progressive and sustainable port.'*

'Furthermore, this maiden call by an ultra-large container vessel once again highlights Hamburg's importance as a key hub for trade between Asia and Europe.'

LNG-powered

CMA CGM Notre Dame is powered by liquefied natural gas (LNG) and features an 18,600 m³ LNG fuel tank, an aerodynamic windshield designed to reduce energy consumption, and intelligent energy

management systems. The vessel offers capacity for up to 1,600 refrigerated containers (reefers) and, thanks to an optimised design, can carry 280 more containers than previous CMA CGM vessels of comparable dimensions.

In addition, the vessel is equipped with a fully digitalised bridge, combining real-time navigation tools, augmented reality systems, and AI-enabled solutions to optimise route planning, speed management, and energy consumption.

CMA CGM Notre Dame operates under the French flag and is registered with the French International Register (RIF). She is the first vessel in a series of ten sister ships to be delivered between 2026 and 2028, each named after iconic landmarks of French heritage.

About the Port of Hamburg

The Port of Hamburg is one of Europe's leading hubs for trade between Asia and Europe. With 19 regular container liner services, Hamburg offers extensive connections to Asia's major economic centres. More than half of the port's container throughput – approximately 4.2 million TEU in 2025 – was generated by Asian trade.

Deployment of CMA CGM's newest vessel generation on the FAL-3 service to Hamburg, together with the Group's planned acquisition of a 20% stake in EUROGATE Container Terminal Hamburg, underlines the port's strategic importance in global container shipping.

100 Years of the Voith Schneider Propeller

Driving progress into the future

On 6 July from Heidenheim, Germany, Voith celebrated a special milestone: 100 years of the Voith Schneider Propeller (VSP). This unique propulsion system revolutionized ship manoeuvrability and remains one of the most groundbreaking innovations in marine engineering.

Tested in Vienna in 1926

The VSP concept originated from Austrian engineer Ernst Schneider, who was born on 18 June 1894. In 1926, his entirely new propeller design was successfully tested for the first time in model trials at the Vienna Ship Model Basin. Voith recognized the invention's potential early on and quickly developed it into a compelling, market-ready product.

Today, the VSP is considered one of the most significant maritime inventions of the 20th century and has become indispensable in tug and ferry operations,

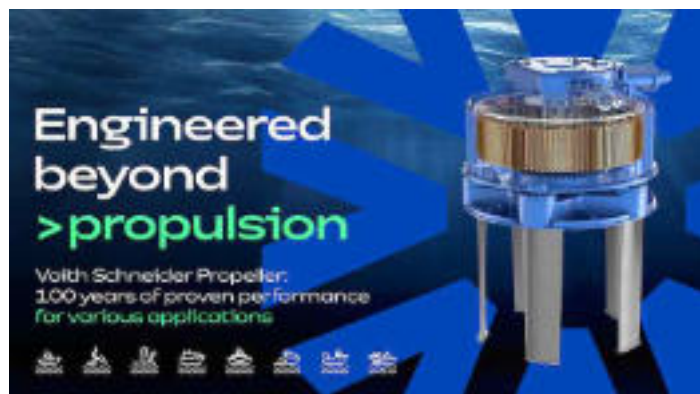
offshore applications, and a wide range of specialized vessels.

A unique operating principle

The operating principle of the Voith Schneider Propeller remains unique to this day. Several vertical blades arranged in a circular rotor move along a circular path while continuously adjusting their pitch. This allows thrust to be varied steplessly in any direction – providing instantaneous 360-degree manoeuvrability. As a result, the system offers extremely fast response times to steering commands, enabling highly responsive, safe and precise manoeuvring – even in wind, waves, currents and confined spaces. With its comparatively low rotational speed, the VSP is also highly robust and generates low underwater noise levels.

Entrepreneurial vision

The successful development of Ernst Schneider's invention into a market-leading product is closely linked to the entrepreneurial vision of the Voith brothers. They quickly recognized the potential of this entirely new propulsion concept. Together with dedicated Voith engineers and mechanics, they transformed a visionary idea into a propeller that continues to shape maritime operations to this day.



