

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 17/2024<sup>1</sup>) 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**

### 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 not be admissible in any judicial proceedings whose purpose, or one of whose purposes, is to apportion liability or blame.

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](#)).

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/maib-reports/girting-and-capsize-of-tug-biter-with-the-loss-of-two-lives-while-assisting-passenger-vessel-hebridean-princess>