

EBIS transition to OCIMF – FAQ

This FAQ document has been developed to try and address the questions and concerns you may have regarding the transition of EBIS towards the administrative support of OCIMF.

We are at the start of the transition process and this FAQ reflects the questions tabled during the Extraordinary AGM and any other areas that where additional clarification may help. The FAQ document will be updated as the process progresses.

A Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between EBIS and OCIMF is currently being developed. Any aspects of the MoU that are either new or impact this FAQ will be updated in the FAQ when the MoU has been reviewed.

If you have any questions, please contact the Chairman of the EBIS Board of Directors. (Mr. Robert Brook at Robert.Brook@Chevron.Com.)

Why does EBIS need to change?

- EBIS has been a member driven organisation without a secretariat for 20 years.
- EBIS thrived because of the support of its members and its industry partners.
- Recent industry events and changes in the circumstances of some members have significantly impacted the future viability of EBIS as it exists.
- EBIS is no longer sustainable under its current structure as a result of these events.

Why OCIMF?

The EBIS Board of Directors explored several options:

- Additional member support to maintain EBIS as is.
- Partnering with an independent organisation to run EBIS.
- Transitioning EBIS into an existing industry body.

The third option was evaluated as the best way forward. The choice of either CDI or OCIMF was put to a vote of the EBIS membership and OCIMF was selected as the preferred partner for EBIS.

Will this change to EBIS lead to competing barge inspection protocols becoming an issue in mainland Europe?

The vote for OCIMF was not unanimous but a clear majority chose OCIMF and the EBIS board believe that the transition of EBIS to OCIMF will fulfil the desire that a single barge inspection scheme within the inland European region will be achieved.

How will the EBIS committees and the European inland barge inspection protocol be accommodated in the OCIMF structure?

The European Inland and Coastal Barge Focus Group (EICBFG) in OCIMF is responsible for setting training and accreditation requirements of European inland and coastal barge inspectors, the European question sets, and reviewing safety and environmental aspects related to inland and coastal barging in the region for ADN and non-ADN vessels. The EBIS members who join OCIMF as full members will be eligible to have company representatives at the EICBFG. To support the focus group's responsibilities, there is a dedicated secretary assigned from the OCIMF secretariat.

Will the inspection protocol / template change as a result of this transition?

The current EBIS inspection protocol / template structure will be maintained during the transition and for a period of time afterwards.

The EBIS questionnaire sub-committee is currently reviewing the current EBIS inspection protocol (EBIS 8), and the revised protocol (EBIS 9) will be transitioned into OCIMF.

OCIMF's intention is to develop a new questionnaire variant in the SIRE programme based on the latest EBIS templates.

Currently EBIS engages with industry bodies (e.g. EBU, ESO) and involves industry Subject Matter Experts (SMEs) in their questionnaire sub-committee. Will this positive relationship be continued?

The European Inland and Coastal Barge Focus Group (EICBFG), can invite non-members to its meetings as observers and contributors at any time. The only restriction is that if a vote on any aspect is required then non-members are not entitled to vote.

If a work group is formed to review and revise a question set, the group will seek input from industry SMEs.

As the OCIMF headquarters are in London will meetings be held in London?

The European Inland and Coastal Barge Focus Group can choose any location to hold a meeting. Locations are chosen by the focus group members taking into account ease of travel and business needs.

My company is not currently an OCIMF member, how will I get access to barge inspection reports in the future?

Any company that can establish a valid need may request access to the SIRE Programme output from the OCIMF website as a Programme Recipient. The SIRE Programme output consists of; Tanker Management Self Assessment reports when given permission by the submitting organisation. Inspection Reports.

Vessel Particular Questionnaires / Technical Information.

Crew Matrix document (currently tankers only).

As a registered Programme Recipient, a company can download these documents from the SIRE and TMSA database for their own use. The SIRE Programme also contains links to a Vessel Incident Database and PSC Inspection Repository as additional resources. While there is no cost to gain Programme Recipient status there is a cost to purchase Inspection Reports.

