

The Latest Issues in International Maritime September 2026

➤ IMO International Maritime News

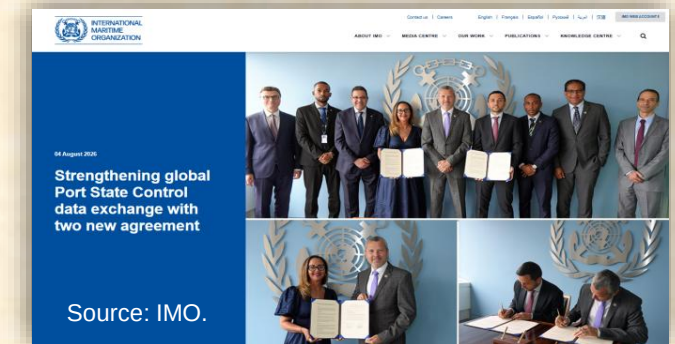
- Reviewing Maritime News from August to the beginning of September 2026 (p2-8)

➤ IMO Meeting Highlights

- IMO The Sub-Committee on Carriage of Cargoes and Containers 12th session (CCC 12) (p9-21)

Strengthening global Port State Control data exchange with two new agreement (1/2)

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) has signed new data exchange agreements with the Black Sea and Caribbean Port State Control (PSC) Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) to enhance the global exchange of PSC inspection data. The agreements were signed on 21 July 2026 at the IMO Headquarters in London by IMO Secretary-General Arsenio Dominguez, Mr. Onur Turhan, Secretary of the Black Sea MoU Secretariat, and Ms. Jodi Munn Barrow, Secretary-General of the Caribbean MoU Secretariat.

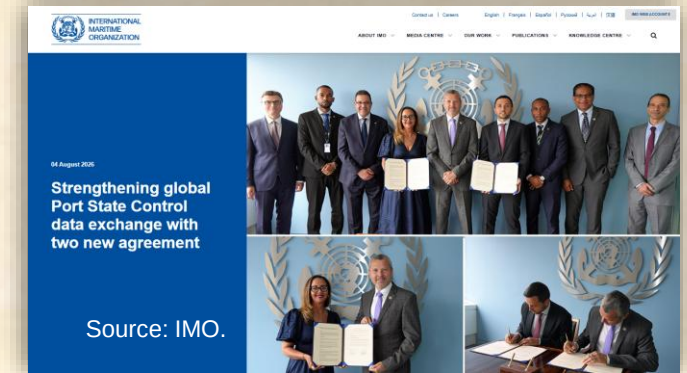


Signing these MoUs broadens the exchange of and cooperation on port State control (PSC) inspection data, supporting the continuous development of the PSC inspection module within the IMO's [Global Integrated Shipping Information System \(GISIS\)](#). With these MoUs, the IMO has now concluded updated data exchange agreements with eight regional PSC regimes. Previously, the IMO signed similar agreements with the Abuja MoU, Indian Ocean MoU, Tokyo MoU, Mediterranean MoU, Paris MoU, and Riyadh MoU; consultations remain ongoing with the Viña del Mar Agreement and the United States Coast Guard (USCG).

Strengthening global Port State Control data exchange with two new agreement (2/2)

➤ **Supporting the PSC Overarching Database**

This updated agreement marks another significant step toward establishing the Overarching Database (ODB) for Port State Control (PSC), which will facilitate more comprehensive, coordinated, and efficient sharing of PSC inspection data on a global scale. Expanding the exchange of verified inspection data will enhance transparency, consistency, and data integrity, while reducing duplicative reporting efforts among member states. Led by the International Maritime Organization (IMO), the ODB initiative aims to facilitate near-real-time information sharing among port State control regimes, strengthen risk-based inspection programs, and support the effective implementation of IMO instruments.



