

Shipping Regulations and Guidance

Week 38, 2026 – Friday 18th September
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SOMS Navigation and Aids to Navigation (AtoN) Questionnaire



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

Following August's announcement of the review of Under Keel Clearance (UKC) requirements in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore (SOMS), Witherbys are assisting Japan's Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT), particularly its maritime administration, who have issued a series of questions seeking the views and experience of mariners in the SOMS.

This questionnaire focuses specifically on navigation practices and the use, effectiveness and reliability of Aids to Navigation (AtoN) throughout the SOMS.

Please take a few minutes to complete the questionnaire below and contribute to this once in a lifetime opportunity to reduce traffic concentration and improve the overall safety and efficiency of navigation through one of the world's most important waterways.

[Complete the questionnaire here](#)

[Read about the SOMS UKC review](#)

Flag State Regulations and Guidance Update

- The Bahamas** – has released an update entitled '[BMA Safety Alert 26-02 – Collision avoidance – Chinese Waters](#)'.
- Bermuda** – has released an update entitled '[Bermuda Guidance Notice 2026-08 - Guidance on LRIT and EPIRB requirements](#)'.
- Cyprus** – has released an update entitled '[Circular 20/2026 Commission Implementing Regulation \(EU\) 2026/1434 of 30 June 2026 as regards design, construction and performance requirements and testing standards for marine equipment](#)'.
- Liberia** – has released two updates:
 - ['Marine Security Bulletin: 34/2026 - Vessel Attack in the Black Sea'](#)
 - ['Marine Advisory: 21/2026 - Enhanced Due Diligence for Vessels Transiting the Strait of Hormuz'](#).
- UK** – has released an update entitled '[MIN 738 \(M+F\) Direction issued under Section 8\(4\) of the Merchant Shipping Act 1995](#)'.

New from Witherbys

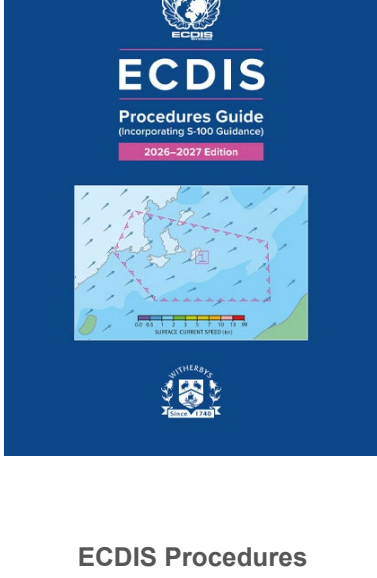
Out September 2026



Cyber Security
Workbook for On Board
Ship Use - 8th Edition
2027

[Pre-order Here](#)

Out September 2026



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

[Pre-order Here](#)

Out November 2026



Ballast Water
Management,
Understanding BWM
for Regulatory
Compliance - 17th
Edition, Volumes 1-2

[Pre-order Here](#)

Navigation and Security News

- ['China opens Pinglu Canal, carving a new southwest route to the sea'](#) (Splash 24/7)
- ['RISK4SEA launches Global PSC Intelligence Layer for live port intelligence and PSC hotspot monitoring'](#) (Safety4Sea)
- ['Turkish Police Seize 350kg of Cocaine from Bulker's Sea Chest'](#) (The Maritime Executive)

Recent Class Society Guidance

- ABS** – has released two updates:
 - ['Regulatory News 15/2026 Free-fall Lifeboat Passage Width Issue'](#)
 - ['Dredges'](#).
- Korean Register** – has released an update entitled '[Notice for amendment of KR Technical Rules \(Part 2 of the Rules/Guidance, Guidance for Approval of MP and TA, etc.\)](#)'.
- Lloyd's Register** – has released an update entitled '[15/2026: Product safety notice for Nishi-F FF-65 freefall lifeboat models](#)'.

