
MAIB Business Plan

2021-22

PURPOSE

To improve marine safety by determining the circumstances and causes of marine casualties and promoting action to prevent reoccurrence.

VISION

To be one of the most professional, effective, trustworthy and influential marine safety investigation authorities in the world.

The MAIB will achieve this by:

- Continually developing its capability to investigate effectively, and delivering timely reports and information that will enhance marine safety.
- Fostering good relationships with other stakeholders, while maintaining its independence.
- Contributing to the continuous development and improvement of marine safety investigation capability, both nationally and internationally.
- Ensuring it maintains adequate resources and uses them effectively.

OBJECTIVES

In complying with the International Maritime Organisation (IMO) Casualty Investigation Code¹ and the UK's statutory obligations for the investigation of marine casualties² the MAIB will:

- Respond promptly to marine casualties.
- Lead and manage accident investigation teams to ensure their safety and wellbeing while deployed.
- Conduct thorough, impartial and timely investigations.
- Focus on identifying safety issues and promoting safety actions to address them.
- Produce clear and informative reports, with well-founded analyses and conclusions, which explain the circumstances and where possible identify the causal and contributing factors, without apportioning blame.
- Make proportionate, well-founded safety recommendations.
- Improve marine safety by promulgating the lessons learned from accident investigations.
- Encourage mutual assistance within the international marine accident investigation community to improve marine safety globally.
- Treat the survivors and the relatives of victims of marine accidents with consideration, empathy and honesty.
- Foster good relations with external stakeholders, professional bodies, educational establishments and the wider maritime community.

¹ <https://www.imo.org/en/OurWork/MSAS/Pages/Casualties.aspx>

² <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/marine-accident-investigation-branch/about#regulations-and-guidance>

