

FACILITATION COMMITTEE 2026
Agenda item 17

FAL 50/17
15 December 2025
Original: ENGLISH
Pre-session public release: ☒

WORK PROGRAMME

Proposal for a new output on the development of Guidelines on port nautical information

Submitted by Netherlands (Kingdom of the), Germany, Estonia, United Arab Emirates,
Norway, ICS, IHMA, IAPH, INTERTANKO, INTERCARGO, BIMCO, IBTA, IFSMA

SUMMARY

Executive summary: The document proposes a new request for output regarding the development of guidelines on port nautical information. This guideline should help with a standardized and harmonized approach towards the collection and sharing of port nautical information, for both navigation and chartering of vessels, leading to improved safety and efficiency of shipping.

Strategic direction, if applicable: 5

Output: Not applicable

Action to be taken: Paragraph 21

Related document: FAL.5/Circ.42/Rev.4; FAL.5/Circ.46; FAL.5/Circ.52; FAL.5/Circ.55; FAL 46/INF.3 and FAL 49/INF.6.

Introduction

1 This document is submitted in accordance with paragraph 4.6 of the *Organization and method of work of the Facilitation Committee* (FAL.8/Circ.1) and proposes a new output on the development of Guidelines on port nautical information.

Background

2 According to IMO Resolution A.893(21), *Guidelines for voyage planning*, masters are required to navigate berth-to-berth, including in pilotage areas, by using official Nautical Charts and Publications to meet SOLAS Chapter V carriage requirements. Charterers must also ensure compliance with safe port and safe berth clauses in charter parties. This is however a challenging undertaking if the information needed for safe navigation in ports is not available, or if the information differs from source to source.

3 As per SOLAS Regulation V/2, Nautical Charts and Publications used for safe navigation in ports and berths are issued officially by or on the authority of a Government, authorized Hydrographic Office or other relevant government institution. This is in alignment with the provisions of SOLAS Chapter V Regulation 9 "Contracting Governments undertake to arrange for the collection and compilation of hydrographic data and the publication, dissemination and keeping up to date of all nautical information necessary for safe navigation" and "Contracting Governments undertake to ensure the greatest possible uniformity in charts and nautical publications and to take into account, whenever possible, relevant international resolutions and recommendations."

4 During the International Hydrographic Organisation (IHO) Nautical Information Provision Working Group of 6 December 2023, it became clear that hydrographic offices experience a lack of availability and consistency in the data provided by port authorities. This results in hydrographic offices being hesitant to publish port nautical information data in their charts and publications, as they cannot guarantee the quality and accuracy of the data. This calls for the development of guidelines to harmonize the data provision by port authorities.

IMO's objectives

5 This proposal is consistent with IMO strategic direction 5: *Enhance global facilitation, supply chain resilience and security of international trade.*

Need

6 Most maritime incidents occur in the approaches, anchorages or harbour basins of ports, as these are subject to high marine traffic density. Therefore, the quality and availability of relevant and up-to-date port nautical information is an important risk mitigation measure as it will support the seafarer to execute safe navigation from pilot boarding place to berth and vice versa.

7 Over the last years, ports have increased the amount of digital port nautical information, updating the information more often. As such the user's expectation and reliance on the correctness of data increases as well. However, at the moment, the data in these digital publications is not standardized, nor are the data sharing agreements standardized, leading to ports developing their own systems and websites independent from other ports, at the expense of worldwide harmonization and, consequently, the safety of navigation, as explained in paragraph 6 above.

Analysis of the issue

8 Both Masters and charterers of vessels have requested IHMA to provide a guidance to improve quality and availability of port information, for navigation and chartering of vessels, providing a harmonized approach for the collection and dissemination of port nautical information. This can only be achieved through the development of an unambiguous international standard, with the necessary guidelines, in line with IHO/IMO standards.