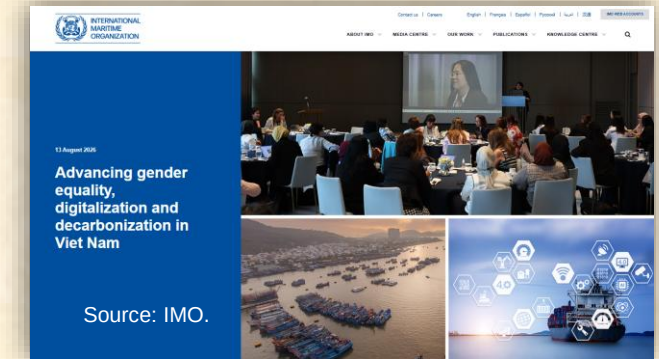
➤ **Strengthening global PSC cooperation**

The Port State Control system inspects foreign ships calling at ports to verify their compliance with internationally agreed-upon safety, security, and environmental standards. The updated agreements strengthen cooperation between the IMO and regional port state control mechanisms. These agreements will enhance transparency, support the coordination and harmonization of port state control activities, improve member states' oversight of the agreements' implementation, and contribute to safer, more reliable, and more environmentally friendly shipping worldwide.

To advance gender equality, digitalization, and decarbonization in Viet Nam (1/2)

[The SMART-C Women Project](#), conducted jointly by the IMO and the Republic of Korea, has developed a new Maritime Sectoral Master Plan for Viet Nam to enhance the participation and leadership of Vietnamese women in maritime digitalization and decarbonization.

The Master Plan, developed by the World Maritime University ([WMU](#)) and Vietnamese stakeholders, establishes a strategic framework to guide the modernization of Viet Nam's ports, logistics, and maritime governance through digital and green transition initiatives, while embedding gender equality as a cross-cutting theme in policymaking, institutional strengthening, and workforce capacity-building. Aligned primarily [with Viet Nam's National Master Plan \(2021–2030, with a Vision to 2050\)](#), the maritime sectoral master plan aims to serve as a replicable model for other developing nations across the Asia-Pacific region.



More Info.

- “Strengthening Women's Competencies in the Sustainable Maritime Transport Sector”(The SMART-C Women Project) official website: <https://smart-c.imo.org/smart-c-women/>. In order to promote gender equality and inclusive growth in the maritime sector through targeted training, education, and international cooperation. Implemented under the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the Republic of Korea’s “SMART-C Framework,” the program aims to advance the career development of women in developing countries across the Asia-Pacific region by strengthening their competencies in environmental protection and digital technology, thereby contributing to the blue economy and the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

To advance gender equality, digitalization, and decarbonization in Viet Nam (2/2)

➤ Supporting maritime transformation

The Master Plan is built around three interdependent pillars:

- **Gender Equality (cross-cutting)** - to promote women's participation, leadership, safety, and opportunities in maritime education and employment;
- **Digitalization** - to modernize maritime services through digital systems such as the Single Window for Maritime Affairs to improve service efficiency;
- **Decarbonization** - to support the transition toward the ports, shipping, and maritime logistics operations to become more green and environmentally friendly.

The Master Plan draws on extensive stakeholder engagement coordinated with the Vietnam Maritime and Waterways Administration ([VIMAWA](#)), including representatives from the government, academia, and financial institutions in the maritime sector. The survey revealed that while they believe significant progress has been made in digitalization, there is also a need to further incorporate gender considerations and address the challenges of decarbonization.

➤ Capacity building and cooperation

To implement the three main pillars of the Master Plan, this initiative promotes women's leadership training, curriculum reform, green finance, and cross-sectoral coordination.

Among these efforts, the SMART-C Women's Program—starting with a pilot project in Vietnam—is fully committed to supporting the career development of women in developing countries across the Asia-Pacific region through digital learning, in-person training, scholarships, and international exchanges.