In 1928, the vessel *Torqueo* became the first ship equipped with a Voith Schneider Propeller. Driven by inventive spirit, entrepreneurship, technical excellence and persistence, an innovative propulsion system emerged that remains state of the art in its fundamental principle.

Widely applied

The VSP's wide range of applications highlights its versatility. Offshore supply vessels use its precise controllability in combination with dynamic positioning systems for complex operations at wind farms and offshore platforms. Its fast thrust adjustment also helps significantly reduce roll motions. Voith Water Tractors benefit from the precise and sensitive thrust control and rapid response times when assisting large vessels – whether in harbours, at offshore terminals or in narrow waterways. Double-ended ferries can dock

and depart quickly and precisely without turning, even under highly demanding weather and current conditions.

Over decades, Voith has continuously advanced the VSP. The focus is not solely on the propeller itself but on the interaction of hull, propulsion system, control system and operating profile. Advanced flow simulations, a dedicated marine research and test facility, and close collaboration with customers enable Voith to analyse new solutions virtually, validate them through model testing, and optimize them for real-world operation.

African cadets and Wellness at Sea

Sailors' Society and ITF partnership renewed

It was reported on 30 July that Sailors' Society is launching a second year of Wellness at Sea Training for Africa's cadets, ratings and trainees, thanks to renewed funding from their partner in this programme, ITF Seafarers' Trust.

Future career help

Together, the global maritime welfare fund and the Trust, which supports programmes and grants to improve the health, wellbeing and welfare of maritime workers and their families worldwide, have already helped more than 1600 of the next generation of African maritime prepare for their future careers.

Wellness at Sea programme established

This bespoke initiative, based on the Society's acclaimed and established Wellness at Sea programme, is already complementing the curriculum at leading maritime institutions in Ethiopia, Ghana, Tanzania, Liberia, Kenya and South Africa by focusing on mental health, resilience, relationships, conflict management, piracy awareness and overall wellbeing.

Handling situations on board

Cadets who have taken part in the programme reveal the immediate and measurable difference it makes, with 81% saying the training gave new insight into the realities of life at sea and 100% saying the training would help them better handle situations on board.

The Society's Wellness brochure is available here: <https://tinyurl.com/yattana9>

Comments

Baade, CEO of Sailors' Society, commented: '*Africa's maritime expansion highlights just how important it is for the continent's cadets to have access to this wellbeing toolkit and our 24/7 support.*

'We are incredibly grateful to ITF Seafarers' Trust for their continued commitment to this programme. By investing in their wellbeing before they ever step on board, we are helping build safer, stronger and more resilient African crews for years to come.'



Illustration per Sailors' Society and ITF with grateful thanks ©.

One cadet added: *'Every student in maritime must go through this; it is very helpful.'*

About Sailors' Society

For more than 200 years the Southampton-based international maritime charity Sailors' Society has been transforming the lives of seafarers and their families.

The charity works to provide practical, emotional and spiritual welfare support around the clock, day in, day out, to the world's 1.9 million seafarers, supporting wellbeing across every area of their lives and giving them the best opportunity to enjoy a fulfilling and productive career at sea.

To learn more about the charity's work readers are invited to use the link here: www.sailors-society.org

Port of Baltimore

USCG and historic buoy lay

On 28 July it was announced from Baltimore that the crew of the US Coast Guard Cutter *James Rankin* had that day set the historic Francis Scott Key Memorial Buoy in the Patapsco River, Maryland.

Formalized as an annual Coast Guard duty in 1980, this year marks the 46th setting of the historic buoy by a Coast Guard cutter's crew.

Specially designed commemorative buoy

The specially designed aid to navigation commemorates Francis Scott Key, revered author of the poem *Defense of Fort M'Henry* that was later retitled *The Star Spangled Banner*. Key's poem became the official national anthem of the United States in 1931.

The buoy is set each year near the spot Key observed the 1814 British bombardment of Fort McHenry and felt inspired to write the national anthem's lyrics. The buoy is removed each year before winter.



