



St Helena
Government

MARITIME AUTHORITY

St Helena Maritime Strategic Framework

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0. Version Control

Version	Review Date	Review Changes	Status
V 1.0	22/04/25	Replaces the III Code Strategy Reviewed pre audit & MAAB verification Approved at Advisory Board and reviewed and noted at ExCo	Final

1. Introduction

1.1. Background

The St Helena Maritime Strategic Framework will outline a comprehensive approach to fulfilling the island's maritime obligations, ensuring collaboration across all relevant portfolios to achieve these goals.

St Helena is signatory to international maritime conventions and is therefore required to fulfill the necessary state obligations pertaining to safety of life and protection of the environment.

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) sets out the international standard of compliance, to enable States to meet their obligations as responsible Flag, Port and Coastal States, within the IMO Instruments Implementation (III) Code.

St Helena has a responsibility to meet compliance standards.

In addressing international obligations, St Helena recognises that it is also necessary to develop and implement local obligations that meet the needs of the local maritime sector.

1.2. Maritime Authority

The Merchant Shipping Ordinance was enacted in 2021, and from this the St Helena Maritime Authority was created, the first ever Maritime Authority for St Helena, bringing the Islands maritime elements together and providing a structure for future development within the maritime community.

In recognising St Helena's international obligations, the authority addresses the compliance requirements of a Flag, Port and Coastal State and addresses the need for acceptable safety standards within the local maritime community.

The Head of Maritime holds the statutory role of Maritime Authority within the Safety, Security and Home Affairs (SSHA) portfolio and has responsibilities as per the ordinance.

The structure of the St Helena Maritime Authority is designed to ensure effective governance and oversight of maritime activities.

1.2. Maritime Authority Advisory Board

The Maritime Authority has implemented a Maritime Authority Advisory Board (MAAB), created and established to support the Maritime Authority and is responsible for all maritime matters.

The Board has strategic oversight and directs the relevant departments across the public service that make up the overall maritime administration, and oversees the implementation of achieving compliance with international obligations in accordance with the III Code.

The Board reports to the Portfolio Director, for SSHA, and provides guidance and recommendations that are referred to the Minister at Advisory Board level.

The Chair of the MAAB is the Head of Maritime and the Terms of Reference (ToR) set out the membership, the role, governance arrangements, and frequency of meetings.

The ToR can be found at Annex A.

1.3. Maritime Authority Structure

The current Maritime Administration structure is illustrated at Annex B.

1.4. International Maritime Organisation

The IMO is the United Nations specialised agency and the global standard-setting authority for the safety and environmental performance of international shipping. Its main role is to create a regulatory framework for the shipping industry that is fair and effective and universally adopted and implemented. Shipping is very much an international industry, and it can only operate effectively if the regulations and standards are themselves agreed, adopted and implemented on an international basis. The IMO is the forum at which this process takes place.

1.5. Maritime Coastguard Agency

The Maritime Coastguard Agency (MCA) is an executive agency of the United Kingdom's (UK) Department for Transport (DfT), and has delegated authority from the UK Secretary of State for Transport. In undertaking this authorisation, the MCA carries out 2 distinct roles:-

1. To ensure that the UK Ship Registries, as members of the Red Ensign Group (REG), inclusive of the Overseas Territories (OT) and Crown Dependencies (CD), meet the necessary compliance requirements and where appropriate are equivalent to that of the UK register
2. To perform as the Maritime administration of the UK, inclusive of the OT's and CD's.

The UK, with the CDs & OTs, including St Helena, form one state.

2. Obligations

2.1. IMO Instruments Implementation Code (III) Code

The IMO formally adopted the (III) Code in 2013, to provide an international standard to enable States to meet their obligations as responsible flag, port and coastal States, and to provide the criteria to determine how Member States give full and complete effect to the provisions of those international maritime conventions to which they are Contracting Parties.

The IMO instruments included within the scope cover:

1. **International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS 1974 and its 1978 and 1988 Protocols, as amended);**
2. **International Convention for the Prevention of pollution from Ships (MARPOL 1973 and Protocols 1978 and 1997, as amended);**
3. **International Convention on Standards of Training, Certification and Watch keeping for Seafarers (STCW 1978, as amended);**
4. **International Convention on Load Lines (LL 66 and its 1988 Protocol);**
5. **International Convention on Tonnage Measurement of Ships (Tonnage 1969); and**
6. **Convention on the International Regulations for Preventing Collisions at Sea (COLREG 1972).**

The applicable conventions extended to St Helena are:

1. **SOLAS 1974 and its 1988 Protocol, as amended;**
2. **LL 66 and its 1988 Protocol; and**
3. **COLREG 1972.**

The UK maintains general superintendence and support to SHG in fulfilling international obligations under these treaties.

