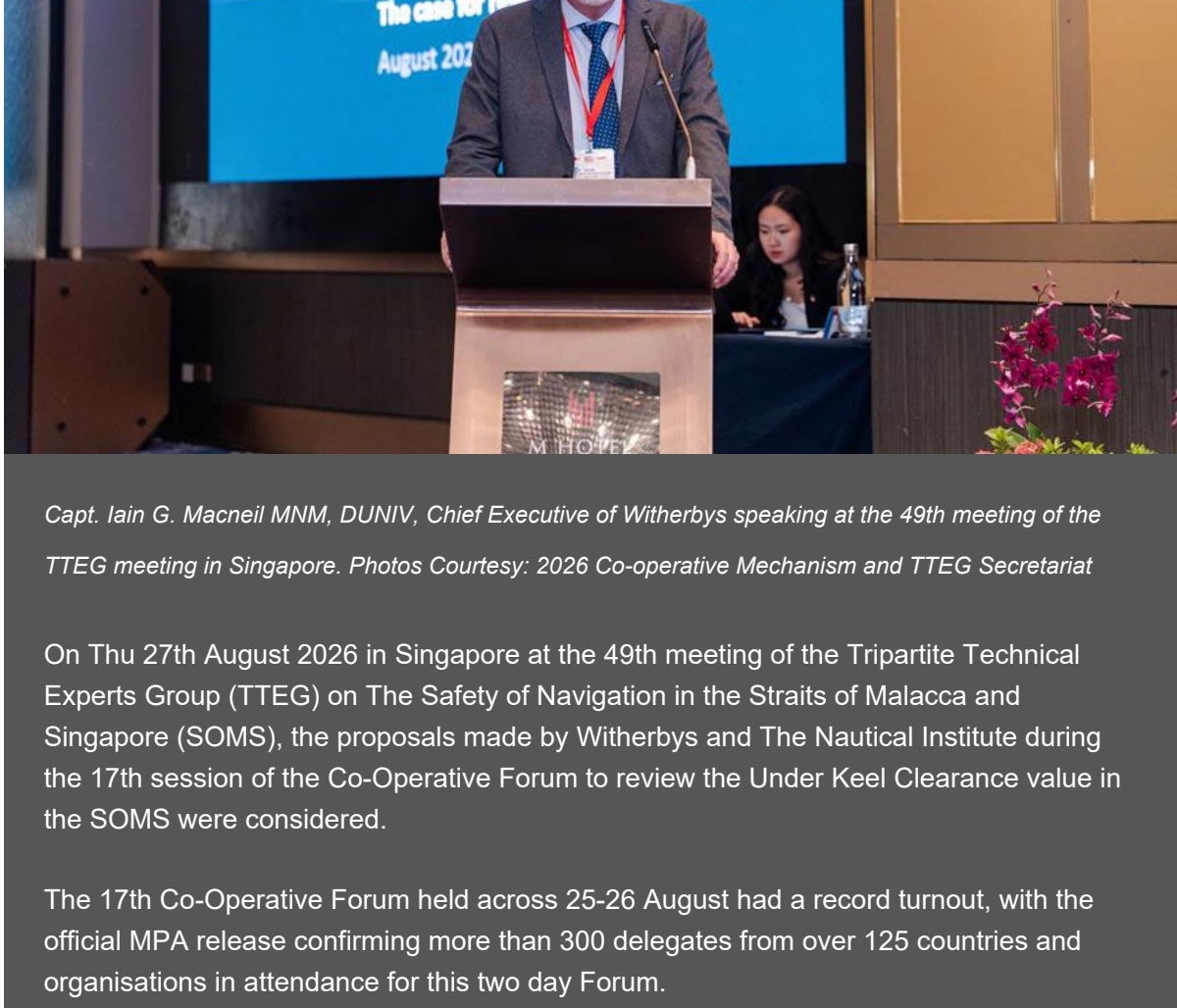


Shipping Regulations and Guidance

Week 35, 2026 – Friday 28th August
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UKC value in the SOMS to be reviewed



Capt. Iain G. Macneil MNM, DUNIV, Chief Executive of Witherbys speaking at the 49th meeting of the TTEG meeting in Singapore. Photos Courtesy: 2026 Co-operative Mechanism and TTEG Secretariat

On Thu 27th August 2026 in Singapore at the 49th meeting of the Tripartite Technical Experts Group (TTEG) on The Safety of Navigation in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS), the proposals made by Witherbys and The Nautical Institute during the 17th session of the Co-Operative Forum to review the Under Keel Clearance value in the SOMS were considered.