9 To develop these guidelines, we need to first determine the required scope of port nautical information necessary for safe navigation and chartering of vessels. Today, there is no minimum scope for port nautical information which is aligned with all shipping segments and the IHO. The following instruments are currently available, and can provide a basis for the scope:

- .1 For bulk carriers, there is a data scope for port nautical information defined by resolution A.862(20), *Code of Practice for the Safe Loading and Unloading of Bulk Carriers* (IMO BLU Code).
- .2 For tankers, the data scope for port nautical information is defined through OCIMF's *Marine Terminal Particular Questionnaire* (MTPQ), and the *Marine Terminal Information System* (MTIS).
- .3 For container carriers, there is no defined scope, however, container liners may have their own port information databases.
- .4 Port segment has to facilitate all trades, and has defined the scope for port information through existing publications, resulting in the *Port Information Guide* of the IHMA and IAPH.
- .5 The ADMIRALTY Sailing Directions Pilot and various other Sailing Directions or Coast Pilots issued by Hydrographic offices which provide essential information to support port entry and coastal navigation for ships.

10 Furthermore, an additional basis for the scope is to focus on SOLAS vessels (e.g. no pleasure craft and/or war ships), taking the two most relevant IMO instruments as starting points:

- .1 SOLAS Regulation V/9: "Contracting Governments undertake to arrange for the collection and compilation of hydrographic data and the publication, dissemination and keeping up to date of all nautical information necessary for safe navigation".
- .2 IMO Resolution A.893(21), *Guidelines for voyage planning*, paragraph 1.3: "Voyage and passage planning includes appraisal, i.e., gathering all information relevant to the contemplated voyage or passage; detailed planning of the whole voyage or passage from berth to berth, including those areas necessitating the presence of a pilot".

11 On this basis, the following minimum scope of port nautical information is proposed:

- .1 Information on Port infrastructure: terminal, berth.
- .2 Information on Port waiting areas: ships in transit and at anchor.
- .3 Vessel particulars at berth and in port passage: maximum permitted draught, length, beam, air draught.
- .4 Depths and tides in the area.
- .5 Meteorological information.
- .6 Availability of nautical services: VTS, pilots, tugs, linesmen.
- .7 Communication procedures.
- .8 Port emergency procedures.

The proposed output needs to focus on the harmonization of these elements.

12 The proposed output needs to focus on the harmonization of these elements. IHO standard S-131 Marine Harbour Infrastructure (ed. 1.0.0 April2023) is recommended to be used as a template or starting point for the above harmonization of information provided to the mariner, securing interoperability with other S-100 publications. This should also include a framework for data quality and authentication.

Analysis of implications

13 No additional cost to the maritime industry is envisaged, nor are administrative requirements expected to arise from this output, and the checklist for identifying administrative requirements set out in annex 1, has been completed on this basis. Capacity- building implications are not envisaged as the output does not concern a mandatory instrument.

14 It should be considered to use an already existing database, such as GISIS, for sharing the standardized information. Some information might already be available there and could be adapted to the required standard, if needed.

Benefits

15 A standardized and harmonized approach towards the collection and sharing of port nautical information, envisaged by the proposed new output, for both navigation and chartering of vessels, leading to improved safety and efficiency of shipping.

Industry standards

16 As mentioned in paragraph 10, some industry standards already exist, and should be taken into account in order to harmonize the data requirements and to develop the proposed guidelines.

Output

17 A new output is proposed on "Guidelines on port nautical information".

18 One session of the FAL Committee is estimated to be required to complete the work.

Human element

19 The human element has been sufficiently considered and addressed during the development of this proposal by providing the completed checklist, as set out in annex 2.

Urgency

20 Although the proposed output is necessary, it is not urgent. The proposed output should be completed in 2027.

Action requested of the Committee

- 21 The Committee is invited to:
- .1 note the information provided in this document; and
 - .2 include a new output on "Guidelines on port nautical information" in the 2026-2027 biennial agenda of the FAL Committee and the provisional agenda for FAL 51, with a target completion year of 2027.

