

PERMANENT COOPERATION FRAMEWORK ACCIDENT INVESTIGATION

Salient points

15th meeting, 3 – 5 June 2025

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Contents

Document Summary..... **4**
Attendees 4
Agenda points 4
Summary 5

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Document Summary

Attendees

The 15th meeting of the Permanent Cooperation Framework (PCF) for the investigation of accidents in the maritime transport sector was held on 3-5 June 2025 at EMSA premises in Lisbon (Portugal).

Mr Paul Meyers (AET- Luxembourg) chaired the meeting, assisted by Mr Tiago Sarandes Teixeira (Portugal – GAMA), as Deputy Chairperson, and by EMSA.

Twenty-eight experts representing 23 EU MS / EEA Countries attended the meeting. The European Commission (EC) was represented by DG–MOVE.

EMSA provided the Secretariat for the meeting.

Agenda points

The agenda points included the following:

Executive Summary

1. Opening of the meeting
2. Adoption of the agenda and timetable
3. Adoption of PCF14 Report and PCF13 Salient points;
4. Update from PCF participants / Secretariat
 - 4.1. By Member States
 - 4.2. By EMSA
5. Update on revised agenda
 - 5.1. Input concerning the revised AID (AID)
 - 5.2. WG10 update
6. Cooperation and exchange of best practices
 - 6.1. WG18 update
 - 6.2. Presentation from GPIAAF
 - 6.3. Presentation from SHK
 - 6.4. Feedback on tools facilitating cooperation between AIBs - Updated list of national resources
 - 6.5. WG19 – Cooperation with 3rd countries
7. Enhancing safety investigations
 - 7.5. WG16 - Seakeeping calculations
 - 7.6. EMSA DB of experts
 - 7.6. WG20 – Casualty prevention measures
 - 7.7. WG13 (HE)
 - 7.1. Operational support to AIBs – ROVs services for MS
 - 7.2. ROV Operation on “Mar dos Segredos”
 - 7.4. WG15 (Data processing)
8. Learning from accidents
 - 8.1. Safety investigation into the RO-RO passenger vessel Lastovo
 - 8.2. Ppt from NSIA on FV
 - 8.3. Ppt from DIGIFEMA
 - 8.4. PPT from BSU (PETRA L)
 - 8.5. EMSA Annual Overview of Marine Casualties and Incidents
9. EMCIP Governance
 - 9.1. Update on EMCIP
 - 9.2. Feedback on data sharing
 - 9.3. Improving reporting in EMCIP
 - 9.4. Data quality
10. Training and qualification
 - 10.1. WG4 on training and qualification progress report
 - 10.2. Training and qualification activities for accident investigators
11. AOB
12. Work programme
 - 12.1. Input for inter-sessional PCF workshops
 - 12.2. Suitable periods to organise the next PCF meetings
14. Closure of PCF15

Summary

The meeting started with a **Tour de Table¹ (TdT)** where Members of the PCF reviewed their available resources, the safety investigations conducted following PCF14 (June 2024) and emerging safety topics of interest.

Regarding available resources, there is a widespread consensus that most Accident Investigation Bodies (AIBs) are currently under-resourced.

Several AIBs provided updates on their Quality Management Strategies and internal audits reviews.

Regarding topics of interest and emerging concerns, some MS expressed a desire to initiate discussions on critical infrastructure vulnerabilities—particularly the risks associated with subsea cable damage – and on traditional infrastructure resilience

Broader discussions addressed **cooperation with third countries** (WG19), where limited resources and delayed investigations remain common issues.

With the purpose of **enhancing safety and navigation**, WG16 provided insights on institutions, universities, and other entities that have been or could be involved in safety investigations related to ship behaviour and sea conditions.

EMSA's Capacity Building team explained to the PCF the EMSA Database of Experts and highlighted that national experts listed in the e-portal can be directly contracted by the Agency to support accident investigations, enhancing their quality. Guidance was also provided on how national experts can apply to the EMSA expert database, with the possibility of being mobilized upon request, subject to EMSA's approval and budget.