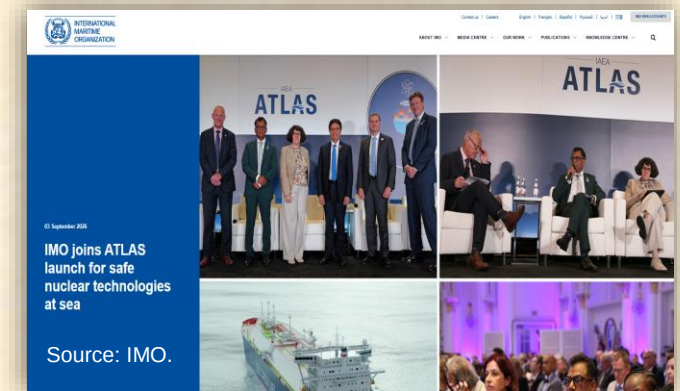
This initiative aligns with the IMO's mission to enhance gender representation in the maritime sector and build a sustainable and resilient industry, and directly addresses the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), including Quality Education (SDG 4), Gender Equality (SDG 5), Infrastructure and Technological Innovation (SDG 9), Climate Action (SDG 13), Life Below Water (SDG 14), and Global Partnerships (SDG 17).

IMO joins ATLAS launch for safe nuclear technologies at sea (1/2)

The IMO participated in [a high-level forum](#) convened by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in Washington, D.C., United States, from 26 to 27 August 2026, where it announced the official launch of the ATLAS initiative. The objective of [the Atom Technology Licensing Applications at Sea \(ATLAS\)](#) initiative is to strengthen international cooperation on maritime nuclear applications, ensuring the safe, secure, and safeguarded use of atomic technology at sea, and to reflect the growing global interest in advanced maritime nuclear applications. The launch of ATLAS is expected to provide a structured platform for dialogue among governments, regulatory authorities, international organizations, industry, and other key stakeholders.

The role of the IMO is to facilitate the establishment of an exhaustive international regulatory framework by leading discussions on legal, regulatory, safety, security, safeguards, and liability regimes to support the prospective deployment of nuclear-powered ships and other maritime nuclear applications.

The IMO's participation underscores its steadfast commitment to sustained cooperation with the IAEA and Member States, ensuring that any future maritime nuclear innovations are underpinned by robust international standards while upholding the highest levels of safety, security, and environmental protection.



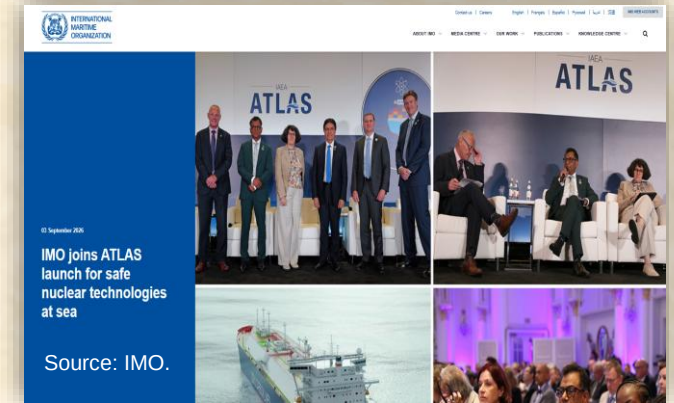
IMO joins ATLAS launch for safe nuclear technologies at sea (2/2)

➤ International norms related to nuclear-powered ships

Currently, IMO has maintained an existing international regulatory baseline for nuclear-powered vessels, notably Chapter VIII of the SOLAS Convention and the Code of Safety for Nuclear Merchant Ships (Resolution A.491(XII)), adopted in 1981. However, these frameworks were predominantly formulated based on early nuclear reactor technologies, creating a clear generational gap with today's Small Modular Reactors (SMRs), advanced reactors, floating nuclear power plants (FNPPs), and next-generation nuclear fuel technologies.

More Info.

- Atomic Technologies Licensed for Applications at sea (ATLAS) project, official website: <https://www.iaea.org/services/key-programmes/atlas-initiative>, the ATLAS Initiative was launched by the IAEA, "Nuclear Technology Approved for Use at Sea," aiming to ensure the safe, secure and peaceful and sustainable use of nuclear technologies applying to the maritime transportation and offshore energy systems.
- The International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)



AMSA issues updated GMDSS Handbook

The Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) has released an updated edition of [the Australian Global Maritime Distress and Safety System \(GMDSS\) Handbook](#). The new Handbook replaces the 11th edition published in January 2018 and incorporates IMO regulatory amendments that had entered into force by 1 January 2026, together with the implementation in Australian regulations of relevant decisions adopted by the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) World Radiocommunication Conference.

