

Minutes of a meeting of the Association’s MASS Committee held on 17 February 2026 from 1300hrs UTC via videoconference

Committee Members	
Name	Company
Gary Sanders (C) (GSA)	Ocean Infinity
Dan Stoyle (VC) (DST)	BP
Graeme Russell (GRU)	TechnipFMC
Lucas Marino (LMA)	Petrobras
Torsten Marten (TMA)	UTEC
Raimund Bjordal (RBJ)	Equinor
Nicolas Chasiotis (NCH)	Allseas
Kristian Breidfjord (KBR)	Reach Subsea
Shepard Smith (SSM)	XOcean
Mohammad Saslia (MSA)	APAVE
Peter Solvang (PSO)	DP Marine
Jeffrey Tuckerman (JTU)	Fugro
Eric Peeters	Van Ord
Richard Purser (RPU)	IMCA
Margaret Fitzgerald (MFI)	IMCA

1 Competition Law Compliance Policy

The IMCA Competition Law Compliance Policy, which had been circulated with the meeting agenda, was drawn to the attention of all present.

2 Welcome and Apologies for Absence and Minutes of the Previous Meeting

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

Name	Company	Committee Meeting Attendance				
		Feb 2025	May 2025	Sept 2025	Dec 2025	Feb 2026
Gary Sanders (C)	Ocean Infinity	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended
Dan Stoyle (VC)	BP	Attended	Attended	Absent	Apologies	Apologies
Graeme Russell	TechnipFMC	Attended	Absent	Attended	Attended	Attended
Lucas Marino	Petrobras	Absent	Attended	Attended	Apologies	Apologies
Torsten Marten	UTEC	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Apologies
Raimund Bjordal	Equinor	Attended	Attended	Attended	Apologies	Attended
Nicolas Chasiotis	Allseas	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended
Kristian Breidfjord	Reach Subsea	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended
Shepard Smith	XOcean	Absent	Absent	Absent	Attended	Apologies
Mohammad Saslia	APAVE	Attended	Attended	Absent	Attended	Apologies
Peter Solvang	DP Marine	Attended	Attended	Attended	Attended	Apologies
Jeffrey Tuckerman	Fugro			Attended	Attended	Attended

2.1 Approval of the Minutes

The minutes from the meeting held in December 2025 were agreed and will be duly signed as an accurate record by the Chair.

3 Review of Actions from Previous Meeting

The committee discussed the status and feedback on USV inspection documents, the ongoing review of document 257, and the need to align guidance with audit requirements.

3.1 Guidance Document 257 (M257)

- A working draft is available on SharePoint with tracked changes.
- Additional content has been incorporated, including alignment of terminology with the IMO MASS Code and clarification of ROC structure and roles.
- Members were encouraged to provide detailed comments and suggested revisions.
- Graphics within the document require improvement; AI-generated images may be considered to enhance visual clarity.

3.2 Inspection / Audit Documents

- The USV inspection templates remain in a feedback phase and are not yet integrated into the IMCA audit database.
- Uptake and industry feedback remain limited.
- A target of approximately 10 substantive feedback responses was suggested before finalising.
- One reported use (Reach Subsea vessel and ROC) was noted; further feedback to be gathered.

3.3 Objectives for 2026

- Previous objectives were transferred into a draft 2026 working document.
- Proposal to use Microsoft Forms to confirm and formally agree committee objectives.
- Primary focus remains on guidance documentation and industry alignment

Action: IMCA/Committee

4 Updates from IMO

4.1 Draft MASS Code & STCW Developments

The committee discussed developments relating to Chapter 15 and the integration of MASS personnel into STCW.

Key points:

- The MASS Code is expected to become mandatory by 2030.
- Several administrations are encouraging early compliance, even where vessel size may not strictly require application.
- There is a need for structured industry feedback into IMO working groups.
- STCW revisions will include MASS personnel; this represents a significant body of work.
- Discussion included potential incorporation of DP certification into STCW on a mandatory basis. IMCA's position remains facilitative rather than oppositional.

The committee agreed that:

- A more coordinated feedback strategy is required.
- Practical challenges in applying the MASS Code (e.g., ROC manning, training availability) should be formally communicated.
- Input should be channelled via the IMCA Secretariat in coordination with IMO representatives.

Action: IMCA/Committee

5 Work Programme

5.1 Committee Objectives and Action Planning for 2026

The committee agreed that key priorities include:

- Finalisation and strengthening of M257.
- Increased feedback and adoption of inspection/audit templates.
- Engagement with MASS Code and STCW revisions.
- Review of training and competence frameworks for ROC personnel.
- Alignment of autonomy definitions with IMO standards.

It was noted that setting fixed long-term deliverables is challenging due to the pace of regulatory and technological developments.

5.2 Review of M257

The revised draft:

- Expands operational guidance.
- Aligns autonomy level terminology with the IMO four-level framework.
- Clarifies scope as high-level operational guidance applicable to USVs of varying sizes.
- Is not prescriptive regarding construction standards.

Discussion points included:

- Whether inspection template references should remain embedded in M257.
- Inclusion of sections on:
 - Security threat risk assessments (including piracy regions).
 - Cybersecurity and GNSS spoofing.
 - Condition monitoring and fallback states.
 - Emergency response guidance for uncrewed vessels.

Members were asked to provide critical review input before end of Q1 / early Q2

Action: IMCA/Committee

6 Collaborations

6.1 Oceanology International 2026

IMCA will participate in a panel discussion at Oceanology (Excel, London). The event provides visibility and promotion opportunities for MASS guidance documents.

Members were invited to submit key messages or topics for representation during the panel discussion.

It was noted that while such events may offer limited new technical insight, they remain important for maintaining industry profile

7 Any Other Business

7.1 Next Steps

The committee agreed to:

- Develop a structured approach for MASS Code and STCW feedback.
- Increase correspondence between meetings to accelerate progress.
- Target completion of M257 review by end Q1 / early Q2.
- Schedule the next meeting for the last week of May 2026 (date to be confirmed).

7.2 Training and Competence

Discussion focused on:

- Differentiation between STCW-mandated competencies and additional internal competencies.
- Avoiding duplication between external certification and internal company assessments.
- Potential need to update training guidance documents (e.g., M117 or addendum via M257).
- Clarification of ROC personnel competence frameworks.

It was agreed that training and competence will become a major future workstream as regulatory clarity develops.


Action: IMCA/Committee

8 Summary of action items

Action	Responsible	Target
Share link to M257 working draft with full committee	GSA / RPU	Immediate
Review and provide comments on M257	All members	End Q1 2026
Identify resource to improve graphics in M257	Committee	Q2 2026
Provide feedback on inspection/audit templates	All members	Ongoing (target 10 responses)
Contact PSO for inspection template feedback	RPU	Before next meeting
Develop plan for coordinated feedback into MASS Code and STCW working groups (with Margaret)	RPU	Before next meeting

9 Date and location of next meetings

May 2026 (date TBC)

	Gary Sanders	05/06/2026
Signed as a true record	Name	Date








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Final Audit Report

2026-06-05

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