At PCF14 (2024), it was decided to set up a working group (WG20) to identify horizontal safety recommendations (SR) for a joint response shared by the Member States. A sample included finished safety investigations on marine casualties under the scope of Directive 2009/18/EC occurred between the 1st January 2021 to the 31st August 2024. The WG identified two main challenges in analysing the qualitative data: inconsistencies in data quality, such as mismatches between dropdown selections and free-text fields, use of national languages, and multiple SRs being merged into single entries; and the high manual workload required to process free-text fields, which often contain the most meaningful insights. To address this, the WG supported exploring **Artificial Intelligence tools like machine learning** and text mining to help identify patterns and cluster similar issues across occurrences. While AI could significantly enhance the analysis, the WG acknowledged that expert oversight would still be essential.

At PCF14 (June 2024), the WG13 was tasked with organising a workshop, focusing on report writing and inherent risks triggered by counterfactual reasoning and other mental traps that could affect safety investigators. The workshop took place at EMSA premises (hybrid mode) on 21 Nov 2024 with the participation of 29 representatives from 18 EU-EEA Member States. As a good practice it was identified that disseminating preparatory material prior to the workshop provided added value. As topics of interest there were presentations related to the use of language and operational decision making in maritime investigations. As relevant points of discussion the presenter highlights the tools to facilitate when handling lot of data, dimensioning the manual effort required and events that may arise with repetitive process and data collection. Other potential tools of interest were addressed such as the use of artificial intelligence in interviews where language could be a barrier. Due to the success of the workshop on HE, the room the need shared the need to integrate the outcomes of the workshop in the Accident Investigation training activities.

EMSA provided insights on the existing ROV Operational Services available for the AIBs. This includes not only the availability to request an observation class ROV but also a yearly ROV familiarisation session. In 2025, the session took place in EMSA premises the 5 and 6 of May with a total of 15 MS participants. The room was provided with the information regarding most recent operations as well as the planned ROV deployments for MMO La Manch and MMO Baltic that will take place this year.

Users reported positive feed-back using EMSA ROV services and shared their experiences with the PCF, considering the Service as very useful for accident investigation.

EMSA informed the floor that due to the expanded available services in a new procurement, currently ongoing. It is expected to make available to MS authorities an enhanced service portfolio from January 2026.

The Group expressed interest in a comprehensive service to support Accident Investigation Bodies (AIBs) with Voyage Data Recorder (VDR) data extraction and integration from multiple sources into a unified maritime picture. The scope of WG15 was decided to be expanded including following on SEG enhancement; explore further VDR

¹ PCF 15/4.1

data extraction and integration software and assess the possibility to set-up a repository with software to download VDR data.

With the purpose to provide insights with regard to **learning from accidents**, four PCF Representatives shared recent cases of maritime casualties, highlighting key lessons learned and systemic safety issues across different vessel types and operations.

The discussion on **EMCIP Governance** highlighted the positive impact of the enhanced EMCIP public portal, which now serves as a central hub for disseminating accident data to the public. Updates were shared on the completed interface between EMCIP and IMO MCI2, along with a reminder that EMCIP supports shared reporting schemas, particularly useful when multiple national authorities are involved. The platform also enables the use of APIs to connect national systems that align with the CIP taxonomy, with some Member States already successfully implementing system-to-system integration.

There was interest in the potential to expand EMCIP's reporting capabilities to third parties, such as vessel managers or companies.

Regarding **Training and Qualification**, the EMSA Academy announced that individual CCC modules can now be taken independently, though without certification, an option welcomed by several Member States.

A total of 4 Working Groups will be active intersessionally:

- WG4 (Training and qualification)
- WG15 (Development of a tool supporting evidence data processing)
- WG18 (Peer-reviewing)
- WG21 (Artificial Intelligence)