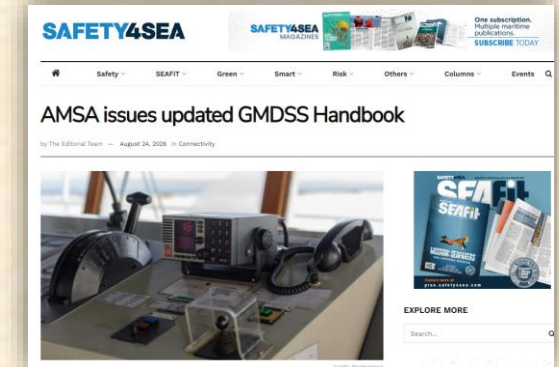
The revised Handbook has shifted from a largely textbook-style format to a more practical, operationally focused reference. It covers key matters relating to search and rescue communications, maritime safety information, distress alerting, NAVAREA X and METAREA X, as well as GMDSS equipment carriage and operational requirements for both SOLAS and non-SOLAS ships operating within Australia's areas of responsibility.

- **Carriage requirement**

Under [Marine Order 27 – Safety of Navigation and Radio Equipment](#), the Australian **GMDSS Handbook** provides practical guidance for **deck officers, masters and radio operators** on the operation of the **Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS)** within Australia's areas of responsibility. Further information is available through the relevant pages on the [AMSA website](#).

- **What operators and ship owners need to do**

Ships required to carry the Australian **GMDSS Handbook** under **Marine Order 27** must ensure that the **latest August 2026 edition** is available on board. The Handbook may be carried in either **electronic or printed form**, provided that the applicable requirements of Marine Order 27 are met. The relevant document can be downloaded from the official **AMSA GMDSS Handbook**: download link [Australian GMDSS Handbook 2026](#).



Source: The Maritime Executive.

More Info.

- Global Maritime Distress and Safety System, (GMDSS) was introduced in 1992 to establish a reliable, automated, and globally standardized maritime distress and safety communication system. It makes use of modern technologies by integrating satellite communications and digital technologies with terrestrial communication systems operating in the medium frequency (MF), high frequency (HF), and very high frequency (VHF) bands. This enables distress alerts to be automatically transmitted and received over both short and long distances, while also providing critical information on the position and identification of the vessel in distress.

The background image shows a large container port. In the foreground, a blue and red Maersk container ship is docked. Behind it, another ship, the MSC Francesca, is visible. The ships are loaded with colorful shipping containers. Several large red and white gantry cranes are positioned along the pier, some with the Eurogate logo. The sky is blue with scattered white clouds.