Companies that meet the criteria for OCIMF Membership may apply by contacting the secretariat using enquires@ocimf.org. As an OCIMF Member, a company will be able to participate in all forum activities. These activities include, in addition to those outlined for Programme Recipients, participation in committees and work groups that develop industry best practice as well as the commissioning of programme inspections. The cost of OCIMF Membership is \$20,000 per year but has been capped at \$10,000 per year for the last 10 years.

OCIMF is in the process of reviewing the membership structure / criteria as part of a strategy refresh. This may include developing a membership category to better facilitate the type of access required to support company third party barge marine quality assurance activities.

Will my company have to arrange a certain number of inspections when the inspection protocol transitions to OCIMF?

No, the cooperative type of arrangement that was employed under EBIS will be discontinued after the transition i.e. there will no longer be a requirement for a company to conduct a certain number of inspections annually.

How will my company arrange inspections in the future?

Currently only OCIMF Members and a few approved Submitting Organisations can arrange programme inspections.

At this time a SIRE Programme Recipient can only purchase Inspection Reports. (i.e. cannot commission inspections or appoint Inspectors.)

OCIMF recognise that a Programme Recipient transitioning from EBIS, not being able to commission / arrange inspections creates a situation where the recipient is unable to arrange an inspection on vessels they have term-chartered. OCIMF is developing a 'request for inspection' process whereby

'Submitting Members' can commission inspections on behalf of the requestor / Programme Recipient. (A similar system currently exists in the OCIMF Offshore Vessel Inspection Database programme for offshore vessels.)

How will my company pay for inspections they arrange?

Appointing, contracting and reimbursing of OCIMF accredited barge inspectors and / or their inspection company is a matter for each individual Submitting Organisation. OCIMF has no involvement with the commercial contracts between Inspectors / inspection companies and submitting members.

Will my company be able to purchase all the barge inspections I need from OCIMF?

Yes, either Full or Programme Recipient members can download purchased reports to their account either automatically or on an individual basis through the website.

How much will an inspection report from OCIMF cost my company?

The current cost per barge report is 20 (twenty) GBP.

How will OCIMF ensure that all European Inland barges are inspected annually?

OCIMF does not ensure all vessels are inspected. When a vessel requires inspection the vessel operator can request an inspection from an OCIMF Submitting Organisation (process to allow recipient members to commission / arrange an inspection is under development). The Submitting Organisations will determine individually if they have an interest in inspecting the vessel.

How does OCIMF ensure that the quality of the inspection reports is maintained?

Quality assurance of inspections is managed by and is a responsibility of the commissioning OCIMF 'Submitting Organisation'. The 'Submitting Organisation' who commissions the report also checks / validates the report before it is shared with vessel operator for their comments and subsequent publishing in the OCIMF database.

OCIMF has a strict compliance regime for its inspection programmes that is supported by dedicated resources, and an OCIMF Compliance team.

Feedback on an inspection can be provided by all Programme Recipients using the SIRE programme portal, and this will be reviewed by the OCIMF Secretariat.

Will EBIS inspections continue to be hosted on the database supported by Pharox?

No, access to new reports will be through the SIRE website only. EBIS reports published before this date will be available from the EBIS database and supported by Pharox. The transition dates have not yet been set.

What happens to the existing reports on the Pharox database?

Access to old reports will be maintained on the EBIS database supported by Pharox for a period of one year after the transition date to ensure availability of reports is maintained until fully covered within the OCIMF system.

My company's IT systems are set up to accommodate downloading reports from Pharox, how will this change impact my current IT systems?

OCIMF will provide the necessary support to the current EBIS members if the database host changes require a change to their report downloading processes. This will start by registering on the OCIMF website at https://register.ocimf-sire.org/Default_Sire.aspx.

EBIS Members will be required to ensure that their inspection downloading and importing processes are ready in time for the transition to OCIMF.

I currently use a third-party service provider to evaluate my barge inspection reports. Will I be able to continue to use a third-party service provider after the transition to OCIMF?

Yes, OCIMF have similar arrangements to EBIS for allowing third party service providers to evaluate inspection reports on behalf of a member.

As in the previous question, members will be required to ensure that their third-party service providers are aware of the change and will be ready for the change such that they are able to evaluate inspection reports being provided from OCIMF.

