



Department
for Transport

MAIB
MARINE ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION BRANCH

Business Plan 2017-18

Published: 19 April 2017

Contents

1. Purpose	3
2. Aims and Values	4
3. MAIB Objectives	5
4. The Work	6
5. AIB Joint Activities and Initiatives	11
6. Finance	12

1. Purpose

- 1.1 The Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) is an operationally independent unit of the Department for Transport. The MAIB contributes to improving marine safety by determining the causes and circumstances of marine accidents, and working with others to reduce the likelihood of such accidents recurring in the future. This Business Plan covers the financial year 2017-18.
- 1.2 The MAIB was formed in 1989 following recommendations made as a consequence of the *Herald of Free Enterprise* disaster of 1987, when it was recognised that the UK needed to separate the roles of accident investigation from those of regulation and enforcement.
- 1.3 Based in Southampton, the MAIB is structured to be able to deploy staff in response to accidents without delay. The Branch currently has 36 staff, comprising inspectors who have a senior professional background at sea and the marine industry, supported by specialist staff from the technical, IT, publishing and administrative disciplines.
- 1.4 The legislative framework under which the MAIB operates is currently provided in The Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations 2012. These Regulations specify the purpose of investigations, make provision for their scope and conduct, define the accidents which may be investigated, and set out the requirements for reporting accidents and the publication of reports and summaries.

2. Aims and Values

2.1 The MAIB aims to improve marine safety by:

- Carrying out investigations to determine the causes and circumstances of accidents;
- Making recommendations to reduce the likelihood of such accidents recurring in the future;
- Increasing awareness of how accidents happen, through initiatives aimed at the seafarer and maritime organisations, so as to encourage better and safer working practices in all sectors;
- Continuing to develop national and international co-operation in marine accident investigations.

2.2 To satisfy the public, and the maritime community, that marine accidents are investigated properly in an efficient and timely manner.

2.3 Fulfilling the UK's international obligations to the European Union and the International Maritime Organization (IMO) to carry out no-blame safety investigations into marine accidents and incidents.

3. MAIB Objectives

“The sole objective of the investigation of an accident under the Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations 2012 shall be the prevention of future accidents through the ascertainment of its causes and circumstances. It shall not be the purpose of such an investigation to determine liability nor, except so far as is necessary to achieve its objective, to apportion blame.”

(Regulation 5 of the Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations 2012)

3.1 The focus of the MAIB’s efforts will continue to be to conduct accident investigations of the highest standard in order to achieve the aims set out in Section 2. In addition, in 2017/18 the MAIB Management Team has identified the following specific objectives:

- To maintain the MAIB’s international reputation as one of the world leaders in its field, through the efficient use of available resources, and continued improvement of the Branch’s in-house management procedures.
- To continue to explore the most effective ways to deliver safety messages to stakeholders, particularly using the Branch’s social media presence.
- To complete the formal review process of the Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations 2012 following the Post-Implementation Review that was carried out in 2016. This will confirm the statutory basis for the MAIB’s work for the next five years.
- Following the formal review, to issue a revised Marine Guidance Note (MGN), replacing MGN 458, aimed at providing all stakeholders with improved advice and instruction.
- To maximise the potential and wellbeing of staff through professional training and development.