*Illustration per USCG East District Public Affairs
Reproduced here with grateful thanks.*

USCG ©.

James Rankin is a coastal buoy tender homeported at the Coast Guard Yard in Baltimore. The cutter's crew is responsible for 346 buoys in the Upper Chesapeake Bay and its tributaries, including the Eastern Shore, Tangier Sound, Annapolis, and the Potomac River.

Facilitating commerce

Collectively, in 2025 these aids facilitate more than \$62 billion of commerce to the Port of Baltimore. The cutter's crew also is equipped to perform other Coast Guard missions, such as homeland security, search and rescue, marine environmental protection, and domestic ice breaking.

Making maritime memories

By Michael Grey, IFSMA Honorary Member

It is that time of year again, when the columnists on proper newspapers head off to their Tuscan villas, the experience currently made rather less fulfilling by the three-hour queue to submit their Euro-fingerprints. There is also the nagging nervousness that the substitute will be so brilliant that the Editor will decide your services are henceforth redundant. Not for this columnist, alas. Let us not be negative, the holiday memories will surely be delightful and you hopefully will not end up on the scrapheap.

Which brings us effortlessly to a rather delightful little story (stolen from this Ships' Monthly) of the lucky passengers on a 30-year old Japanese cruise ship which is being sent for recycling. Past guests aboard this elegant old lady are being invited to buy bits of their old ship, which will afford them with a pleasant conversation piece in their Tokyo apartments. One presumes that the gesture specifies some tableware, or even a table and chairs, rather than a radar

antennae or section of the crankshaft, but it surely will bring pleasant memories and make the cruise a little different from the norm. I sadly never took a ship to the breakers, although there was a near miss when, aboard one of our elderly Commonwealth liners in the London Docks, word came that the ship was to be taken to Scotland for scrapping (the word recycling had yet to be invented). We were already planning which bits of the ship we might appropriate when, curses, a message arrived from the Dock Office, posting me to a vessel in Liverpool and a voyage to Australia.

The chap who replaced me had no better luck, as very early on the Sunday morning before the proposed demolition voyage, as the only officer on board, he was rudely awoken by a foreign gentleman in a very loud suit, who told him that he had bought the ship. He carried with him a large Gladstone bag full of padlocks which he began to furiously apply all around the vessel, to the OOW's complete bewilderment. He finally managed to reach the duty superintendent, just before he set off for the golf course, who told him that the ship had indeed been sold and they had just forgotten to tell him. The ship eventually was to be fully laden with a scrap cargo and make her way to Taiwan. No tangible memories were available from that ship. Some 2000 cruise passengers had a voyage with a difference recently, when part of the available "excursions" included a drydocking in Damen Shiprepair's Rotterdam graving dock. It was apparently a huge success; the guests being chuffed to bits as the waters gurgled away and their ship took the blocks.

In my day, drydocking meant the inconvenience of all the toilets being locked, but modern cruise ships are clearly far more self-contained. The average intelligent person is hugely interested in the mysteries of other people's professions and love watching other people work, so the cruise organisers maybe ought to look at other ways of making their offering rather more different. Some years ago, one of the most popular attractions in the maritime museum in Chatham Dockyard was a working drydock, and when there was a coaster on the blocks the punters would be several deep around the security fence. It was also a good advertisement for modern shipping, although the welders and painters were exhorted to watch their language. Today there is a historic ship permanently in the dock, which might, to those not historically inclined, be less of an attraction. And if you are looking for memories afloat it was interesting to read that one of the older Norwegian coastal ferries has emerged from her refit as a sort of working museum, stuffed with artefacts, artwork, and the like, celebrating the history of this amazing service. That is a great idea and sure to be popular with those cruising and employing the ship as a ferry. If you have this stuff in some store ashore, why not use it?

It was several years ago that I voyaged from Helsinki to Stockholm on a huge, brand-new ferry. It was an amazing vessel with full-length atria, astonishing fittings and passenger attractions, while the bridge was like something out of the Starship Enterprise. As we made our way down the Oslofjord, the master conducted us from this space-age wheelhouse to a compartment at the back of the bridge, which had been fitted out as an elegant chartroom, from a ship of another, far earlier era. It might have seemed quixotic, but the serious purpose, we were told, was to remind the modern navigators, seated at their consoles, of the value of traditional seafaring skills. History, you see, does have a purpose.