2.2 Category 2 Ship Registry

The UK's Statutory Instrument No. 1248 of 2003, the Merchant Shipping (Categorisation of Registries of Relevant British Possessions) Order 2003, as amended, provides for St Helena to be a **Category 2** Registry which permits St Helena to register commercial ships and yachts of up to 150 gross tons, and pleasure vessels; that is, those not operated commercially of up to 400 gross tons.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the UK and the St Helena Government (SHG) sets out the responsibilities and conditions mutually agreed for the operation by SHG as the Maritime Administration of its Category 2 Shipping Registry.

St Helena's Ship Registry is a British Ship Registry, flying the Red Ensign, and as such is a member of the prestigious Red Ensign Group (REG).

2.3 Local Safety Standards

In addressing international obligations, it is recognised that there is a lack of local safety standards. St Helena's maritime sector encompasses a broad range of activities, commercial and non-commercial. The Maritime Authority's role extends to overseeing these activities and to ensure that appropriate safety standards, aligned with best practice, are implemented over time, with supporting policy and legislation.

3. Strategic Framework Purpose

The strategic framework establishes St Helena's approach to maritime and supports the SHG in meeting the Aim and Objectives herein to achieve full compliance with relevant maritime international obligations, in accordance with the mandatory III Code, and national obligations that meet the needs of the local sector.

3.1 Aim

The Aim is to develop and implement a maritime administration that meets compliance requirements for maritime safety and environmental protection, in adherence of international maritime obligations.

1. Safety of Life on all registered vessels and vessels in St Helena waters
2. Minimal risk of pollution to the marine environment

3.2 Objectives

1. Provide a consistent approach for SHG to meet the requirements of the III Code and relevant safety standards.
2. Achieve and maintain the ability to effectively implement and enforce relevant international obligations and demonstrate compliance.
3. Improve overall performance and capability as a Flag, Port and Coastal State by continuous monitoring, review and evaluation.
4. Ensure the development, effective implementation and enforcement of legislation, policies, procedures and guidance is continuous in meeting compliance requirements.
5. Ensure that competent personnel and sufficient resources and systems are in place.
6. Enhance awareness and co-operation between the respective SHG portfolios, agencies, entities and relevant stakeholders to develop a collaborative approach to meeting and demonstrating compliance.
7. Continuously review the framework to achieve, maintain and improve the overall organisational performance and capability for all maritime matters.
8. Link the work to wider strategies within SHG to include tourism, economic development, environmental, health, customs, immigration, fishing, passenger carriage, safety and security and pollution policies to ensure a holistic approach is taken to maritime matters.

3.3 Alignment with SHG Vision and Strategy

The St Helena Maritime Strategic framework ensures that the aim aligns with the strategic objectives stated in the 'St Helena Government Vision and Strategy April 2022 - March 2025', specifically:

Strategic Objective 18:

Develop policies which protect the Island from increasing external threats and risks.

Strategic Objective 33:
Ensure compliance with local and international obligations.

Annexes

Annex A – Maritime Authority Advisory Board Terms of Reference

1 Introduction and Context

- 1.1 The purpose of this document is to set out the terms of reference, composition and operating arrangements of the Maritime Authority Advisory Board (MAAB).
- 1.2 The UK is one of the International Maritime Organization's (IMO) Member States and a signatory to international maritime conventions. The UK Member State comprises the UK, its Crown Dependencies and Overseas Territories who operate British Shipping Registers and is collectively known as the Red Ensign Group (REG). Under the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS) the UK has devolved implementation of the duties, obligations and responsibilities for Flag, Port and Coastal State to the individual respective REG members.
- 1.3 St Helena is a Category 2 REG member.
- 1.4 The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), is an executive agency of the UK Department for Transport and on behalf of the UK Secretary of State, is responsible for oversight of the UK state, which includes the Overseas Territories (OT) and Crown Dependencies (CD), meeting its compliance requirements.
The MCA carries out two distinct roles:-
 1. To ensure that the UK Ship Registries, as members of the Red Ensign Group (REG), inclusive of the OT's and CD's, meet the necessary compliance requirements and where appropriate are equivalent to that of the UK register
 2. To perform as the Maritime administration of the UK, inclusive of the OT's and CD's
- 1.5 In November 2021 the St Helena Government (SHG) created the St Helena Maritime Authority (and its position as the Competent Authority for maritime matters). This is the first ever Maritime Authority for St Helena, and is compliant with the Merchant Shipping Ordinance 2021.
- 1.6 The St Helena Maritime Authority, within the portfolio for Safety, Security and Home Affairs (SSHA), has implemented a Maritime Authority Advisory Board (MAAB). This is to recognise St Helena's international obligations, including those Flag, Port and Coastal State duties in the IMO Instruments Implementation Code (III Code), and the need for acceptable safety standards within the local maritime community.
- 1.7 The MAAB supersedes the Maritime Project Board which dissolved in November 2021.