International Maritime Organization

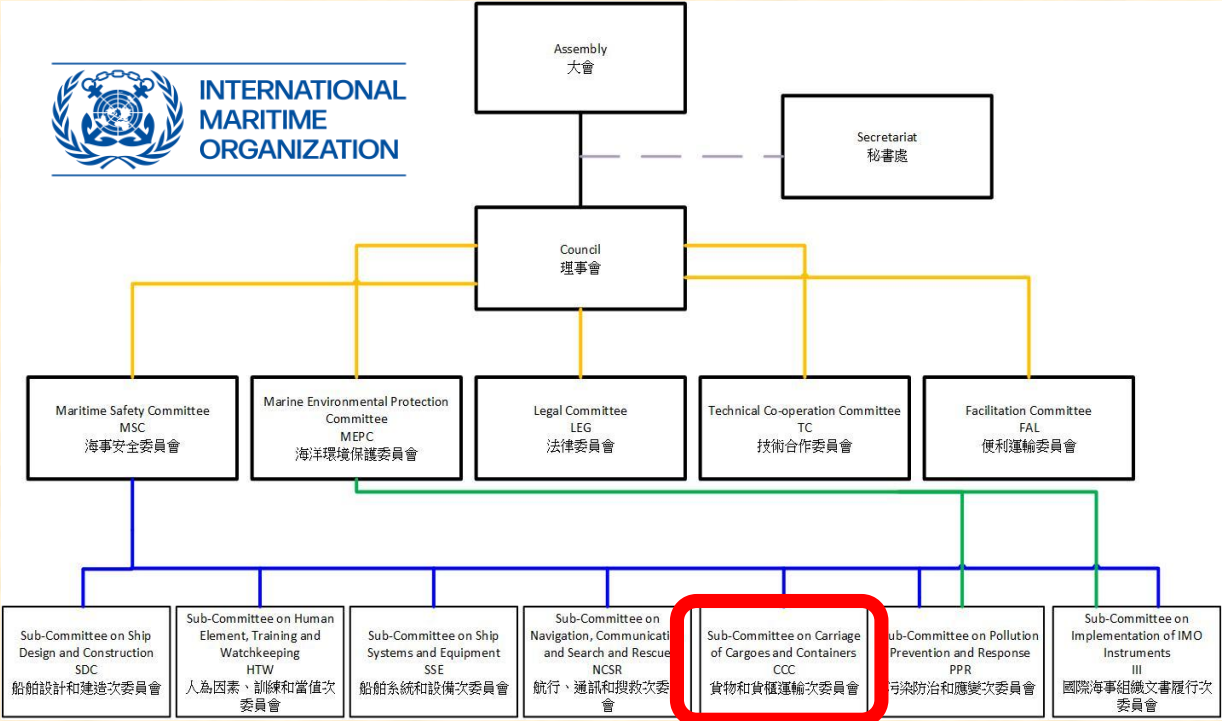
The Sub-Committee on Carriage of Cargoes and Containers

12th session (CCC 12)

14 - 18 September 2026

II. IMO's Meeting Highlights

Organization Structure of IMO



Source: Made by NKUST-CIMCS.

The Sub-Committee on Carriage of Cargoes and Containers (CCC)

- CCC is one of the seven sub-committees under the five major committees of the International Maritime Organization (IMO).
- The IMO Sub-Committee on Carriage of Cargoes and Containers (CCC) is responsible for matters relating to the carriage of packaged dangerous goods, solid bulk cargoes, bulk gases, and containers.
- The Sub-Committee continues to update the International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes (IMSBC) Code and the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code, while also keeping other instruments under review, including the International Code of Safety for Ships using Gases or other Low-flashpoint Fuels (IGF Code) and the International Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships Carrying Liquefied Gases in Bulk (IGC Code). The Sub-Committee also works closely with other United Nations (UN) bodies on matters relating to the multimodal transport of goods.

II. IMO’s Meeting Highlights

CCC 12 Agenda

Item No.	Agenda	Item No.	Agenda
1	Adoption of the agenda	8	Consideration of reports of incidents involving dangerous goods or marine pollutants in packaged form on board ships or in port areas
2	Decisions of other IMO bodies	9	Unified interpretation of provisions of IMO safety, security, environment, facilitation, liability and compensation-related conventions
3	Amendments to the IGF Code and development of guidelines for alternative fuels and related technologies	10	Biennial status report and provisional agenda for CCC 13
4	Development of a safety regulatory framework to support the reduction of GHG emissions from ships using new technologies and alternative fuels	11	Election of Chair and Vice-Chair for 2027
5	Amendments to the IMSBC Code and supplements	12	Any other business
6	Amendments to the IMDG Code and supplements	13	Report to the Committees
7	Revision of the Revised guidelines for the preparation of the Cargo Securing Manual (MSC.1/Circ.1353/Rev.2) to include a harmonized performance standard for lashing software to permit lashing software as a supplement to the Cargo Securing Manual		

II. IMO's Meeting Highlights – CCC 12

Finalized the Draft Revised Interim Guidelines for the Safety of Ships Using Methanol/Ethanol as Fuel

