

Minutes of a meeting of the Association's Offshore Survey Committee
held on 09 July 2026 from 09:00 online

1 Welcome and Attendance

The Chair welcomed members to the meeting. Apologies for absence were recorded, with the latest meeting attendance as follows:

IMCA Offshore Survey Committee					25 Q4	26 Q1	26 Q2	26 Q3
First Name	Last Name	Initials	Company	Position	15/10/25	15/01/26	22/04/26	09/07/26
Committee Members								
Mike	Clark	MC	Subsea 7	Chair	✓ Attended	✓ Attended	✓ Attended	✓ Attended
Dave	Matthews	DM	TechnipFMC	Vice-Chair	✗ Apologies	✓ Attended	✓ Attended	✓ Attended
Aaron	Bainbridge	AB	Subsea7	APAC Representative	✗ Apologies	✓ Attended	✗ Apologies	✓ Attended
Arnold	Niessen	AN	Boskalis		✓ Attended	✗ Apologies	✗ Apologies	✓ Attended
Gordon	Brown	GB	Andrews		✓ Attended	✓ Attended	✓ Attended	✓ Attended
John	Chatten	JC	Fugro	SA representative	✓ Attended	✓ Attended	✓ Attended	✗ Apologies
Julian	Nelson	JN	Oceanscan	C&T representative	✗ Apologies	✓ Attended	✓ Attended	✗ Apologies
Kate	McCubbin	KMC	Oceaneering International		✗ Apologies	✓ Attended	✓ Attended	✓ Attended
Michiel	Van de Munt	MVDM	Allseas		✓ Attended	✓ Attended	✓ Attended	✓ Attended
Mike	Lycke	ML	Jan de Nul		N/A	✓ Attended	✗ Apologies	✓ Attended
Paul	McBride	PMB	Fugro		✓ Attended	✓ Attended	✓ Attended	✓ Attended
Scott	Howden	SH	DOF ASA		✗ Apologies	✓ Attended	✗ Apologies	✓ Attended
Shepard	Smith	SS	XOCEAN Ltd	NA Representative	✗ Apologies	✗ Apologies	✓ Attended	✗ Apologies
Simon	Waterfield	SW	Sonardyne		✓ Attended	✓ Attended	✓ Attended	✓ Attended
Torsten	Marten	TM	UTEC Survey, Inc.		✓ Attended	✗ Apologies	✓ Attended	✓ Attended
Tristan	Fleury	TF	Saipem		✓ Attended	✓ Attended	✓ Attended	✓ Attended
IMCA Representatives								
Sara	McQuillan	SMQ	IMCA	Assistant Technical Adviser	✓ Attended	✓ Attended	✓ Attended	✓ Attended
Stuart	Walder	SWA	IMCA	Head of Technical and Safety	N/A	N/A	N/A	✓ Attended
IOGP Representatives								
Walter	Jardine	WJ	IOGP		✓ Attended	✓ Attended	✗ Apologies	✓ Attended
Nicole	Zhou	NZ	IOGP	Committee Manager	N/A	✓ Attended	✓ Attended	✓ Attended

2 IMCA Competition Law Compliance Policy Review

SMQ reminded all committee members, including additional attendees and IOGP representatives, about the IMCA competition law compliance policy, emphasising its legal requirements and the need to avoid any commercial or anti-competitive discussions during the meeting.

3 Update from the IOGP

WJ reported that IOGP issued a technical flash on GNSS jamming and spoofing in March, highlighting increased global incidents and providing definitions, mitigations, and a glossary. The document is freely available and intended to support industry awareness and response.

NZ confirmed that the 3D point cloud technical flash, led by Matt Paloian at Shell with industry input, is in the final proofreading stage and will be published soon. The document covers subsea LiDAR, photogrammetry, planning, acquisition, verification, and reporting.

WJ and Sara discussed that the joint IOGP-IMCA GNSS guideline (S015) is approximately 70% complete, with most edits done and remaining work focused on finalising and harmonising the document before committee review and publication.

NZ outlined plans for an industry survey on the USBL technical specification, aiming to gather feedback from both operators and contractors by September, with results expected by year-end to inform updates and ensure alignment between IOGP and IMCA documents.

WJ, NZ, and SMQ discussed the existence of a joint publication list and the potential for a more formalised joint register to improve cross-referencing and accessibility of IMCA and IOGP documents. This will be progressed between SMQ and NZ.