Recent P&I Club Guidance

- Gard** – has released four updates:
 - ['Preventing auxiliary engine overspeed'](#)
 - ['Collisions with fishing vessels: Chinese waters remain a hotspot'](#)
 - ['Bearing failures: When normal readings hide the risk'](#)
 - ['Loss of bridge control: Calling on back-up modes'](#).
- Japan P&I Club** – has released two updates:
 - ['USA - Aging Fiberglass Lifeboats'](#)
 - ['Iron Ore Fines and Group A Cargo at Ports around Kolkata'](#).
- London P&I** – has released two updates:
 - ['Australia - Port Hedland Salvage Preparedness Requirements'](#)
 - ['China - Fish Farms Guide & Checklist'](#).
- NorthStandard** – has released an update entitled '[Seed Cake Classification Continues to Cause Confusion](#)'.
- Skuld** – has released an update entitled '[Safe navigation and crew preparedness for operations in polar waters](#)'.
- The Swedish Club** – has released three updates:
 - ['Fluorspar Cargo Liquefaction Risk'](#)
 - ['Panama Canal restrictions and the real cost of the Cape Horn alternative'](#)
 - ['The Swedish Club offers practical Forward Defence Guides'](#).
- UKP&I** – has released an update entitled '[Lessons Learnt: High-Pressure System Failure](#)'.

Other Regulations and Guidance in the News

- ReCAAP** – has issued its [weekly piracy report](#).
- BIMCO** – has released an update entitled '[The IMO GHG working group – a BIMCO account](#)'.
- IACS** – has released an update entitled '[IACS Participation at CCC 12](#)'.
- World Shipping Council** – has released an update entitled '[One in ten inspected cargo units found with safety deficiencies](#)'.

Recent Accident Reports

- Malta** – The MSIU has released an [investigation report](#) into the fatal fall on board the passenger catamaran 'Your Magic' in Marsa, Malta, on 6th September 2025. The crew was conducting pre-entry into service inspections and left the emergency escape hatch open with no visible warning or physical barrier. The chief mate did not notice the open hatch and fell to the bottom of the switchboard room, sustaining injuries that proved fatal. The investigation concluded that the lack of physical and visible warnings around the opening were the cause of the accident, and that the non-operational state of the ship might have participated in the deviation from standard work processes.
- US** – The NTSB has released an [investigation report](#) into the subsea cable damage caused by the bulk carrier 'Belle Mer' near Ketchikan, Alaska, on 15th November 2024. The ship was anchored in the Tongass Narrows when it dragged anchor, damaging a subsea cable. The investigation concluded that the pilot and Master's decision to anchor close to a restricted anchorage area with inadequate anchor chain length was the likely cause of the incident.

Recent IMO Circulars

- PSLS.6/Circ.98 – 16/09/2026** – Protocol of 1988 Relating to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974.
- MSC 112/INF.3 – 16/09/2026** – Any Other Business.
- MSC 112/10 – 16/09/2026** – Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue.
- Circular Letter No.5266 – 16/09/2026** – Communication from the Government of the Gabonese Republic.
- MSC 112/5 – 15/09/2026** – Development of a Goal-based Instrument for Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS).
- Circular Letter No.5265 – 15/09/2026** – Communication from the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands.
- HK SRC.1/Circ.32 – 15/09/2026** – Hong Kong International Convention for the Safe and Environmentally Sound Recycling of Ships, 2009.
- STCW.2/Circ.151 – 14/09/2026** – International STCW Convention, 1978, Communication Received from the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland.
- Circular Letter No.5270 – 14/09/2026** – Communication from the Government of the Ukraine.
- MEPC 85/11/2 – 14/09/2026** – Identification and Protection of Special Areas, ECAs and PSSAs.

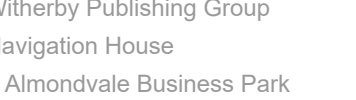
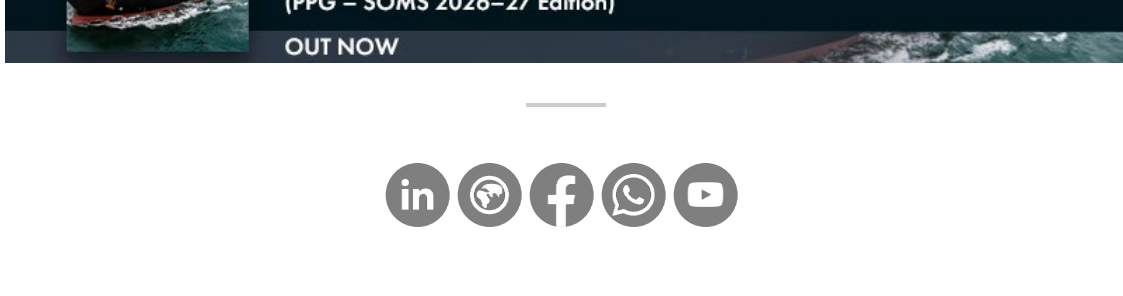
List of Amendments Expected to Enter into Force This Year and in the Coming Years

[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.

- 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 (IIII)
- 24-28 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



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