

## I. IMO Assembly (A) 34th session (A 34)

IMO held the 34th session of the Assembly from 24th November to 3rd December 2025 at IMO Headquarters in London. A 34 meeting highlights are as follows:

1. Approved the revised IMO Strategic Plan for 2024–2029, which clearly sets safety, security, environmental protection, climate change, emerging technologies, the human element, and supply chain resilience as its core governance priorities, and introduces performance indicators alongside an outcomes-based management mechanism.
2. Under the biennial review mechanism, *the 2025 Code on Alerts and Indicators*, *the 2025 Procedures for Port State Control (PSC)*, and *the 2025 Survey Guidelines under the Harmonized System of Survey and Certification (HSSC)* were adopted, strengthening consistency and auditability for the implementation, inspection, and survey/certification activities of the regulatory system.
3. The *2025 Non-exhaustive list of obligations under instruments relevant to the IMO Instruments Implementation Code (III Code)* was adopted to expand the auditable scope for Member States, incorporating implementation provisions relating to the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS), port reception facilities for wastes, and oversight of companies conducting hull structural thickness measurements, among other areas. The effective date is 3rd December 2025.
4. The GMDSS-related resolutions were amended to formally incorporate non-geostationary satellite communication systems, and the associated recognition standards and fee structure were adjusted to ensure the technological neutrality and future applicability of the global distress and safety communications framework.
5. Finalized a number of organizational and administrative governance resolutions, including the Integrated IMO Identification Number Scheme, the adoption of the 2026–2027 results-based budget, and adjustments to internal operating rules, thereby continuing to advance institutional modernization and enhance governance efficiency.

### References:

1. Lloyd's Register (LR), A 34 Summary Report. <https://maritime.lr.org/Assembly-34-Summary-Report>
2. IMO, Assembly, 34th session, 24 November to 3 December 2025. <https://www.imo.org/en/mediacentre/meetingsummaries/pages/assembly-34th-session.aspx>

## II. IMO Council 135<sup>th</sup> & 136<sup>th</sup> Session (C 135 & C136) Meeting Highlights

The Council is the executive body of the IMO, it's under the Assembly, and is responsible for supervising the work of the Organization. The Council is formed by 40 Member States, elected by the Assembly for two-year terms.

The 135th session of the IMO Council (C 135) was held from 19th to 21st November 2025, and the 136th session was held on 3rd December 2025, right after the A 34 meeting. The highlights of the two meetings are as follows:

1. C 135 had approved the revised results-based regular budget proposal for the 2026-2027 biennium and submitted it to the Assembly (A 34).
2. To coordinate the integration of the IMO Identification Number Scheme with the company/shipowner identification code scheme to form a regulatory framework. The aim is to enhance vessel traceability, combat fraud, and ensure consistency in certification and regulatory systems. The regulatory framework encompasses two sets of systems:
  - (1) **Under the IMO Number Scheme**, each ship is assigned a permanent and unique seven-digit IMO number. This number remains unchanged throughout the ship's entire life cycle and is not affected by changes in the ship's name, ownership, or flag. The purpose is to enhance maritime safety and help prevent maritime fraud.
  - (2) **Under the IMO Shipowner/Company Identification Number Scheme**, permanent and unique IMO numbers are assigned to shipowners and operating companies and are used across various certificates and compliance regimes, so as to clearly identify the entity responsible for a ship's operation or ownership.

The draft resolution proposed by the Council for consideration by the 34th session of the General Assembly would consolidate the above two sets of systems into a single integrated system to enhance overall operational efficiency and consistency.

3. C 135 had approved amendments to Rule 28 of the Rules of Procedure of the Assembly, which will include the Arabic language as a working language of the Assembly. A 34 had agreed to introduce Arabic as a working language of IMO. As an important institutional adjustment for multilingualism and modernization of organizational governance, it will be officially adopted at the 35th IMO Assembly (in 2028).
4. The Council noted that there are several IMO Conventions and instruments that have not yet reached the conditions to be taken into force, including:

- (1) *The 2021 Amendment to the Convention on the International Maritime Organization;*
- (2) *The 2010 Protocol on Preparedness, Response and Co-operation to pollution Incidents by Hazardous and Noxious Substances (the 2010 HNS Protocol);*
- (3) *The 2012 Cape Town Agreement (2012 CTA).*

Other amendments to the IMO instruments that require explicit acceptance include:

- (1) *The 2008 Convention on the International Maritime Satellite Organization;*
  - (2) *The 2009 Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution by Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter and the 1996 London Protocol (2009 London Protocol);*
  - (3) *the 2013 amendments to the London Protocol.*
5. Completed the election of new members and the handover of duties for the 2026-2027 term of the IMO Council, and ensured that the subsequent budget, governance, and regulatory-related Agendas can be continued and advanced.

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**References:**

1. IMO, Council, 135th session (C 135), 19 to 21 November 2025.  
<https://www.imo.org/en/mediacentre/meetingsummaries/pages/council-135th-session.aspx>
2. IMO, Council, 136th session (C 136), 3 December 2025.  
<https://www.imo.org/en/mediacentre/meetingsummaries/pages/council-136th-session.aspx>