4 Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the previous meeting had been circulated with the agenda. SMQ invited committee members to raise any comments or corrections. No comments were raised and, with no objections noted, the minutes were taken as approved. SMQ confirmed that the minutes would be signed by MC and published on the IMCA website.

Action: SMQ to arrange for MC to sign the approved minutes and for the final minutes to be published on the IMCA website.

5 IMCA updates

5.1 Committee Membership Requirements

SMQ detailed that, from 2027, committees must include at least one Next Generation Network member, a minimum of 12 members with three from SMEs, and a revised chair selection process with a two-term, three-year benchmark. It was noted that exceptions may be considered in certain circumstances and that the previous election system will be replaced by an appointment process.

DM requested rationale for chair term limits, expressing concern about potential loss of experienced leadership. SWA clarified that the changes were based on extensive member feedback and are intended to open opportunities for new participants.

5.2 Committee Communication with Board

DM raised the issue of committees lacking a direct conduit to the IMCA board, suggesting SWA could act as a liaison. SMQ responded that a new objectives system allows committees to flag items for board consideration which will be discussed later in the meeting.

5.3 Membership Committee

SMQ provided an update on the establishment of the Membership Committee, which will include people and membership activities and act as a counterpart to the Operations Committee. The committee noted that this change does not alter the position of the Offshore Survey Committee, which remains within the technical committee structure under the operations committee. The Membership Committee will be launched in September 2026.

5.4 General Updates

SMQ highlighted the new Head of Competence and Training Natalie Carroll joining IMCA. The new chair of the Competence and Training Committee is Jamie Johnson. SMQ provided updates on Membership, Publications and IMCA Events.

6 OS Committee Activity (Non-Workgroup)

6.1 Actions from the Q2 2026 Meeting

SMQ reviewed the actions from the Q2 2026 meeting and provided updates on each item. Completed actions were closed, while remaining actions were either carried forward or addressed under later agenda items.

6.2 Division Objectives

SMQ demonstrated the new method for communicating the division's objectives to the wider IMCA. This also included a demonstration of how items are flagged for board level consideration.

6.3 Draft WG Terms of Reference

SMQ highlighted four new draft Terms of Reference for future document reviews or new documents. Feedback and discussion followed. These included the following:

6.3.1 IMCA IN 795 Safe Personnel Levels for Survey

The committee discussed the scope and terminology of the proposed review of IMCA IN 795, agreeing that the document should focus on offshore personnel levels rather than remote operations. Remote support may be referenced as a supplementary consideration, but remote operations should remain outside the scope of the review. The committee also noted the need to define relevant terms and address risk-planning considerations where remote support is used to supplement offshore personnel. SMQ will review the TOR to clarify the distinction between remote support and remote operations, to focus the document on offshore personnel levels, and to include appropriate definitions and risk-planning considerations.

Action: SMQ to revise the draft Terms of Reference for IN 795.

6.3.2 IMCA Guidance Data Delivery

MC and GB discussed whether data storage and transfer should be included in the data delivery guidance or remain covered by the existing S020 document, concluding that the new note should focus on delivery while referencing S020 for storage. SMQ will update the draft Terms of Reference to make clear that vessel data storage and transfer are outside the intended scope where already covered by IMCA S020, and to review S020 to confirm whether it remains current.

Action: SMQ to update the draft Terms of Reference for Data Delivery.

6.3.3 IMCA Guidance LBL Array Planning

The group reviewed the need for updated guidance on LBL array planning, especially regarding sparse arrays, with MVDM and TM noting that current documents mention limitations but may require expansion or a supplementary document.

The S013 workgroup will complete the deep water positioning guidance and progress it to committee review before deciding whether additional guidance on sparse LBL, range-aided LBL or LBL array planning is required.

6.3.4 IMCA IN Coordinate Reporting

SMQ introduced terms of reference for coordinate reporting, aiming for industry consistency. WJ offered IOGP's support in reviewing terminology and ensuring alignment with operator practices.

6.4 Quality Flashes (Survey Practice Notes)

SMQ presented the proposal for survey practice notes (formerly quality flashes), seeking committee feedback and examples, with discussion on content detail, commercial sensitivities, and intended use, supported by MC, SW, TM, and WJ.

6.4.1 Purpose and Format of Practice Notes

SMQ explained that survey practice notes will communicate anonymised lessons learned, preventative actions, and best practices, modelled after IMCA safety flashes, and will be distributed to offshore survey members.

6.4.2 Feedback on Content and Detail

Committee members debated the appropriate level of detail, balancing usefulness with commercial confidentiality, and agreed that submissions should include sufficient context without disclosing sensitive information.