2 Aim and Objectives

- 2.1 The aim of the Board is to:

Develop and implement a maritime administration that meets compliance requirements for maritime safety and environmental protection, in adherence of our international maritime obligations.

2.2 The Objectives are to:

- A. Update and advise the Maritime Authority on any and all matters pertaining to the III Code, and relevant safety standards, which will have either a strategic or operational impact on St Helena's maritime safety and security obligations.
- B. Promote the requirements of the III Code, and relevant safety standards, to enhance awareness and cooperation within SHG to develop a collaborative approach to demonstrate compliance and routinely collect feedback from relevant stakeholders on how international obligations are maintained.
- C. Ensure that overall performance and capability as a Flag, Port, and Coastal state is achieved, maintained and improved by continuous monitoring, review and evaluation, having oversight of the recommendations made by the MCA and ensuring actions are addressed within appropriate timelines.
- D. Monitor international maritime standards and obligations through liaison with the MCA, and provide guidance and/or recommendations on their appropriateness to St Helena.
- E. Ensure maritime compliance requirements and strategies are appropriately communicated within SHG and that appropriate legislative arrangements are in place.
- F. Recommend methods of implementation and enforcement through issuing and reviewing legislation, policies, procedures and guidance, to ensure maritime compliance requirements are met.
- G. Seek to identify and eliminate causes of actual and potential non-compliance by monitoring reports of post incident and exercise reviews and provide recommendations to the relevant SHG portfolios.
- H. Create and/or take part in opportunities to maintain relationships with all relevant stakeholders within the REG to continue a collaborative working approach.
- J. Ensure that as a Ships Registry, the Category 2 Quality Objectives, maintaining international obligations are achieved.

3 Membership of the Maritime Authority Advisory Board

3.1 Membership shall comprise of the following:

- Head of Maritime (Chair)
- Deputy Head of Maritime
- Harbour Master
- Sea Rescue Manager

- Environment Representative from the Environment, Natural Resources and Planning Portfolio
- Head of Strategy and Infrastructure for Safety, Security & Home Affairs Portfolio
- Secretary

3.2 Additional members when required:

On occasion, SHG officers, elected members and representatives from other governmental and non-governmental organisations may advise, as and when necessary, but will not be a substantive member of the MAAB.

4 Accountability

4.1 The Board is operationally accountable to the Portfolio Director (PD) and to the Minister for Safety, Security and Home Affairs Portfolio in accordance with the Constitution. The Chair will submit timely updates, as to the outcome of each meeting, to the PD and referred to the Minister at advisory board level.

5 Frequency of Meetings and Agenda Items

5.1 The MAAB shall meet every month, or as deemed necessary.

5.2 Prior to a meeting, members will be invited to highlight items they would like to be included within the agenda. Any relevant papers will be circulated one week prior to the meeting to allow members to have sufficient time to read.

5.3 Before the close of the meeting, actions, responsibilities and completion dates will be agreed by members. Where members agree that one or more members complete an action, it should, as far as possible, be completed within the time specified.

5.4 A set of draft minutes will be produced by the Secretary and all members will be provided with an opportunity to comment on the contents before agreeing a final version. Once the minutes are approved, this will be shared with the SS&HA PD and Minister.

5.5 Where recommendations/actions are required to be escalated to the relevant portfolios to obtain approval or a decision, the appropriate briefing papers and supporting documentation will be coordinated and issued by the Secretary. Both the PD and Minister SS&HA will be appraised of the situation.

6 Proxies and Quorum

6.1 When the Chair is unable to attend, they may nominate another member to Chair.

6.2 Members of the MAAB shall nominate a proxy to attend a meeting if the member is unable to attend.

- 6.3 The Chair will be informed of the substitution at least one working day prior to the scheduled nominated meeting.
- 6.4 The nominated proxy shall provide relevant comments/feedback, of the MAAB member they are representing.
- 6.5 A minimum of four members of the group must be present to form a quorum and proceed with the meeting.

7 Working arrangements for ad hoc groups

- 7.1 The MAAB may be supported by ad hoc groups established by the MAAB to discuss specific issues.
- 7.2 MAAB members may participate in any such groups relevant to their area of interest. The Chair of each group will be determined by its members.
- 7.3 The progress and/or outcome(s) of discussions of a group will be fed back to the MAAB, by the Chair of the group for information/agreement purposes.
- 7.4 Specific outcomes or targets will be provided to the group by the MAAB.