The 17th Co-Operative Forum held across 25-26 August had a record turnout, with the official MPA release confirming more than 300 delegates from over 125 countries and organisations in attendance for this two day Forum.

During the Forum, Singapore agreed that it is timely to review the UKC values in the SOMS, which were originally established in the 1970s. Singapore proposed a Straits Project together with Witherbys and The Nautical Institute.

The existing 3.5 metre minimum Under Keel Clearance (UKC) requirement in the SOMS was developed 50 years ago, based on the hydrographic information, vessel characteristics and navigational technology available at that time. Since then, significant advances have been made in hydrographic surveying, vessel design, understanding of squat and dynamic draught, electronic navigation and the availability of real-time environmental data, while traffic through the Straits has increased exponentially.

The present UKC requirement remains a fixed, static value, whereas modern UKC management can take account of vessel-specific and environmental factors including tide, swell, speed, squat, trim and water depth. Importantly, a review is not a proposal simply to reduce the existing safety margin: it is an opportunity to determine, using today's data and technology, whether the present framework remains the safest and most effective. This is particularly relevant because accident analysis in high density areas of the SOMS indicates that collision risk considerably outweighs grounding risk, while the existing UKC requirement bunches deep-draught vessels into concentrated tidal windows. A structured, evidence based review could therefore examine whether a more dynamic, risk based approach could maintain protection against grounding while reducing traffic concentration and improving the overall safety and efficiency of navigation through one of the world's most important waterways.



Photos Courtesy: 2026 Co-operative Mechanism and TTEG Secretariat

Malaysia highlighted that navigation and hydrographic requirements should be taken into account and that the project should take account of the forthcoming IHO S-100 standard (that will replace the existing S-57 standard) that should enable the integration of real-time digital marine data into ECDIS.

Malaysia further highlighted specifically that The IHO S-129 standard for Under Keel Clearance Management (UKCM), which is designed to deliver real-time and predicted water depth safety margins within ECDIS, aligns with such UKC Requirements.

Indonesia highlighted matters such as sandwave movement, particularly in 3 key areas, should be taken into account and that a Joint Survey Research Programme is also explored.

It was agreed and approved that the project for the 'Review of UKC in the SOMS' is led by Singapore, supported by Witherbys and The Nautical Institute and was allocated as TTEG Straits Project 16.

As project lead, Singapore requested input from Indonesia and Malaysia to allow the development the Terms of Reference for this project.

Capt. Iain Macneil MNM, CEO of Witherbys commented after the meeting that:

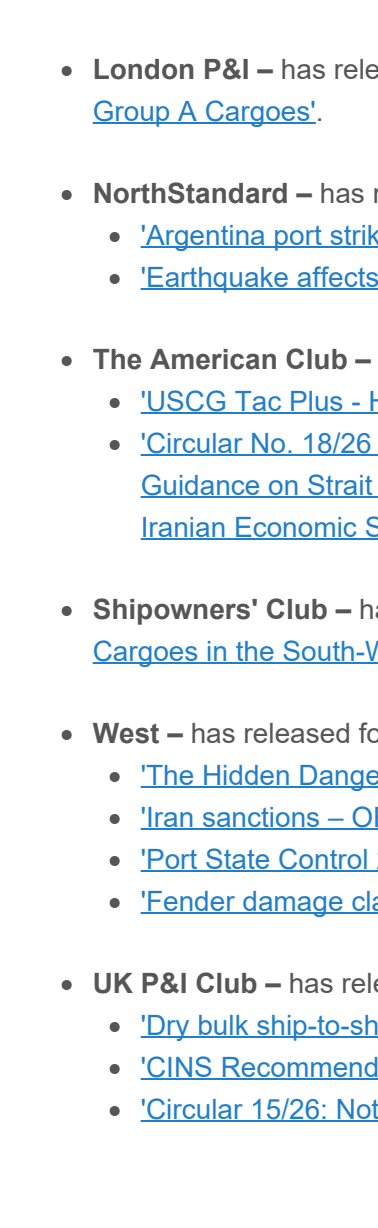
"This is not just a once in a generation review, but a once in a lifetime review and we look forward to working with Singapore and The Nautical Institute on this Straits Project to review UKC in the SOMS".