ANNEX 1

CHECKLIST FOR IDENTIFYING ADMINISTRATIVE REQUIREMENTS (FAL.3/CIRC.217/Rev.2, ANNEX 6)

This checklist should be used when preparing the analysis of implications required in submissions of proposals for inclusion of outputs. For the purpose of this analysis, the term "administrative requirements" is defined in accordance with resolution A.1043(27), as an obligation arising from a mandatory IMO instrument to provide or retain information or data. Instructions: (A) If the answer to any of the questions below is YES, the Member State proposing an output should provide supporting details on whether the requirements are likely to involve start-up and/or ongoing costs. The Member State should also give a brief description of the requirement and, if possible, provide recommendations for further work, e.g. would it be possible to combine the activity with an existing requirement? (B) If the proposal for the output does not contain such an activity, answer NR (Not required). (C) For any administrative requirement, full consideration should be given to electronic means of fulfilling the requirement in order to alleviate administrative burdens.		
1. Notification and reporting? Reporting certain events before or after the event has taken place, e.g. notification of voyage, statistical reporting for IMO Members, etc.	NR ☒	Yes ☐ Start-up ☐ Ongoing
Description of administrative requirement(s) and method of fulfilling it: (if the answer is yes)		
2. Record-keeping? Keeping statutory documents up to date, e.g. records of accidents, records of cargo, records of inspections, records of education, etc.	NR ☒	Yes ☐ Start-up ☐ Ongoing
Description of administrative requirement(s) and method of fulfilling it: (if the answer is yes)		
3. Publication and documentation? Producing documents for third parties, e.g. warning signs, registration displays, publication of results of testing, etc.	NR ☒	Yes ☐ Start-up ☐ Ongoing
Description of administrative requirement(s) and method of fulfilling it: (if the answer is yes)		
4. Permits or applications? Applying for and maintaining permission to operate, e.g. certificates, classification society costs, etc.	NR ☒	Yes ☐ Start-up ☐ Ongoing
Description of administrative requirement(s) and method of fulfilling it: (if the answer is yes)		
5. Other identified requirements?	NR ☒	Yes ☐ Start-up ☐ Ongoing
Description of administrative requirement(s) and method of fulfilling it: (if the answer is yes)		

ANNEX 2

CHECKLIST FOR CONSIDERING AND ADDRESSING THE HUMAN ELEMENT

	1 Question	2 Yes/No	3 IMO references	4 Considerations	5 Instructions
Workload			<i>Other relevant references may be added</i> <i>Strike out references that are not relevant</i>	<i>If answer to question is "yes" identify considerations. If answer is "no" make proper justification</i>	<i>Identify how human element considerations should be addressed in the output</i>
1	Does the "output" affect workload?	NO			
1.1	On board, especially in the already intensive phases of the voyage and port operations to:		<i>Revised guidelines for the operational implementation of the International Safety Management (ISM) Code by Companies (MSC-MEPC.7/Circ.8)</i> <i>Guidelines on fatigue (MSC.1/Circ.1598)</i> <i>Principles of minimum safe manning (resolution A.1047(27))</i> <i>Guidelines for the investigation of accidents where fatigue may have been an issue (MSC/Circ.621)</i>		
1.1.1	Operations including navigation, cargo and engineering				
1.1.2	Maintenance of the ship's structure and its equipment				

	1 Question	2 Yes/No	3 IMO references	4 Considerations	5 Instructions
1.1.3	Onboard administration in support of the ship's management systems				
1.1.4	Onboard administration related to regulation involving flag States, classification societies, port State and other bodies such as charterers and port authorities				
1.1.5	Increased workload or time pressure on personnel if involved in implementation of changes prior to the implementation date				
1.2	Ashore, in a manner that would affect the ships operation to:				
1.2.1	Companies' administration				
1.2.2	Flag State, port State and classification societies administration such that certification and other processes are compromised or delayed				