Michael Grey is former editor of *Lloyd's List*

This article first appeared in *The Maritime Advocate Online* Issue No 913 of 2 August 2026 and appears here by kind permission of the Editor and the Author ©

Shipwreck of Cook's *Endeavour* identified

By Kevin Fewster and Dr James Hunter ©

In early 1999, the Australian National Maritime Museum (ANMM) was invited to join the search for the shipwreck of James Cook's most iconic ship, HMB *Endeavour*, by Newport, Rhode Island-based American researcher, Dr Kathy Abbass, who speculated the ship's remains were likely lying on the seabed at the entrance to Newport's harbour. An article in *The Times* declared *Endeavour's* discovery would be 'the greatest maritime revelation since the discovery of the *Titanic*'. In June 2025, after 25 years of exploration and dogged research, ANMM released a comprehensive report proving that a shipwreck site in Newport Harbor has finally been identified beyond doubt as that of *Endeavour*.

Following Cook's voyage, *Endeavour* was briefly used as a storeship and made three voyages to the Falkland Islands as a Royal Navy transport before being sold out of service in 1775. It was purchased by merchant James Mather that same year and engaged in the Baltic trade, making at least one voyage to the Russian port of Archangel. Following the outbreak of the American War of Independence in April 1775, the vessel—renamed *Lord Sandwich*—was contracted to the British government's Transport Board to serve as a transport delivering British troops, arms and supplies to suppress the rebellious American colonies. After delivering a contingent of approximately 200 Hessian mercenaries to New York in May 1776, the vessel sailed to Rhode Island and participated in the British capture of Newport. It was then moored in Newport Harbor and largely functioned as a prison hulk during the first half of 1778.



Endeavour aground

Lord Sandwich was scuttled (intentionally sunk) as a blockship during the Battle of Rhode Island in August 1778. The battle was a defensive action by British and Hessian troops to prevent a combined American and French expeditionary force from recapturing Newport. Approximately 30 vessels were scuttled by the British and many were later refloated; however, 13 ships were considered unworthy of recovery and abandoned where they sank. One of those left on the harbour floor was *Lord Sandwich*.

More than two centuries later, the partnership between the museum and Dr Abbass' non-profit Rhode Island Marine Archaeology Project (RIMAP) resulted in the discovery of most of the transports scuttled during the Battle of Rhode Island. During the early 2000s, a few of the more promising sites were investigated further but none positively identified as *Lord Sandwich*. Then in 2015, ANMM's former Head of Research, Dr Nigel Erskine, identified a specific zone—later labelled the 'Limited Study Area' or LSA—within Newport Harbor as the location where *Lord Sandwich* was scuttled. It comprises a section of the harbour between the northern end of Goat Island and Newport's historic North Battery—landmarks that are still present on Newport's modern land- and seascape. Because the shipwrecks of the abandoned transports spanned the entirety of Newport Harbor, and several represented British-built vessels of

approximately the same size, Erskine's discovery was a significant leap forward in identifying *Lord Sandwich/Endeavour's* final resting place. His research also revealed the names and construction details of all five transports scuttled within the LSA.

Ultimately, four eighteenth-century shipwrecks were discovered in the waters between Goat Island and the North Battery. Prior to investigating these sites, ANMM's maritime archaeology team liaised with Dr Abbass and RIMAP to develop and agree upon a list of comparative criteria between the historical and archaeological records that, if met, would provide sufficient evidence to identify one of them as *Lord Sandwich/Endeavour*. Based on this 'preponderance of evidence' approach, the museum's maritime archaeology team sought to identify surviving hull attributes and other archaeological data that would closely or exactly match features of *Endeavour's* design and construction recorded in historical sources. By 2018, the project's focus centred on the largest of the four shipwrecks in the LSA, known by its Rhode Island state archaeological site number RI 2394.

