

SB1/2026

FEBRUARY 2026

**Extracts from
The United Kingdom
Merchant Shipping
(Accident Reporting and
Investigation) Regulations
2012 Regulation 5:**

"The sole objective of a safety investigation into an accident under these Regulations 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 16(1):

"The Chief Inspector may at any time make recommendations as to how future accidents may be prevented."

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NOTE

This bulletin is not written with litigation in mind and, pursuant to Regulation 14(14) of the Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations 2012, shall be inadmissible in any judicial proceedings whose purpose, or one of whose purposes is to attribute or apportion liability or blame.

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Safety bulletin (video) following the investigation of the capsize and sinking of the tug

Biter

with the loss of two lives,
while assisting the passenger vessel

Hebridean Princess

off Greenock, Scotland

on 24 February 2023



Biter and Hebridean Princess

MAIB SAFETY BULLETIN (VIDEO) 1/2026

On 13 November 2024, the Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) published a report (MAIB report 17/2024¹) into the capsizing and sinking of the tug *Biter* with the loss of two lives. That MAIB investigation was the eighth involving the capsizing of a conventional tug since 1998, a series of accidents that has resulted in the loss of nine lives. The MAIB has now produced a [safety bulletin video](#) to promulgate the key safety lessons from the *Biter/Hebridean Princess* investigation to the marine industry.

Regulation 16 of the *Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations 2012* provides for the Chief Inspector of Marine Accidents to make recommendations at any time as to how future accidents might be prevented.

A recommendation has therefore been issued to the **UK Chamber of Shipping**, **UK Harbour Masters' Association**, the **UK Maritime Pilots' Association**, the **British Tugowners Association**, **British Ports Association** and **The Workboat Association** to:

S2026/122 Promulgate the Marine Accident Investigation Branch's safety bulletin video on the key safety lessons from the *Biter/Hebridean Princess* investigation to their members.

Recipients should provide the Chief Inspector of Marine Accidents with details of the measures taken to implement the above, or otherwise, under regulation 16(4).

This safety bulletin, containing safety lessons, has been produced for marine safety purposes only, on the basis of information available to date.



Captain Andrew Moll OBE
Chief Inspector of Marine Accidents

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Safety recommendations shall in no case create a presumption of blame or liability

Issued February 2026

Front cover images courtesy of [Hebridean Island Cruises Ltd](#) and Kevin Kelway ([Dorcas Media](#)).

This bulletin is also available on our website: www.gov.uk/maib
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¹ <https://www.gov.uk/maib-reports/girting-and-capsizing-of-tug-biter-with-the-loss-of-two-lives-while-assisting-passenger-vessel-hebridean-princess>