Flag State Regulations and Guidance Update

- Australia** – has released an update entitled '[Marine Order 31 \(SOLAS and non-SOLAS certification\) 2019](#)'.
- Bermuda** – has released an update entitled '[Bermuda Guidance Notice 2026-08 - LRIT and EPIRB Guidance](#)'.
- Isle of Man** – has released an update entitled '[TAN 004-26: Pilot Transfer Arrangements](#)'.
- Liberia** – has released four updates:
 - ['Marine Security Bulletin: 31/2026 - Vessel Attacks in the Strait of Hormuz'](#)
 - ['Marine Security Bulletin: 30/2026 - Report of Piracy Activity in the Gulf of Aden'](#)
 - ['Marine Security Bulletin: 29/2026 - Multiple Attacks in the Black Sea'](#)
 - ['Marine Advisory: 20/2026 - Unsafe Mixed Migration and Guidance on Rescue at Sea'](#)
- Malta** – has released three updates:
 - ['MS Notice 105 Rev.3 - Guidelines for the implementation of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006'](#)
 - ['Technical Notice SLS.27 Rev.1 – Reporting Obligations and Detentions'](#)
 - ['Technical Notice SLS.39 Rev.1 – Escape arrangements from the lower part of machinery spaces'](#)
- Marshall Islands** – has released two updates:
 - ['Marine Safety Advisory 10-26: Incidents Involving Cargo Grabs'](#)
 - ['Marine Safety Advisory 11-26: Joint Concentrated Inspection Campaign on Cargo Securing'](#)
- Panama** – has released an update entitled '[Safety Recommendations for Vessels Navigating in China's Coastal Waters During the Fishing Season](#)'.
- Singapore** – has released an update entitled '[Shipping Circular No. 8 of 2026 Resolutions Adopted by the 111th Session of the Maritime Safety Committee \(MSC 111\) of the IMO](#)'.
- UK** – has released five updates:
 - ['MIN 655 Amendment 1 \(M+F\) new-style certificates for UK seafarers and those working onboard UK ships'](#)
 - ['MGN 474 \(M\) Amendment 2 retention of crew agreements where appropriate'](#)
 - ['MGN 480 \(M\) Amendment 3 MLC, 2006: Shipowners' liabilities including seafarer compensation'](#)
 - ['MGN 620 \(F\) Amendment 1 ILO \(No.188\) work in fishing recruitment and placement of fishermen'](#)
 - ['MSN 1844 \(M\) Amendment 1 MLC, 2006: crew accommodation'](#)
- US** – has released two updates:
 - ['MSIB 04-26: Applicability of MTSA Cybersecurity Requirements to Inactive Vessels'](#)
 - ['MSIB 05-26: Maritime Security Program \(MSP\) Select Eligibility'](#)