Does OCIMF have enough accredited inspectors to conduct the number of inspections required?

OCIMF currently has 16 Category 3 Inspectors dedicated to inspecting inland barges in Europe, this can be supplemented by specially trained ship (Category 1) Inspectors with Category 3 inland familiarisation.

All current OCIMF Cat 3 inspectors in Europe are also EBIS accredited inspectors.

OCIMF has the capacity to train current EBIS Inspectors to inspect under an OCIMF programme. This would be achieved by conducting a Grandfathering course with an examination for existing EBIS inspectors who wish to take up the option. The course will be free to the inspector and conducted in convenient locations. Course duration would be approximately three days.

How does OCIMF ensure the quality of their inspectors?

The quality of inspectors is ensured and maintained through a robust selection and training programme, which includes minimum eligibility criteria, successful completion of new inspector training, periodic refresher courses and a periodic audit by an accredited auditing inspector.

Inspectors are also required to maintain a minimum number of inspections per year.

In addition, the performance of inspectors, including feedback received on their reports, is closely monitored by OCIMF.

I understand that OCIMF has Cat 1 and Cat 3 inspectors, can you please explain what is a Cat 1 and Cat 3 inspector?

OCIMF Cat 1 inspectors are accredited to inspect internationally trading tonnage; i.e. deep sea and coastal ships.

OCIMF Cat 3 inspectors are accredited to inspect local, regional trading tonnage; i.e. inland and coastal barges.

Following on from above question, can a Cat 1 inspector inspect a European inland barge?

Due to the different types of vessels and operations OCIMF recognise the limitations of a Cat 1 inspector being engaged to inspect an inland European barge. OCIMF are investigating the enhancement of training / accreditation and subsequent annotation for a Cat 1 inspector before they can inspect an inland and coastal barge.

Does OCIMF have any ADN expertise within their secretariat?

Currently OCIMF does not have ADN expertise within their secretariat. OCIMF is aware of this knowledge gap and will address it as part of the transition project.

ADN expertise is also provided by the member representatives of the European Inland and Coastal Barge Focus Group and invited observers.

Are all inland European barges registered in the OCIMF database?

Some European inland barges are registered in the OCIMF database.

A process to populate all European Inland barges into the OCIMF database will be progressed as part of the transition. This will require the engagement of barges owners / operators to allow the information to be transferred under GDPR rules.

Are there any other benefits of EBIS transitioning to OCIMF?

Additional advantages of a transition to OCIMF are:

Within Europe there will be one system to follow for inland and coastal vessel inspections, enhancing consistency and efficiency.

As an OCIMF member, there is the opportunity to be involved in the management of OCIMF, its publications, programmes and activities globally. Participation in the committee structure allows contribution and expertise on safety and environmental protection to be shared;

- Through the application of global and regional best practices,
- lessons learnt from all marine incident types,
- and develop focussed improvement within the inland and coastal barge industry.

For organisations who become recipient programme members there is the greater advantage of access to the programme output, be that TMSA submissions with the vessel operator's permission, access to purchase inspection reports of all vessel types in the database, and technical information (vessel particulars) of vessels in the database.

The wider inland and coastal barge industry benefit with their specialist knowledge and expertise involvement in best practice publications and programmes, and partners in advocating safety and environmental protection improvements.

What happens to EBIS during 2020?

The EBIS questionnaire committee will continue to develop EBIS 9 – this question set will be the one transitioned across to the OCIMF programmes.

EBIS inspector refresher training will continue as scheduled and as promulgated in light of COVID 19 travel restrictions.

EBIS new inspector training will not be conducted. Inspectors that recently passed the new inspector course will continue with their audited inspections in order to become fully accredited.

The EBIS Board, Management committee and sub-committees will continue to oversee the smooth running of EBIS and will engage with OCIMF to ensure a smooth transition.

The EBIS BOD / Management committee will provide the EBIS membership and industry partners with updates as work towards the transition is progressed.

What is the timeline for completing the transition to OCIMF?

We are currently at the start of the transition process and an estimated timeline for completion is being developed. After this has been reviewed with primary stakeholders the proposed timeline will be communicated to all members of EBIS and OCIMF.