	1 Question	2 Yes/No	3 IMO references	4 Considerations	5 Instructions
	Decision-making		Other relevant references may be added Strike out references that are not relevant	If answer to question is "yes" identify considerations. If answer is "no" make proper justification	Identify how human element considerations should be addressed in the output
2	Does the "output" impact decision-making on board the ship?	NO			
2.1	By confusion with existing requirements and regulations				
2.2	By changing responsibilities as laid out in the ISM Code				
2.3	By creating complexity in its implementation and/or in the safety management systems				
2.4	By requiring increased mental effort, such as the need to find, transform and analyse data or result in the need to make judgements based on incomplete information				
2.5	By limiting the time available to establish situational awareness, decide, communicate (possibly across time zones) or check				

	1 Question	2 Yes/No	3 IMO references	4 Considerations	5 Instructions
2.6	By increasing reliance on judgement and administrative controls to manage major risks such as oil spills and collisions				
Living and Working Environment			Other relevant references may be added Strike out references that are not relevant	If answer to question is "yes" identify considerations. If answer is "no" make proper justification	Identify how human element considerations should be addressed in the output
3	Does the "output" affect the living and working environment?	NO	Guidelines on the basic elements of a shipboard occupational health and safety programme (MSC-MEPC.2/Circ.3) Guidelines on fatigue (MSC.1/Circ.1598)		
3.1	By interfering with existing arrangements for abandonment, fire-fighting and other emergency plans or procedures				
3.2	By introducing new materials that could create an explosion, fire, environmental or occupational health risk				
3.3	By introducing new high energy sources such as high-voltage, high pressure fluids				
3.4	By affecting access or egress and causing lack				

	1 Question	2 Yes/No	3 IMO references	4 Considerations	5 Instructions
	of ventilation in working spaces				
3.5	By affecting the habitability of accommodation spaces due to noise, vibration, temperatures, dust and other contaminants				
Operation and maintenance			Other relevant references may be added Strike out references that are not relevant	If answer to question is "yes" identify considerations. If answer is "no" make proper justification	Identify how human element considerations should be addressed in the output
4	Does the "output" affect the operation and maintenance of the ship, its structure or systems and equipment?	NO	Revised guidelines for the operational implementation of the International Safety Management (ISM) Code by Companies (MSC-MEPC.7/Circ.8) Guidelines for bridge equipment and systems, their arrangement and integration (BES) (SN.1/Circ.288) Principles of minimum safe manning (resolution A.1047(27)) Guidelines on software quality assurance and human-centred design for e-navigation (MSC.1/Circ.1512)		

	1 Question	2 Yes/No	3 IMO references	4 Considerations	5 Instructions
			<i>Guidelines for the standardization of user interface design for navigation equipment (MSC.1/Circ.1609)</i>		
4.1	By introducing equipment that the user may find difficult to operate or maintain or may be unreliable				
4.2	By introducing new and/or novel technology, or technology that changes the role of the person				
4.3	By introducing requirements for new competencies and roles				
4.4	By overloading existing infrastructure such as power generation and ventilation systems				
4.5	By poor integration with existing systems and controls				
4.6	By introducing new and unfamiliar operations/procedures				
4.7	By introducing new and unfamiliar operating interfaces?				
4.8	By introducing risks to the ship during any modifications required prior to the implementation date of the output				

	1 Question	2 Yes/No	3 IMO references	4 Considerations	5 Instructions
	Measures to address the human element		Other relevant references may be added Strike out references that are not relevant	If answer to question is "yes" identify considerations. If answer is "no" make proper justification	Identify how human element considerations should be addressed in the output
5	Does the "output" require changes to:	NO	Shipboard technical operating and maintenance manuals (MSC.1/Circ.1253) Revised guidelines for the operational implementation of the International Safety Management (ISM) Code by Companies (MSC-MEPC.7/Circ.8)		
5.1	Training				
5.2	Practical skill development and competences				
5.3	Operating, management and/or maintenance procedures				
5.4	Information/manuals for operation and maintenance				
5.5	Spares outfit				
5.6	Occupational safety requirements including guarding and PPE				
5.7	Shore support				