New from Witherbys

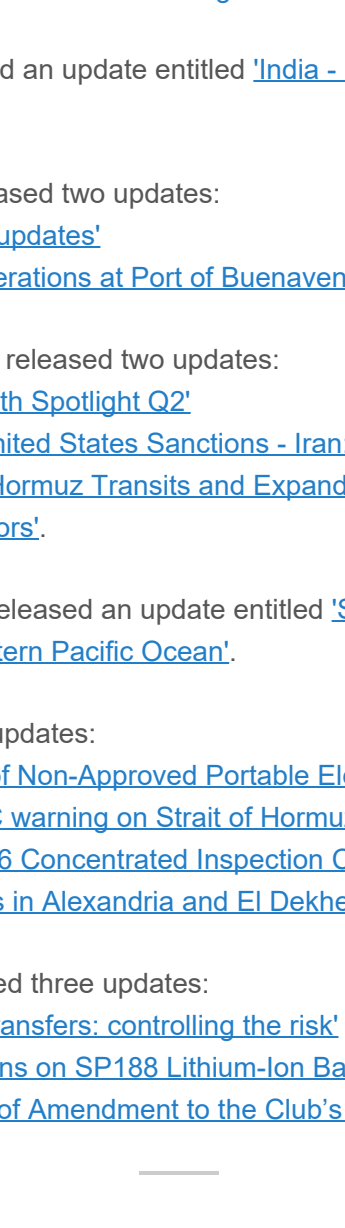
Out August 2026



Tank Cleaning Practice

- A Handbook to:
Planning, Recipe
Formation, Best
Practices and
Techniques

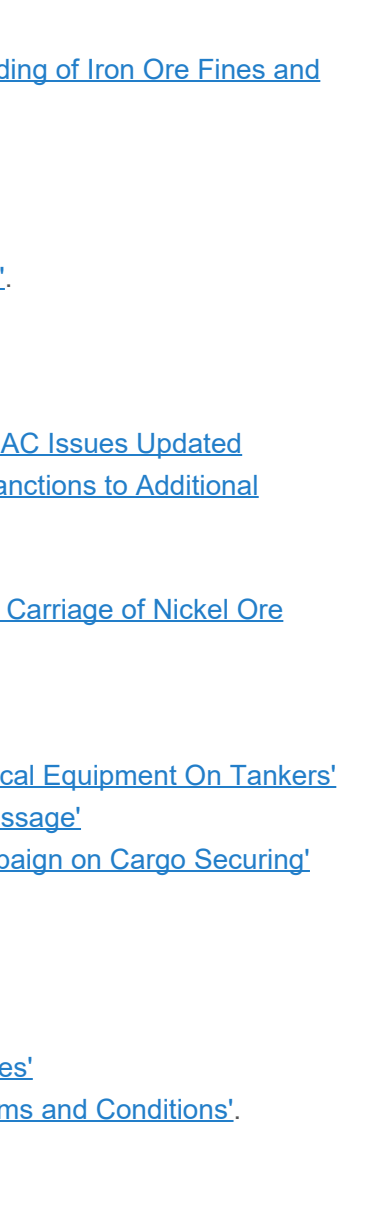
Out September 2026



ECDIS Procedures

Guide (incorporating S-
100 Guidance) - 2026-
2027 Edition

Out October 2026



LNG Operational

Practice - 3rd Edition

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Navigation and Security News

- ['IFC: Major maritime security trends for H1 2026'](#) (Safety4Sea)
- ['Container shipping urged to move fire prevention upstream'](#) (Splash 24/7)

Recent Class Society Guidance

- DNV** – has released an update entitled '[Updated Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2026/1434 amending the MED: In force from 31 August 2026](#)'.
- Korean Register** – has released four updates:
 - ['Advance notice on the drafts for revision of the Classification Technical Rules 2027 Edition \(Pt. 8 & Pt. 9 & Ships Using Low-flashpoint Fuels, etc\)'](#)
 - ['Advance notice on the drafts for revision of the Classification Technical Rules 2027 Edition \(Pt.01, Pt.14, Underwater Vehicles\)'](#)
 - ['Advance notice on the drafts for revision of the Classification Technical Rules 2027 Edition \(Material/Welding part\)'](#)
 - ['MSC 111 - News Final'](#)

Recent P&I Club Guidance

- Britannia** – has released two updates:
 - ['Bunker: Off-spec trends across major ports'](#)
 - ['BSafe incident case study 32: Serious burn injury incident to a crew member'](#)
- Japan P&I Club** – has released an update entitled '[OFAC Alert: Sanctions Risks of Iranian Demands for Strait of Hormuz Passage](#)'.
- London P&I** – has released an update entitled '[India - Loading of Iron Ore Fines and Group A Cargoes](#)'.
- NorthStandard** – has released two updates:
 - ['Argentina port strike - updates'](#)
 - ['Earthquake affects operations at Port of Buenaventura'](#)
- The American Club** – has released two updates:
 - ['USCG Tac Plus - Health Spotlight Q2'](#)
 - ['Circular No. 18/26 - United States Sanctions - Iran: OFAC Issues Updated Guidance on Strait of Hormuz Transits and Expands Sanctions to Additional Iranian Economic Sectors'](#)
- Shipowners' Club** – has released an update entitled '[Safe Carriage of Nickel Ore Cargoes in the South-Western Pacific Ocean](#)'.
- West** – has released four updates:
 - ['The Hidden Dangers of Non-Approved Portable Electrical Equipment On Tankers'](#)
 - ['Iran sanctions – OFAC warning on Strait of Hormuz passage'](#)
 - ['Port State Control 2026 Concentrated Inspection Campaign on Cargo Securing'](#)
 - ['Fender damage claims in Alexandria and El Dekheila'](#)
- UK P&I Club** – has released three updates:
 - ['Dry bulk ship-to-ship transfers: controlling the risk'](#)
 - ['CINS Recommendations on SP188 Lithium-Ion Batteries'](#)
 - ['Circular 15/26: Notice of Amendment to the Club's Terms and Conditions'](#)

Other Regulations and Guidance in the News

- ReCAAP** – has issued its [weekly piracy report](#).
- Marine Traffic** – has released an update entitled '[Port State Control Monthly Update - July 2026](#)'.
- IIMS** – has released an update entitled '[AMSA issues updated GMDSS Handbook](#)'.

