

Press release

22 May 2026

PARIS MOU 59TH COMMITTEE MEETS IN GLASGOW, UNITED KINGDOM

The Paris Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control (Paris MoU) successfully concluded its 59th Committee meeting in Glasgow, held from 18 to 22 May 2026. The meeting was formally opened by Ms. Virginia McVea, Chief Executive Officer of the UK's Maritime and Coastguard Agency, and chaired by Mr. Brian Hogan. The discussions marked significant progress in further enhancing maritime safety, environmental protection, and seafarer welfare.

On a broader strategic level, the Committee noted satisfactory progress on the follow-up actions from the 2017 Vancouver Joint Ministerial Conference. In line with these long-term strategic goals, in light of previously agreed amendments to the Paris MOU and with the amended EU Port State Control Directive effective 6 July 2027, significant advances were made to progress these amendments for an aligned commencement date. This alignment will introduce various updates, most notably changes to flag State and Recognized Organisation (RO) performance calculations and new environmental parameters within the Ship Risk Profile. The necessity of these evolving measures was underscored by the official 2025 statistics. The Committee noted a continuous rise in the detention rate to 4.18% in 2025 (up from 4.03% in 2024 and 3.81% in 2023), reinforcing the critical role of Port State Control as a vital safety net.

This safety net faces additional challenges from deceptive maritime practices, which the Committee discussed with concern. The growing number of ships operating with fraudulent registrations and certificates has prompted the Committee to develop practical guidance for handling different scenarios of suspected ships, ensuring a harmonised regional response to counter these practices. Concurrently, given the inherent limitations of PSC in addressing risks from ships that intentionally avoid calling at Paris MoU ports, the Committee reiterated the urgent need for enhanced international cooperation and ongoing information exchange.

A key outcome of the meeting was the decision to initiate a process to develop a harmonised, voluntary Port State Control approach for fishing vessels of 24 metres in length and over. A dedicated task force will now develop the core elements required to support this initiative.

Alongside this important decision, the Committee extensively focused on the wider harmonisation of inspection procedures and the continuous enhancement of the Paris MoU's internal training initiatives. In addition, the Committee considered ways to assist other regional Port State Control MoUs in training their Port State Control Officers (PSCOs) by providing experts and through exchange programmes.

The Committee also maintained its focus on rapid global technological shifts, particularly ongoing developments in digitisation, alternative fuels, Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships, and Alternative Design & Arrangements. To ensure the inspection regime is fully prepared as these innovations scale up, the Paris MoU is progressively updating its inspection guidance and operational procedures.

The Committee reviewed the outcomes of the joint Concentrated Inspection Campaign on Ballast Water Management, held from 1 September to 30 November 2025. While compliance with core documentation was generally high, the main finding revealed a distinct gap between formal compliance and practical operational effectiveness on board. Having approved plans and certificates on paper did not always translate to reality, as shortcomings frequently arose regarding the operational status of the systems and crew familiarity with specific procedures. The Paris MoU emphasises that ensuring consistent, correct operation and robust crew training remains essential to achieving the environmental objectives of the Convention.

The Committee considered the progress achieved in preparing for upcoming joint Concentrated Inspection Campaigns with the Tokyo MoU, reconfirming Cargo Securing for 2026 and Enclosed Space Entry for 2027. In parallel, the Committee reviewed progress made in enhancing the overall effectiveness of inspection campaigns. This development builds on extensive experience gained from Focused Inspection Campaigns conducted on a trial basis over recent years, covering diverse operational areas such as Pilot Transfer Arrangements, ECDIS, the Galley, EPIRB, fire doors, CLC Insurance Certificates, and most recently, the Safe Stowage and Handling of Large Materials and Heavy Spare Parts. The outcomes of this enhancement process will lead to updates in the policy governing joint inspection campaigns with the Tokyo MoU.

The high level of commitment within the Paris MoU was reflected in the robust attendance at the meeting, which was joined by the vast majority of Paris MoU member Authorities, the European Commission, and EMSA. Active participation included observers from the Abuja, Black Sea, Caribbean, Indian Ocean, Mediterranean, and Tokyo MoUs, alongside the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), while the Viña del Mar Agreement participated via online proceedings. The widespread participation of

observers from international organisations and partner MoUs underscored the cooperative strength of the international port State control community.

In closing the meeting, Mr. Brian Hogan expressed his sincere appreciation to the United Kingdom for its warm hospitality. He extended his gratitude to the member Authorities, the European Commission, EMSA, the information system manager, the dedicated PSCOs worldwide, the ILO, the IMO, partner MoUs, and the Paris MoU Secretariat for their vital contributions and enduring spirit of cooperation.

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Notes to editors:

Regional Port State Control was initiated in 1982 when the maritime Authorities of fourteen European countries agreed to co-ordinate their port State inspection effort under a voluntary agreement known as the Paris Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control (Paris MOU). Currently 27 maritime Authorities are member of the Paris MOU. The European Commission, although not a signatory to the Paris MOU, is also a member of the Committee.

The Paris MoU is supported by a central database THETIS hosted and operated by the European Maritime Safety Agency in Lisbon. Inspection results are available for search and daily updating by MoU Members. Inspection results can be consulted on the Paris MoU public website and are published on the Equasis website.

The Secretariat of the MoU is provided by the Netherlands Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management and located in The Hague.

Port State Control is a check on visiting foreign ships to verify their compliance with international rules on safety, pollution prevention and seafarers living and working conditions. It is a means of enforcing compliance in cases where the owner and flag State have failed in their responsibility to implement or ensure compliance. The port State can require deficiencies to be corrected, and detain the ship for this purpose, if necessary. It is therefore also a port State's defence against visiting substandard shipping.