6.4.3 Use and Dissemination

WJ and MC described how such notes could be used in project briefings and as leverage for best practice, while MVDM emphasized the importance of reaching the right project teams for maximum impact.

6.4.4 Next Steps and Call for Examples

SMQ requested further feedback and additional example submissions from members to refine the process. The committee gave provisional approval for the initiative, with full rollout subject to committee consensus and further internal approvals. Committee members were asked to submit feedback on the proposed survey practice note format, content level, commercial sensitivity considerations and any further examples that could be anonymised for future publication. SMQ will continue to develop the initiative.

Action: Committee members to provide feedback on proposed survey practice notes.

6.5 GNSS Intentional Interference – Update

SMQ provided an update on the IMCA response to the increasing operational risk of intentional interference. IMCA will act as a conduit for affected members, helping to communicate industry needs and encourage the development of appropriate technologies. SMQ reported that IMCA held a meeting on 3 June 2026 with the signatories of the recent 'Call to Industry' including Van Oord, Allseas, Boskalis and DEME. SMQ gave a summary of the key points raised in the meeting and highlighted that the intention is for IMCA to form a steering group to coordinate technology development and member support.

SMQ highlighted that the Middle East and India regional meeting will include a focus on intentional interference, featuring speakers on INS and alternative antenna solutions, reflecting the region's heightened exposure to GNSS denial.

Action: SMQ to continue providing updates on IMCA activity relating to GNSS intentional interference.

6.6 IMCA Response to ISO document

SMQ and WJ discussed the proposed IMCA and IOGP response to the ISO document reviewed earlier in the year (ISO 25451:2026 - Ships and marine technology — Technical requirements and guidelines for seafloor mapping with uncrewed marine vehicles). WJ noted the separate ISO 19901-10 document (ISO 19901-10:2021 - Petroleum and natural gas industries — Specific requirements for offshore structures, Part 10: Marine geophysical investigations), which addresses offshore site investigation and includes broader seafloor mapping content.

SMQ and WJ agreed to consolidate feedback from both organisations and submit it to the relevant body promptly, aiming to influence future revisions and document suitability for industry use.

The committee also discussed the trend of operators adopting industry standards over company-specific specifications, emphasising the importance of ensuring that referenced documents are fit for purpose and accurately reflect industry needs.

Action: SMQ and WJ to consolidate IMCA and IOGP feedback on the ISO seafloor mapping document and submit the combined response to ISO.

6.7 Regulations on Air Transportation of Lithium Batteries

MC explained that, from January, lithium-ion batteries not contained in equipment must be shipped at no more than 30% state of charge. This raised questions about discharge procedures and compliance. The committee agreed to consider an information note summarising key points for members. MC requested that committee members review the published IATA guidance and submit any feedback for consideration. SMQ will prepare an information note for review.

Action: Committee members to review the IATA guidance and submit feedback.

Action: SMQ to prepare an Information Note on the IATA guidance.

6.8 Future Guidance Planning

SMQ led the committee in reviewing and prioritising previously suggested guidance reviews or new guidance. The committee considered eight existing or potential topics:

- ◆ Review of IMCA C004 *Competence assurance and assessment framework*.
- ◆ UXO guidance, to be progressed by the ROV Division with offshore survey input where required.
- ◆ LBL array planning, including consideration of sparse LBL, range-aided LBL and whether supplementary guidance may be required following completion of S013. MVDM noted that Terms of Reference already exist and would send them on.
- ◆ Heavy lift positioning support in shallow water, including consideration of current GNSS denial risks.

- ◆ Data delivery guidance, focused on data volumes, deliverables and client expectations, with vessel data storage and transfer to remain aligned with existing IMCA S020 guidance.
- ◆ Coordinate reporting information note, including consistent reporting of coordinate reference systems, reference points and terminology, with IOGP support for technical review.
- ◆ Review of IMCA IN 795 on safe personnel levels for survey, including clarification of remote support, remote operations and offshore personnel requirements.
- ◆ Information note on air transportation of lithium batteries, highlighting relevant IATA requirements and practical implications for offshore survey equipment.

The committee agreed that the review of IMCA C004 should remain the initial priority, with work intended to begin in Q4 2026. Data delivery was identified as the next substantive guidance priority, noting the existing draft Terms of Reference, followed by the review of IN 795 safe personnel levels.

The lithium battery air transportation information note was considered suitable for separate early development as it can be based on published IATA guidance.