Between 2018 and 2021, ANMM, RIMAP, and professional maritime archaeologists and conservators from the Silentworld Foundation and Sprintsail Enterprises conducted limited excavation,

documentation, and recovery of artefacts and samples from RI 2394. Collected data included timber samples that confirmed the vessel was constructed of white oak and European elm, the preferred species of British shipwrights and proof the hull was built in a British shipyard, rather than one in the North American colonies, where an array of native woods were more commonly used. The team also located evidence of repairs in the forward section of the lower hull—the same area that was heavily damaged in June 1770 when *Endeavour* struck a coral reef off the Queensland coast that now bears its name. Two scuttling holes were also found in the surviving lower hull adjacent to the keel, providing compelling evidence it was intentionally sunk.

Documentation of the site resulted in a detailed plan of the shipwreck's surviving hull that, when superimposed at the same scale over *Endeavour's* 1768 lower hold and lower deck plans, revealed several specific hull features—including the positions of the surviving bilge pump shaft stump and pump well partitions, bow end of the keel, and locations of doubled and tripled frames relative to the foremast and mainmast—aligned perfectly with their counterparts on the archival documents. Another compelling piece of evidence was the discovery of a rare half-lap scarph at the bow end of the shipwreck's keel. This join between the stempost and keel was compared to the keel-stem scarph shown on *Endeavour's* 1768 Admiralty sheer draught and resulted in an exact match in terms of both form and size.

The correlation of the historic plans to the shipwreck site is even more remarkable given most eighteenth-century vessels, including *Endeavour*, were built by 'rack of eye'—a shipbuilding tradition in which a shipwright's tacit knowledge and understanding, aided by geometric or proportional rule, was used to construct a vessel to a desired tonnage and set of dimensions. 'Rack of eye' construction did not utilise builder's plans, which meant no two ships were built alike. This argues against the shipwreck's hull remains matching another of the shipwrecked transports in Newport Harbor.

Unique diagnostic artefacts—such as a ship's bell or an artefact bearing the name of a crewman, passenger or prisoner associated with *Lord Sandwich* or *Endeavour*—were not encountered on the shipwreck site. However, given *Lord Sandwich* was used as a prison hulk and later intentionally scuttled, it would have been regularly cleaned and ultimately

stripped of anything of value before ending up on the bottom of Newport Harbor. Therefore, identification of the site has hinged on the surviving hull and the evidence it contains, and enough correlations now exist between the archaeological and historical records that ANMM is confident the final resting place of James Cook's *Endeavour* has been located.

Editorial note:

About the authors

Kevin Fewster was the inaugural Director of the Australian National Maritime Museum 1989-2000, then Director of Royal Museums Greenwich 2007-2019. In January 2025, soon after returning to live in Sydney, he was appointed to ANMM's governing Council.

Dr James Hunter is the Manager of Maritime Archaeology at the Australian National Maritime Museum, where he also served as the inaugural Curator of Naval Heritage and Archaeology between 2015 and 2024. He has been a maritime archaeologist for nearly three decades and was involved in the investigation and identification of HMB *Endeavour's* shipwreck site between 2017 and 2022.

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Picture caption

HMS Endeavour off the coast of New Holland by Samuel Atkins, active 1787-1808.

The vessel is shown following an incident in June, 1770 near the Endeavour River, Queensland, when Cook's ship struck a reef.

Image and caption kindly provided by the National Library of Australia, NLA ref 211981.
(<https://library.gov.au>)

Q1 FY2026 Financial Results

From Singapore on 4 August Ocean Network Express (ONE) announced its financial results for the first quarter of FY2026, covering the period from 1 April to 30 June 2026.

For the first quarter, ONE generated revenue of US\$4,539 million and recorded a net profit of US\$31 million.