Agenda Item 3

- CCC 12 has finalized the draft revised *Interim Guidelines for the Safety of Ships Using Methyl/Ethyl Alcohol as Fuel*. Drawing on practical experience gained from the use of methanol and ethanol as marine fuels, the draft comprehensively revises [MSC.1/Circ.1621](#), with particular emphasis on strengthening the management of toxicity, fire and explosion risks associated with these fuels.
- Chapters 1, 2 and 4 were revised to clarify the differences in toxicity between methanol and ethanol, and to require risk assessments to address hazards including fuel toxicity, flame visibility, and vapour explosion risks.
- Chapters 5 to 13 were revised with respect to ship design and fuel system requirements. For certain spaces, a two-stage ventilation requirement was introduced, providing for 10 air changes per hour under normal conditions and 30 air changes per hour under emergency conditions.
- Chapters 15 to 18 were revised to strengthen requirements concerning monitoring, training, operation, and personnel protection, including provisions for methanol concentration alarms, crew training and drills, decontamination shower facilities, and personal protective equipment (PPE).
- The draft revised Guidelines are expected to be submitted to the 113th session of the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 113), scheduled for June 2027, for approval. Once approved, they will replace the existing MSC.1/Circ.1621.

II. IMO's Meeting Highlights – CCC 12

Low-Flashpoint Oil Fuels, Fuel Cells, and Amendments to the IGF Code

Agenda Item 3

- CCC continuing the work on the development of the Interim Guidelines for Ships Using Low-flashpoint Oil Fuels, which will apply to fossil fuels, synthetic fuels, biofuels, and their blends with a flashpoint between 52°C and 60°C. The Guidelines are intended to provide the safety basis for ships applying the alternative design and arrangements approach under SOLAS regulation II-1/55.
- Revision of the Interim Guidelines for the Safety of Ships Using Fuel Cell Power Installations has also commenced. The revision will be based on [MSC.1/Circ.1647](#) and will incorporate recent design and operational experience gained from ships fitted with fuel cell power installations.
- **Both sets of Guidelines will be further considered by the intersessional Correspondence Group and the fourth session of the Intersessional Working Group on Alternative Fuels (ISWG-AF 4). Reports and draft texts are expected to be submitted to CCC 13 in September 2027.**
- The revised fuel cell Guidelines are expected to be finalized at CCC 13 and submitted to MSC 114 in 2028 for approval. The timetable for MSC approval of the Guidelines for low-flashpoint oil fuels has not yet been determined

Safety Guidelines for Onboard Carbon Capture and Storage System

Agenda Item 4

- CCC 12 initiated the development of the *Interim Guidelines for the Safety of Ships Using an Onboard Carbon Capture and Storage System* and agreed on the scope and overall structure of the Guidelines.
- The Guidelines will adopt a **goal-based and risk-based approach**, with **Chapters 1 to 11** establishing technology-neutral common safety requirements, while separate annexes will address specific carbon capture technologies, such as **chemical absorption** and **mineralization**.
- The Guidelines will focus on **shipboard integration, carbon handling, storage, transfer, and personnel safety**, and will not cover **carbon capture performance, carbon accounting, or environmental management**. The Sub-Committee considered that, at this stage, the onboard storage of captured carbon would **not require amendments to the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code**.
- The intersessional Correspondence Group will submit its report to CCC 13 in September 2027. The Guidelines are expected to be finalized at CCC 14 in 2028 and submitted to MSC 116 in 2029 for approval.

International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes (IMSBC) Code and amendments to its supplementary documents

Agenda Item 5

- CCC 12 continued to advance the 09-27 amendments to *the International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes (IMSBC) Code*, and agreed in principle to add nine new individual cargo schedules, including lime mud, untreated incinerator bottom ash, contaminated soil, and spodumene direct shipping ore.
- The amendments also revise the cargo information requirements in section 4.2, including an amendment to paragraph 4.2.2.3 to require the declaration of subsidiary hazards, the addition of a new paragraph 4.2.2.5 to identify Materials Hazardous only in Bulk (MHB), and a revision to paragraph 4.2.2.10 concerning the relevant documentary certification requirements.
- The amendments will be referred to the Editorial and Technical Group (E&T 45) for finalization and are expected to be submitted to MSC 113 in June 2027 for adoption.
- The 09-27 amendments are expected to be available for voluntary application from 1st January 2028 and to enter into force on a mandatory basis from 1st January 2029.