MC noted that priority for this year is to close out existing reviews. Therefore, the new workgroups will be formed in 2027. SMQ will seek volunteers for the workgroups, aiming to initiate activities in line with the agreed priorities and available resources.

Action: SMQ to capture the prioritisation for 2027 and determine suitable chairs for the associated workgroups.

Action: MVDM to provide the previous Terms of Reference for heavy lift positioning support in shallow water.

6.9 OS Division – Strategy 2030

SMQ presented the developing Offshore Survey Division Strategy 2030 for committee input. The strategy was structured around six proposed objectives intended to guide the division's work over the next four years. These objectives covered improved visibility of the division's work, stronger engagement with members and related IMCA committees, continued collaboration with external bodies including IOGP, and opportunities to raise the profile of offshore survey across wider IMCA activity. Committee members were invited to review the proposed objectives and provide feedback to support further development of the strategy.

Action: SMQ to continue developing the Offshore Survey Division Strategy 2030 and return it to the committee for further review and input.

6.10 IMCA Global Summit – Survey Session

SMQ outlined the planned Offshore Survey session at the IMCA Global Summit, noting its aim to raise the profile of survey, demonstrate its relevance to wider project delivery, and engage non-survey stakeholders on current priority topics.

7 OS Committee Activity (Workgroup Activity)

7.1 S026 Out of Straightness

SMQ reported that the out of straightness guidance received 41 comments from committee and IOGP review, with technical input ongoing and publication targeted for the following month.

7.2 S003 Multibeam Echosounders

GB reported that the revised S003 multibeam echosounder guidance was nearing IMCA committee review and due to be issued within the following week.

7.3 S013 Deep Water Positioning

MVDM and TM discussed S013 Deep Water Positioning in the context of LBL array planning, sparse LBL and range-aided positioning. It was noted that the current draft already includes material on traditional LBL and some discussion of sparse LBL limitations, but that further specialist guidance may be required in future. The committee agreed that the priority should be to complete S013 and progress it through review before determining whether a supplementary document on specific LBL techniques is required.

7.4 S017 USBL

MC noted that S017 USBL remains closely linked to the joint IMCA and IOGP GNSS guidance and to ongoing discussions on statistical treatment of USBL accuracy. IOGP plans to issue an industry survey on the USBL technical specification, with results expected to inform future updates and support alignment between IMCA and IOGP documents. MC noted that S017 USBL remains in the planning stage, with further work expected after the summer.

7.5 S015 GNSS

SMQ noted the continued progress on the joint IMCA and IOGP GNSS guidance, with the document estimated to be approximately 70% complete. Remaining work will focus on resolving outstanding technical areas, harmonising the document and preparing it for working group and committee review prior to publication.

7.6 IN – ZRBs/RCs

SMQ stated that the residual curves information note has been reviewed by the committee and IOGP, with final edits pending before publication.

8 Any Other Business and Summary of Actions

No separate items of other business were raised. Further discussion related to Survey Practice Notes, including additional examples that could be anonymised for future publication, and SMQ asked members to submit suggestions for consideration.

9 Safety/Quality Moment and Next Meetings

An un-minuted safety discussion was held.

The next meeting will be scheduled for October 2026 but subject to a poll to be issued to the committee.

10 Summary of Action Items

Action	Responsible	Target
Arrange for MC to sign the approved minutes and for the final minutes to be published on the IMCA website.	SMQ	As soon as practicable
Revise the draft Terms of Reference for IN 795.	SMQ	Q4 2026
Revise the draft Terms of Reference for Data Delivery.	SMQ	Q4 2026
Provide feedback on proposed survey practice notes.	Committee members	Before next meeting
Continue providing updates on IMCA activity relating to GNSS intentional interference.	SMQ	Ongoing
Consolidate IMCA and IOGP feedback on the ISO seafloor mapping document and submit the combined response to ISO.	SMQ/WJ	Promptly
Review the IATA guidance and submit feedback.	Committee members	Before next meeting
Prepare an Information Note on the IATA guidance.	SMQ	Q4 2026
Capture the prioritisation for 2027 and determine suitable chairs for the associated workgroups.	SMQ	Q4 2026
Provide the previous Terms of Reference for heavy lift positioning support in shallow water.	MVDM	Before next meeting
Continue developing the Offshore Survey Division Strategy 2030 and return it to the committee for further review and input.	SMQ	Next committee review

11 Minutes Approval

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Signed as a true record

Name

Date