Till Ole Barrelet, CEO of Ocean Network Express, commented: *'The first quarter reflected a demanding market, with Middle East disruption raising fuel and operating costs across the industry. As demand recovered through the quarter, we improved yields and maintained high utilization.'*

'We have raised our full-year forecast and remain focused on operational agility as conditions evolve. This reflects the dedication of our global team and the steady progress of our ONE2030 strategy. As market uncertainties persist, our priorities are protecting our people and assets, ensuring service reliability for our customers, and delivering sustainable long-term value for our stakeholders.'

To see the financial results readers are invited to use the link here: <https://tinyurl.com/ju44nsvr>

About Ocean Network Express (ONE)

Ocean Network Express (ONE), headquartered in Singapore, is one of the world's leading liner shipping companies. It operates a fleet of over 280 vessels with a capacity exceeding 2.2 million TEUs.

Through its extensive global network, ONE provides container shipping services to over 120 countries.

Revised IMO requirements for pilot transfer arrangements

IR Class notice 13/2026

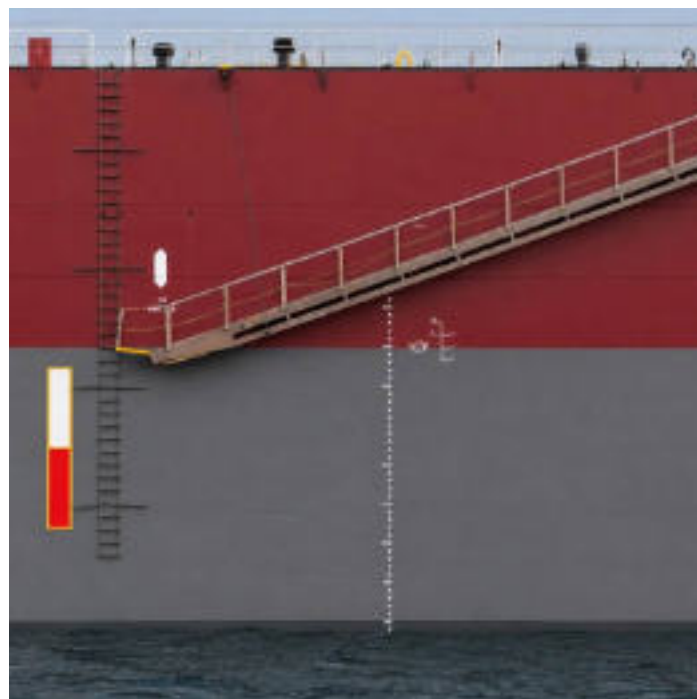
In July the Indian Register of Shipping (IRClass) issued a notice and LR document on the Revised IMO requirements for pilot transfer arrangements.

We reproduce here an introduction to the topic.

The complete document is to be found here: <https://tinyurl.com/2s3cm3np>

Overview

The IMO has published amendments, to the SOLAS regulation V/23 related to pilot transfer arrangements, in IMO Resolution MSC.572(110). The main change is that the regulation mandates new associated performance standards, IMO Resolution MSC.576(110) *Performance Standards for Pilot Transfer Arrangements*, whereas previous performance standards were recommended.



Application of requirements

As per IMO Resolution MSC.572(110) the performance standards for inspection, stowage, maintenance, replacement and familiarisation of pilot transfer arrangements apply as follows:

- For all pilot transfer arrangements, regardless of installation date: must comply with the introduction and parts D and E of the resolution from 1 January 2028.
- Pilot transfer arrangements installed on or after 1 January 2028*: must comply with the new performance standards from 1 January 2028.
- Pilot transfer arrangements installed before 1 January 2028* on SOLAS certified ships: must comply with parts A, B and C of the resolution not later than the first survey** on or after 1 January 2029.
- Pilot transfer arrangements installed before 1 January 2028* on non-SOLAS certified ships: must comply with parts A, B and C of the resolution not later than 1 January 2030.

***Note 1:** the expression 'installed on or after 1 January 2028' means a contractual delivery date for the pilot transfer arrangement or, in the absence of a contractual delivery date, the actual delivery date of the arrangement to the ship on or after 1 January 2028.