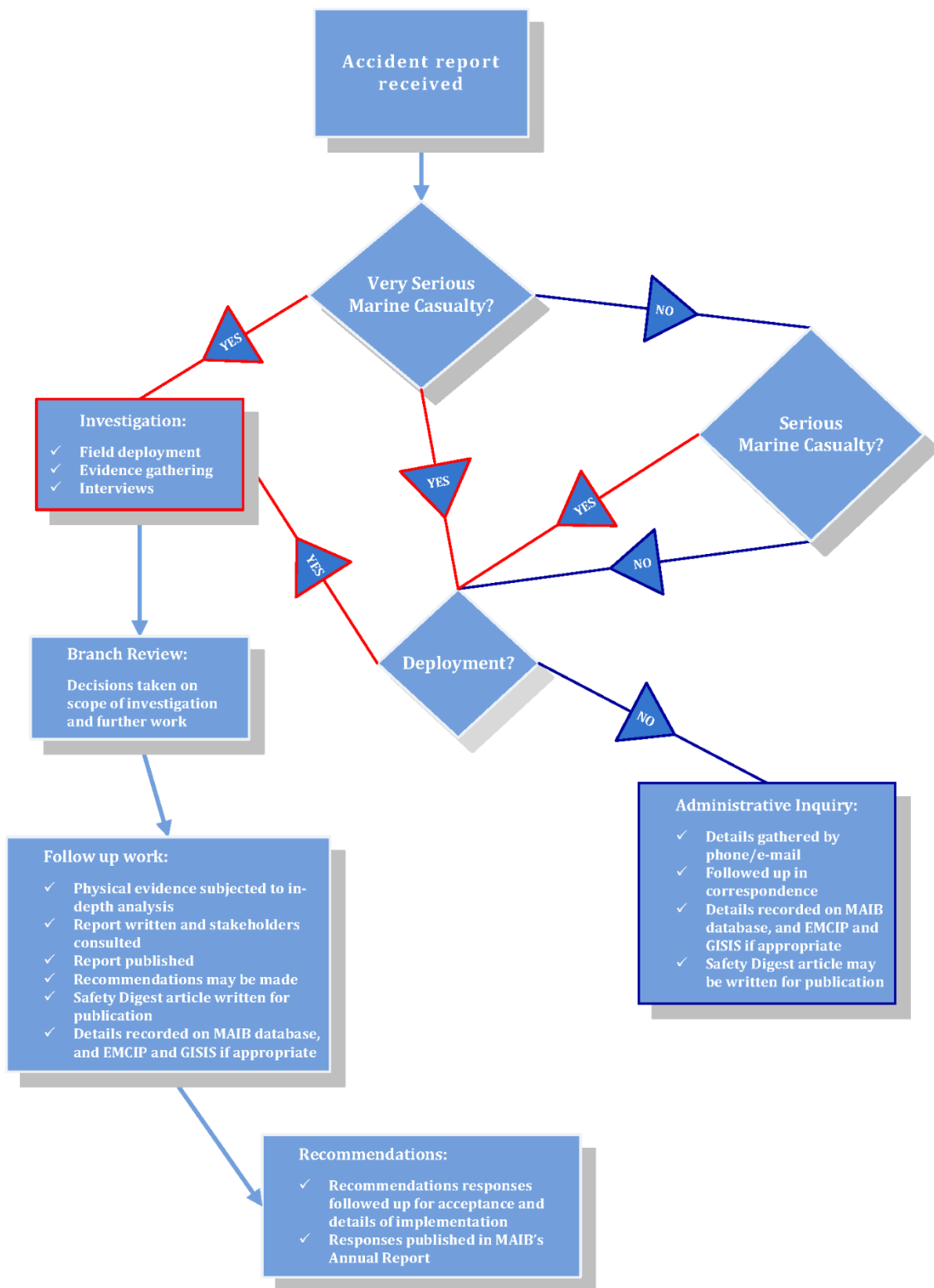
4. The Work

Investigation Process

- 4.1 The MAIB receives around 1,200 reports of accidents and incidents each year. The simplified schematic on page 7 shows the sequence of events involved in investigating an accident.
- 4.2 When the decision is made to investigate an accident, a team of inspectors is deployed to gather evidence and conduct interviews in order to gain a proper understanding of the circumstances and causes of the accident or incident. After initial analysis, the findings are presented to the Chief Inspector for a decision about the scope of the investigation and to establish the need for any urgent safety recommendations. Further work may then be undertaken and recommendations formulated where necessary (see below). Draft investigation reports are subject to a statutory 30-day consultation process, the results of which are considered before the final report is published.
- 4.3 Other investigations usually take the form of **Administrative Inquiries**, which normally involve the gathering of evidence through correspondence or by phone, although face to face interviews and site visits are possible in some circumstances.
- 4.4 Details of all accidents and incidents are recorded on the European Marine Casualty Information Platform (EMCIP), and those that fall within the remit of the IMO's Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS) database are transferred accordingly.

Recommendations and Stakeholders

- 4.5 MAIB's investigations usually result in the Branch making recommendations to those stakeholders best placed to implement them. These can include vessel owners and operators, port and harbour authorities, industry and regulatory bodies, for the purpose of ensuring that action is taken that will help prevent a recurrence. Industry experts are consulted to ensure that recommendations are proportionate and achievable.
- 4.6 Recipients of MAIB recommendations are required to inform the Chief Inspector whether or not they accept the recommendation(s), and provide details of their implementation. The Chief Inspector makes publically available the status of all recommendations in his Annual Report to the Secretary of State.



Promulgation of Safety Lessons

- 4.7 A key facet of the MAIB's work is the promulgation to its stakeholders of safety lessons identified during its investigations. Importance is attached to identifying the optimum means for disseminating these messages most effectively.
- 4.8 **Investigation Reports** are publicly available, digitally and in print, and contain a factual account, analysis, conclusions and recommendations.
- Safety Bulletins** communicate urgent safety recommendations that must be brought to the industry's attention before the main investigation report is published.
- Where appropriate, investigation reports are accompanied by **Safety Flyers**, which are short descriptions of the key findings aimed at being read by key stakeholders as quickly as possible.
- 4.9 **Safety Digests** are produced every six months and contain anonymised articles based on investigations and administrative enquiries, with an emphasis on the lessons to be learned. Specialised fishing vessel and leisure craft editions are also produced on an occasional basis.
- 4.10 MAIB's **website** - www.gov.uk/maib - is a resource delivering safety messages in a number of forms. As well as containing every investigation report the Branch has published since it began operating in 1989, the website continues to be developed with further work planned. MAIB's YouTube, Facebook and Twitter presence will continue to be an important means of keeping people informed.
- 4.11 An **Annual Report** to the Secretary of State is produced, providing a comprehensive set of accident statistics derived from the MAIB database, and a register of recommendations made during the year and the responses made to them.
- 4.12 **Information Leaflets** are published on the MAIB website and carried on deployments by inspectors, and are used to inform stakeholders involved in an investigation about the role of the MAIB and the processes involved.

