



MARINE GUIDANCE NOTE

MGN 564 (M+F) Amendment 2

Marine Casualty and Marine Incident Reporting

Notice to all Owners, Operators, Masters, Skippers, Officers and Crews of Merchant Ships, Fishing Vessels and Pleasure Vessels, and Harbour Authorities, VTS personnel, Marine Pilots and UK Inland Waterway Authorities

This notice replaces MGN 564 (M+F) published March 2019

Summary

MGN 564 (M+F) has been amended to reflect revisions to marine casualty and marine incident reporting requirements resulting from the Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations 2026 that entered force on 15 May 2026.

1. Introduction/background

1.1 The Marine Accident Investigation Branch (MAIB) investigates marine casualties involving UK vessels worldwide and vessels of any flag in UK territorial waters. The MAIB's purpose is to help prevent further avoidable accidents from recurring, it does not seek to apportion blame or establish liability. The MAIB is responsible for:

- Carrying out investigations to determine the causes of accidents at sea.
- Publishing reports that include safety recommendations on improving safety at sea.
- Increasing awareness of how marine accidents happen.
- Improving national and international cooperation in marine accident investigations.

1.2 The MAIB's reports draw attention to lessons learned from marine casualties, to inform the shipping industry, the leisure craft community and the public of those lessons.

1.3 This MGN provides guidance on the legal obligation to notify marine casualties and marine incidents contained in The Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations 2026. [Click here](#)

1.4 The reporting obligations are set out in regulation 6 of the 2026 Regulations.

2. Who must report

2.1 The master / skipper¹ of any ship must notify the MAIB of any marine casualty or marine incident (see what to report below).

2.2 The ship's owner² must notify the MAIB of any marine casualty or marine incident, unless they are satisfied that the master / skipper or senior surviving officer has made the report.

2.3 In addition to the above, the following must notify the MAIB of any marine casualty or marine incident, if it occurs in their area of responsibility:

- Harbour authorities, for occurrences in or adjacent to their harbour area.
- The person, authority or body having responsibility for an inland waterway.
- An official of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), for all occurrences in UK waters.

2.4 The duty to notify does not apply to UK ships that are:

- Recreational craft hired on a bareboat basis, unless the accident involves explosion, fire, death, serious injury, the capsizing of a power-driven craft or boat, or severe damage to the environment, or
- Non-UK ships unless they are operating in the jurisdiction of a harbour authority or carrying passengers to or from a UK port.

2.5 Note, there is no requirement for the master / skipper or owner of a pleasure vessel³ to notify the MAIB of a marine casualty or marine incident, unless it is being operated for temporary commercial use under the Intended Pleasure Vessels (IPV) Code.

2.6 Voluntary notifications relating to pleasure vessels, though not required, are welcomed by the MAIB to facilitate analysis of trends in the pleasure vessel sector.

¹ or the ship's senior surviving officer

² or where a ship is managed by a person other than the owner, the manager

³ Refer to The Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations 2026, regulation 7(2) for the definition of a pleasure vessel.

2.7 All notifications are treated confidentially, and a reporter's identity will not be released.

3. What to report

3.1 Subject to the exclusions set out above, it is a legal requirement that any marine casualty or marine incident is notified to the MAIB. Any notification made to the MAIB does not remove any obligation to notify other organisations.

3.2 A marine casualty is an event or sequence of events that occurred directly in connection with the operation of a ship, and resulted in:

- The death of, or serious injury⁴ to a person.
- The loss of a person from a ship.
- The loss, presumed loss or abandonment of a ship.
- Material damage⁵ to a ship.
- The stranding or disabling of a ship, or the involvement of a ship in a collision;
- material damage to marine infrastructure external to a ship, that could seriously endanger the safety of the ship, another ship or any individual;
- severe damage to the environment, or the potential for severe damage to the environment caused by damage to a ship or ships;

3.3 A marine incident means an event, or sequence of events, which occurred directly in connection with the operation of a ship, that do not meet the criteria to be classified as a marine casualty but that endangered or, if not corrected would endanger, the safety of the ship, its occupants or any other person or the environment.

Examples of marine incidents include:

- Close-quarters situations where urgent action was required to avoid collision.
- Any event that had the potential to result in death or serious injury.
- A fire that did not result in material damage.
- An unintended temporary grounding on soft mud, where there was no risk of stranding or material damage.

⁴ In this context a serious injury renders the person unable to perform their usual duties for >72 hours, or requires their admittance to a hospital / medical facility for >24 hours.

⁵ In this context, material damage means the structural integrity, performance or operational characteristics of the ship or marine infrastructure are significantly affected, and requires major repair or replacement of a major component or components, or the destruction of marine infrastructure or a ship.

- A person overboard who was recovered without serious injury.
- Snagging of fishing gear resulting in a dangerous heel.

3.4 Note, a marine casualty or marine incident does not include a deliberate act or omission that is intended to cause harm to the safety of a ship, an individual (e.g. assault, suicide or homicide) or the environment.

3.5 These Regulations also apply, with modifications, in relation to watercraft as provided for by regulation 25 and the Merchant Shipping (Watercraft) Order 2023. This includes certain mechanically powered craft such as personal watercraft, rigid inflatable boats and hovercraft where they fall within the scope of the relevant legislation

4. Do not report

4.1 There is no requirement to report:

- Defects to equipment and vessel detentions, unless they are related to a marine casualty or marine incident.
- Injuries to passengers that did not result from activities connected with the operation of the vessel. For example: a passenger suffering a fall on board a ship, where the ship's movement, design, or acts or omissions by crew were not contributing factors.
- Damage or injuries occurring ashore, including the quayside, which do not involve the ship's equipment.

5. When to report

5.1 All marine casualties and marine incidents must be notified to the MAIB as soon as practicable by the quickest means available (see 'How to Report', below).

5.2 Notification must not be delayed until the completion of an internal company investigation.

6. How to report

6.1 The MAIB's 24 hour accident reporting line: +44 (0)23 8023 2527.

6.2 Information can also be submitted using the MAIB's Accident Report Form (ARF), which is available on the Branch's website: www.gov.uk/MAIB. On the home page, click 'Reporting an Accident', then the 'Accident Report Form' link.

6.3 Comprehensive completion of the form will avoid the need for the MAIB to make follow-up enquiries to obtain missing information.

6.4 Once completed, the form may be submitted electronically or printed and sent by post to:

OFFICIAL

MAIB, 1st Floor Spring Place
105 Commercial Road
Southampton
SO15 1GH

6.5 For general enquiries about marine casualty or marine incident notification, to follow up on a notification already made, or for assistance in completing the ARF:

Tel: +44 (0)23 8039 5500 (switchboard)
E-mail: maib@df.gov.uk

6.6 The switchboard telephone number and the e-mail account are not monitored outside office hours.

7. Evidence

7.1 Following a marine casualty or marine incident, the MAIB may require access to additional information and evidence. In this regard, all charts, log books, recorded data (hard copy or electronic) relating to the period prior to, during and after the marine casualty or marine incident, and all other documents, records and equipment which may be pertinent to the marine casualty or marine incident must be preserved.

7.2 Where a vessel is fitted with a Voyage Data Recorder, the data recorded by it must be saved immediately and steps taken to prevent the data becoming overwritten.

8. Penalties

Note, it is an offence under The Merchant Shipping (Accident Reporting and Investigation) Regulations 2026, Regulation 24, not to report a marine casualty or marine incident or provide the information required without reasonable cause.

More information

Marine Accident Investigation Branch
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Email: iso@maib.gov.uk

Website: www.gov.uk/maib

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