****Note 2:** the term 'first survey' means the first annual survey, the first periodical survey or the first renewal survey, whichever is due first after the date specified in the relevant regulation or any other survey if the Administration deems it to be reasonable and practicable, taking into account the extent of repairs

and alterations being undertaken. For a ship under construction, where the keel is laid before, but the ship is delivered after the date specified in the relevant regulation, the initial survey is the 'first survey'.

EU 21st Sanctions package against Russia

An IGP&I Members' Circular

Towards the end of July the International Group of P & I Clubs (<https://www.igpandi.org/>) issued a circular to members regarding EU sanctions against Russia and we are pleased to be able to reproduce the document below in an effort to spread the word.

On 23 July 2026, the Council of the European Union adopted its 21st package of restrictive measures against Russia, amending Regulation (EU) 833/2014 and Regulation (EU) 269/2014.

These measures were implemented in Council Regulation (EU) 2026/1848, Council Implementing Regulation (EU) 2026/1843, Council Regulation (EU) 2026/1844 and Council Decision (CFSP) 2026/1845*, and published in the Official Journal of the EU.

The Council's press release** and FAQs issued by the European Commission*** are available online. The priority development for Members to note is that the EU has for the first time expanded the listing criteria to include vessels that service shadow fleet ships, whether or not designated.

More broadly, the package comprises 218 individual and entity listings (170 entities and 48 individuals) including 94 Russian banks and financial institutions, which is the largest number of designations in a single package in four years, together with a range of sectoral, trade, financial and anti-circumvention measures.

Key takeaways for Members

- Shadow fleet expansion: 41 further vessels designated (under Council Regulation (EU) 2026/1848 amending Regulation (EU) 833/2014), bringing the total number of sanctioned vessels to over 670, including, for the first time under widened criteria, five bunkering tankers alleged to have regularly refuelled designated vessels.
- New power for EU Member States to confiscate and sell cargoes carried aboard detained shadow fleet vessels.
- LNG carrier sales: owners must now notify their EU member state of residence of any sale of an LNG tanker to a third country. The European Commission will review, by 25 October 2026, whether to introduce a full ban on the sale of LNG tankers to Russia, which would also require sellers

to take reasonable steps to ensure vessels sold to third countries are not resold or transferred to Russian interests, including via proxy ownership.

- LNG trade: a one-year, renewable exemption permitting continued transport of Russian LNG to third countries under long-term contracts concluded before 24 February 2022, capped at 2025 volumes; all other previously agreed restrictions on Russian LNG, including the import ban from 1 January 2027, remain unchanged.
- Oil price cap: the automatic adjustment mechanism has been paused for 12 months (until 15 July 2027), maintaining the price cap for Russian-origin crude oil at US\$44.10 per barrel.
- Further transaction bans: two Russian ports, four Russian airports, a Georgian refinery, and five oil traders, together with new designations of refineries in Russia and Belarus.
- Designation of an individual identified as a central figure behind a network of fraudulent ship registries used to document ageing tankers engaged in Russian trades.

Shadow Fleet and Vessel Designations

Forty-one additional vessels have been designated under Regulation (EU) 2026/1848, taking the total number of such vessels to over 670. The new listings include non-EU tankers alleged to be circumventing the oil price cap, and vessels supporting Russia's energy sector, transporting military equipment, or carrying grain removed from occupied Ukrainian territory. Designated vessels remain subject to an EU port access ban and a prohibition on the provision of a broad range of maritime services, including insurance, together with a ban on ship-to-ship transfers and other cargo transfers involving such vessels.

For the first time, the designation criteria have been expanded to capture vessels providing support services, such as bunkering or ship to ship transfers, to the shadow fleet (Article 3s(2) of Regulation (EU) 833/2014 as amended by Council Regulation (EU) 2026/1848). On this basis, five bunkering tankers alleged to have regularly refuelled already-designated vessels have been listed. Separately, eight entities and one individual have been designated in connection with the shadow fleet ecosystem, including a crewing agency alleged to have supplied personnel in support of sanctioned shipping operations.

A new rule permits EU Member States to confiscate and sell cargoes carried by shadow fleet vessels that they detain.