Amendment to the International Maritime Dangerous Goods Code (IMDG Code) and its supplementary documents

Agenda Item 6

- CCC 12 has commenced on the development of the 44-28 amendments to *the International Maritime Dangerous Goods (IMDG) Code*, with key revisions focusing on the safe carriage by sea of electric and hybrid vehicles, lithium batteries, and sodium-ion batteries.
- A new **Special Provision (SP) 980** is being developed to require shippers to assess the safety condition of vehicles before offering them for carriage. Related **amendments to SP961 and SP962** are also being considered to clarify the applicable requirements and marking provisions for electric, hybrid, and waste vehicles.
- Further amendments are being advanced to **paragraph 5.4.1.4.3.8 and SP376 and SP377**, requiring transport documents to indicate whether sodium-ion batteries are damaged, defective, waste, or intended for recycling. In addition, **the explosion hazard provisions currently contained in paragraph 7.3.7.2.1 are proposed to be relocated to a new paragraph 7.3.3.19.**
- The draft amendments will be further considered by **E&T 46** in 2027 and, following confirmation by **CCC 13**, are expected to be submitted **to MSC 114 in 2028 for adoption**. The amendments are expected to be available for voluntary application from 1st January 2029 and to enter into force on a mandatory basis from 1st January 2030.

Revise the compilation criteria for the cargo securing manual and incorporate it into the performance standards for securing software

Agenda Item 7

- **The *Revised Guidelines for the Preparation of the Cargo Securing Manual* have been finalized.** The revision, to be issued as MSC.1/Circ.1353/Rev.2, introduces interim performance standards for cargo securing software, allowing such software to be used as a supplementary tool to the Cargo Securing Manual (CSM), but not as a replacement for the approved Manual.
- The performance standards cover software functionality, calculation methods and tolerances, human-machine interface, data exchange, approval, testing, and verification requirements, with the aim of establishing a consistent approach to the safety assessment of cargo securing arrangements on container ships.
- Cargo securing software must be approved by the Administration or a Recognized Organization (RO). It must also be verified annually by the Master and confirmed during special surveys. The full Guidelines are primarily intended to apply to new container ships whose keels are laid on or after 1 July 2027. Existing ships may apply the Guidelines on a voluntary basis, but this would require re-approval of the entire Cargo Securing Manual.
- The revised Guidelines are expected to be submitted to MSC 113 in June 2027 for approval. As they will be issued in the form of a non-mandatory MSC circular, no mandatory entry-into-force date has been established. If the mandatory carriage or use of cargo securing software is required in the future, a separate amendment to SOLAS would still be necessary.

II. IMO's Meeting Highlights – CCC 12

Revision of the IMO/ILO/UNECE Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units (CTU Code)

Agenda Item 12

- The Sub-Committee agreed in principle to revise the IMO/ILO/UNECE Code of Practice for Packing of Cargo Transport Units (CTU Code), which provides guidance on the safe packing, handling, and transport of cargo transport units, including freight containers, road vehicles, and railway wagons.
- This will be the first comprehensive revision of the Code since its publication in 2014. The revision will update relevant regulatory requirements, industry practices, equipment, cargo handling techniques, and operational procedures. The Code will also be reorganized into a four-tier structure to facilitate future updates to its technical content.
- The Sub-Committee also supported in principle the establishment of a standing Technical Body, with participation from the IMO, the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), Member States, and industry experts, to be responsible for the future maintenance and revision of the Code.
- The IMO Secretariat will prepare a draft MSC circular, which is expected to be submitted to MSC 112 in December 2026 for approval, together with the proposed terms of reference for the Technical Body.