Coroners' Inquests and Fatal Accident Inquiries

- 4.13 MAIB Inspectors will continue to provide support to Coroners and Procurators Fiscal in the event of deaths caused by marine accidents which occur in UK territorial waters or on UK registered vessels overseas. Such support is limited by the provisions of the Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations 2012 that relate to confidentiality and the use of evidence. However, MAIB inspectors will explain the contents of MAIB reports during such Inquests and Fatal Accident Inquiries.

Presentations and other external commitments

- 4.14 MAIB staff will continue to engage with industry sectors by delivering a programme of presentations to relevant stakeholder organisations. This will include nautical and fishing colleges, the police and fire services, insurers, maritime trade organisations, and leisure craft organisations.

International

- 4.15 The Chief Inspector is the current chairman of the European Commission's Permanent Co-operation Framework established to promote the development and application of common working methodologies by EU Member State marine accident investigation organisations. The next meeting is planned to take place in June 2017.
- 4.16 The Chief Inspector represents the UK at the Marine Accident Investigators' International Forum (MAIIF) and plays a leading role in its European sub-forum E-MAIIF. MAIIF is an international non-profit organisation dedicated to the advancement of maritime safety and the prevention of marine pollution through the exchange of ideas, experiences and information acquired in marine accident investigation. Its purpose is to promote and improve marine accident investigation, and to foster co-operation and communication between marine accident investigators. MAIIF has Observer status at the IMO.
- 4.17 The MAIB will continue to offer training for accident investigation practitioners from other countries' administrations. This includes specific training on the recovery and analysis of evidence obtained from Voyage Data Recorders (VDRs) and other electronic recording devices, but also involves longer term placements whereby an investigator is embedded within the MAIB inspectorate for several months.
- 4.18 The MAIB is an active member of the UK delegation at the IMO's Sub-Committee on Implementation of IMO Instruments (III) and participates in the Working Group on Casualty Analysis. This group distils lessons drawn from the analysis of accident investigations, so that they can be recommended for consideration by the relevant IMO sub-committees. The Committee meets annually with its next meeting in September 2017, but is active throughout the year via its Casualty Analysis Correspondence Group that is currently under the co-ordination of the UK.

Technical Developments

- 4.19 The Marine Accident Data Analysis Suite (MADAS) will continue to be developed in co-operation with the National Transportation Safety Board of the USA. This has become the industry-standard platform for marine electronic evidence analysis.
- 4.20 Developments within the fields of electronic navigation, modern propulsion systems, and other emerging maritime technologies will continue to be kept under review to ensure the MAIB inspectorate are sufficiently informed in these areas.

Training and Development

- 4.21 MAIB Inspectors are required to develop and maintain an extensive range of professional skills. The Branch maintains an accreditation scheme comprising theoretical and practical modules covering all aspects of marine accident investigation. On recruitment, all inspectors are expected to successfully complete the accreditation scheme and achieve a Post Graduate Certificate in Marine Accident Investigation within two years.
- 4.22 All Inspectors receive continued professional development and training in core areas such as interview techniques, human factor investigation, and evidence handling, making full use of post-graduate courses where available.
- 4.23 The Branch is continuing to maintain its training and development programme for all staff for job-specific skills as well as personal development. The MAIB has held Investors in People accreditation since 1996 and was successfully re-assessed in April 2016.

5. AIB Joint Activities and Initiatives

- 5.1 The Board of Accident Investigation Branches will continue to deal with governance issues. It is chaired by the DfT's Director General for International, Security and Environment and is attended by the Chief Inspectors of the Air, Marine and Rail Accident Investigation Branches, as well as other DfT staff.
- 5.1 Under the auspices of the separate Accident Investigation Branch Chief Inspectors' Board, the following joint initiatives have been agreed to take advantage of synergies between Branches:
- Continue to develop common processes and practices for accident investigation.
 - Share technical facilities, equipment and expertise where appropriate, including cross-Branch auditing, in order to improve efficiency and effectiveness.
 - Use and continue to develop joint accident investigation training for new and established Inspectors.
 - Share resources and expertise in public relations, recruitment, career progression and personal development.
 - Work will be continued on the establishment of a Memorandum of Understanding with the Chief Coroner to establish consistent and effective ways of working.
- 5.2 A Head of Communications, who serves all three AIBs, co-ordinates and promotes the safety messages identified during investigations to the wider industries and public.

6. Finance

6.1 MAIB is funded from the DfT's programme budget. Where services are provided to other countries or international organisations those costs will be recovered. The budgets for the 3 years of this Business Plan are shown in the table below, together with the budget for 2016/17.

	2016/17	Year 1 2017/18	Year 2* 2018/19	Year 3* 2019/20
Budget	£k	£k	£k	£k
Pay	2841	2803	2939	2959
Non-pay	1146	1167	1188	1194
Total	3987	3970	4127	4153

* Provisional figures