Ship Registries

The EU has designated an Indian national identified as the central figure behind a network of ship registries alleged to have supplied flag documentation to ageing tankers operating in Russian trades, with reported links to registry arrangements in Dominica, Guyana, Samoa, Micronesia, Eswatini and Laos. Several flag administrations are reported to have withdrawn approvals or repudiated the arrangements, and the IMO has declared a number of the associated registrations fraudulent or invalid. Members are reminded of the importance of verifying the validity of a vessel's flag and registry as part of their due diligence.

LNG Measures

Owners must now notify the EU member state in which they reside of any sale of an LNG tanker to a third country (Article 3qa). Under the legal text, the European Commission will review, by 25 October 2026, whether to introduce a full ban on the sale of LNG tankers to Russia. Should such a ban be introduced, sellers would also be required to take reasonable steps to ensure that vessels sold to third countries are not resold or otherwise transferred to Russian interests, including via proxy ownership.

A one-year, renewable exemption has been agreed permitting EU operators to continue transporting Russian LNG to buyers outside the EU under long-term contracts concluded before 24 February 2022, provided that annual volumes do not exceed 2025 levels (Article 3ra). The exemption is available to any EU operator meeting these criteria and is not limited to a single company.

All other previously agreed EU restrictions on Russian LNG remain unchanged, including the comprehensive ban on imports of LNG originating in or exported from Russia into the EU, which takes effect from 1 January 2027 for long-term contracts. The EU has also clarified that the prohibition on the provision of LNG terminal services, introduced under the 20th sanctions package, applies not only to Russian and EU operators but also to non-Russian third-country operators controlled by Russian companies (Article 3rb). Existing third-country exemptions have also been extended: the Sakhalin-2 exemption for Japan has been extended to 31 March 2028, and a new exemption has been granted to South Korea until the same date.

Oil Price Cap

In order to ensure that Russia's profits from oil sales remain contained, despite the exceptional market situation caused by the closure of the Strait of Hormuz, the package pauses the automatic six-monthly adjustment mechanism for the oil price cap (introduced under the EU's 18th sanctions package) for a period of 12 months, until 15 July 2027 (Article 3n).

The suspension may be reviewed earlier in the event of exceptional market developments. This maintains the price cap for Russian-origin crude oil at US\$44.10 per barrel. The legal basis for a full maritime services ban on vessels carrying Russian crude oil and petroleum products, established under the EU's 20th sanctions package, remains in place but no decision on activating it has been taken yet.

Port, Refinery and Trading Transaction Bans

Transaction bans have been extended to two further Russian ports i.e. Olya and Vysotsk and four Russian airports, in addition to the ports of Murmansk and Tuapse designated under the EU's 20th sanctions package. A transaction ban, subject to a six-month wind-down period, has also been imposed on a Georgian refinery at Kulevi engaged in the trading and processing of Russian oil.

Eighteen entities and one individual have been designated in the oil sector, including three refineries in Russia and a major Belarusian refinery, together with a company established to sell Belarusian petroleum products within Russia. Transaction bans have also been imposed on five oil traders, including UAE-based Nexus Oil Trading, for allegedly frustrating the prohibition on purchasing Russian crude oil and petroleum products.

Other Measures

The package also introduces a wide range of measures outside the primary scope of this circular, including expanded transaction bans and asset freezes affecting the Russian banking and crypto-asset sectors, further designations and export restrictions targeting Russia's military-industrial complex (including components used in long-range drones), new import bans on certain metals and ores, measures mirroring the above in respect of Belarus, and enhanced legal protections for EU operators against Russian court judgments.

Members (**of P & I Clubs**) are reminded that cover is not available for any trade that breaches applicable sanctions. Members are advised that they should conduct thorough due diligence on the parties, cargoes, vessels, and other service providers that are or may be involved before they engage in any trade with a high sanctions risk. Finally, Members are reminded to keep records of their due diligence investigations and findings.

All P&I Clubs in the International Group have issued a similarly worded circular.

* <https://tinyurl.com/bddz3672>

** <https://tinyurl.com/4et9b92c>

*** <https://tinyurl.com/2bpwd79f>