II. IMO's Meeting Highlights – CCC 12

Recommendation for CCC 12

- CCC 12 has finalized the revision of the *Interim Guidelines for the Safety of Ships Using Methyl/Ethyl Alcohol as Fuel* and continued to advance the development of safety guidelines for low-flashpoint oil fuels and fuel cell power installations. The competent authorities may continue to monitor the deliberations at MSC 113, CCC 13 and the relevant sessions of the SSE Sub-Committee, as a reference for reviewing domestic arrangements concerning alternative design approval, fire safety, ship surveys and seafarer training for alternative-fuel ships.
- The Sub-Committee initiated the development of the *Interim Guidelines for the Safety of Ships Using an Onboard Carbon Capture and Storage System*, which are expected to be finalized at CCC 14 and submitted to MSC 116 for approval in 2029. The competent authorities may continue to monitor the development of the relevant requirements and conduct an early review of regulatory issues such as system approval, carbon storage and transfer, operational safety, personnel protection, and the allocation of responsibilities among competent authorities.
- CCC 12 has advanced the 09-27 amendments to the IMSBC Code and the 44-28 amendments to the IMDG Code, which are expected to become mandatory in 2029 and 2030, respectively. In line with the adoption and application timelines of these amendments, the competent authorities may review in advance domestic cargo declaration documents, information systems, operational procedures for shippers and carriers, as well as related awareness-raising and training needs.
- CCC 12 has finalized the revision of the Guidelines for the Preparation of the Cargo Securing Manual and agreed in principle to a comprehensive revision of the CTU Code. The competent authorities may continue to monitor the approval of the relevant instruments at MSC 112 and MSC 113, consider approval, annual verification and survey principles for cargo securing software, and assess the incorporation of the revised CTU Code into domestic cargo packing and loading guidance and relevant personnel training.

II. IMO's Meeting Highlights

Next CCC Meeting

CCC 13

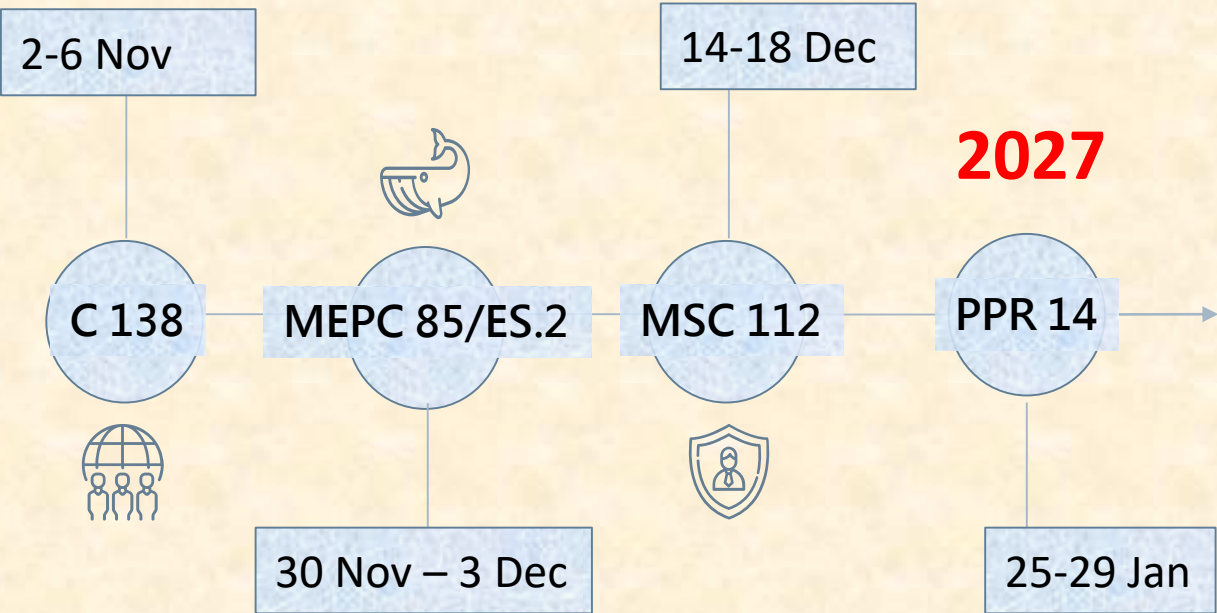
Would be held from Sept. 20th to 24th in 2027.



Photo by IMO on Flickr

Next Meeting schedules for IMO

C 138 November 2nd to 6th, 2026.



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Have a nice day. Thank you!

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