Recent Accident Reports

- Japan** – The JTSB has released an [investigation report](#) into the fatal accident on board the cargo ship 'Keum Yang 3' in Tokuyama Kudamatsu port, Japan, on 4th August 2025. As the cargo hold hatch was being closed, it struck an engineer who had been looking inside the cargo hold in the head, causing fatal head trauma. The investigation found several operational and safety failings, including lack of warning signs, poor safety awareness of non-deck crew, and inadequate risk assessment.
- Marshall Islands** – The RMIMA has released an [investigation report](#) into the fatal accident on board the bulk carrier 'Federal Indiana' in the Mediterranean Sea on 19th February 2025. The opening of a booby hatch in a small space resulted in the release of toxic gases, which proved fatal for the trainee conducting the operation on his own. The investigation concluded that the space in which the hatch was located had not been identified as an enclosed space or adjacent connected space due to the presence of natural ventilation, and the precautions associated with those spaces had therefore not been taken.
- Marshall Islands** – The RMIMA has released an [investigation report](#) into the fatal accident on board the bulk carrier 'Avra' in the port of Daesan, Republic of Korea on 25th July 2025. A crew member was found collapsed in a cargo hold access hatch space during cargo discharge operations, and it was concluded that he died from asphyxiation. The investigation found that the deceased had not followed enclosed space entry procedures or obtained authorisation to do so. There was also a general lack of oversight of his actions due to assumed competency and inadequate warning signs.

Recent IMO Circulars

- ESPH 32/3/5 – 27/08/2026** – Evaluation of Products.
- LC 48/5/15 – 26/08/2026** – Marine Geoengineering Including Ocean Fertilization.
- LC 48/14/3 – 26/08/2026** – Relations with Other Organizations in the Field of Marine Environmental Protection.
- Circular Letter No.5261 – 25/08/2026** – Communication from the Government of the United Arab Emirates.
- EGDH 15/12/2 – 25/08/2026** – Any Other Business.
- EGDH 15/5 – 25/08/2026** – Location.
- MSC 111/22/Add.2 – 24/08/2026** – Other Report of the Maritime Safety Committee on its 111th Session.
- EGDH 15/2 – 24/08/2026** – Safety Information.
- EGDH 15/3 – 24/08/2026** – Environmental Information.
- EGDH 15/6 – 24/08/2026** – Persons.

List of Amendments Expected to Enter into Force This Year and in the Coming Years

PDF Download

A Guide to What's Happening at the IMO

The IMO has released the programme for 2026-2027. Please see the IMO's '[Meeting Summaries](#)' webpage for more information.

- 01-04 September – Intersessional Working Group on Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships (ISWG-GHG)
- 14-18 September – Sub-Committee on Carriage of Cargoes and Containers (CCC)
- 05-09 October – Consultative Meeting of Contracting Parties (London Convention 1972) and Meeting of Contracting Parties (London Protocol 1996)
- 02-06 November – IMO Council
- 23-27 November – Intersessional Working Group on Reduction of GHG Emissions from Ships (ISWG-GHG)
- 30 November-03 December – Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC)
- 14-18 December – Maritime Safety Committee (MSC)
- 25-29 January – Sub-Committee on Pollution Prevention and Response (PPR)
- 08-12 February – Legal Committee (LG)
- 22-26 February – Sub-Committee on Human Element, Training and Watchkeeping (HTW)
- 15-19 March – Sub-Committee on Ship Systems and Equipment (SSE)
- 12-16 April – Facilitation Committee (FAL)
- 26-30 April – Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR)
- 10-14 May – Sub-Committee on Implementation of IMO Instruments (Illi)
- 14-28 May – Sub-Committee on Ship Design and Construction (SDC)
- 16-25 June – Maritime Safety Committee (MSC)
- 05-09 July – Technical Cooperation Committee (TC)
- 19-23 July – IMO Council

Passage Planning Guide
Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS)
 (PPG – SOMS 2026–27 Edition)
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