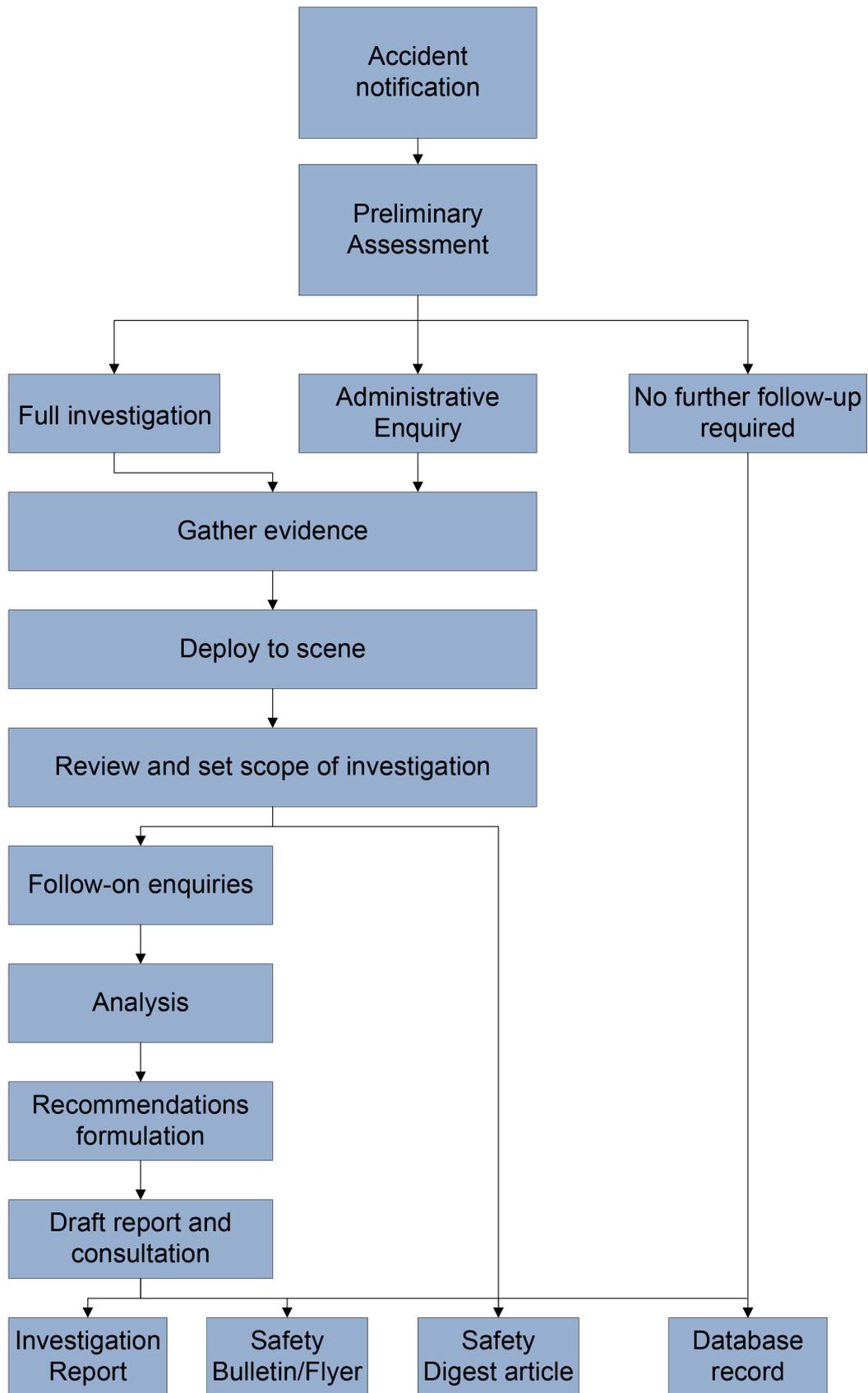
THE WORK

INVESTIGATION PROCESS

The MAIB receives around 1,200 reports of accidents and incidents each year. The simplified schematic on page 4 shows the sequence of events involved in investigating an accident.

All reports are reviewed through a Preliminary Assessment process during which further information can be gathered, through deployment to the scene if necessary, in order for the decision to be taken on whether a full investigation is warranted. If a decision is made to investigate, a team of inspectors will be deployed to gather evidence and conduct interviews to gain a full understanding of the circumstances and causes of the accident or incident. After initial analysis, the findings are presented to the Chief Inspector for a decision about the scope of the investigation and to establish the need for any urgent safety recommendations. Further investigation and analysis will then be undertaken and reviewed before any recommendations are formulated (see below) and the report is written. Draft investigation reports are subject to a statutory 30-day consultation process, and all comments received are reviewed and the report amended if appropriate before it is finally published.

Details of all accidents and incidents received are recorded on the Branch's case management system and database (COMPASS). In addition, the findings and reports of all full investigations are uploaded on to the IMO's Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS) database.



RECOMMENDATIONS AND STAKEHOLDERS

MAIB's investigations usually result in the Branch making recommendations to those stakeholders best placed to implement them. These can include vessel owners and operators, port and harbour authorities, and industry and regulatory bodies. Recommendations are made for the purpose of ensuring that action is taken that will help prevent a reoccurrence. Industry experts are consulted to ensure that recommendations are proportionate and achievable.

Recipients of MAIB recommendations are required to inform the Chief Inspector whether or not they accept them, and provide details of their plans for implementation. The Chief Inspector makes publicly available the status of all recommendations in his Annual Report to the Secretary of State.

PROMULGATION OF SAFETY LESSONS

A key facet of the MAIB's work is the promulgation to its stakeholders of safety lessons identified during its investigations. Importance is attached to identifying the optimum means for disseminating these messages most effectively.

INVESTIGATION REPORTS

Investigation reports contain a factual account, analysis, conclusions and recommendations, and all are publicly available, digitally on the MAIB's website³ or in print.

SAFETY BULLETINS

Safety Bulletins⁴ are issued to communicate urgent safety lessons and recommendations that the Chief Inspector decides must be brought to the industry's attention before the main investigation report is published.

³ <https://www.gov.uk/maib-reports>

⁴ https://www.gov.uk/maib-reports?report_type%5B%5D=safety-bulletin

SAFETY FLYERS

Safety Flyers⁵ provide short descriptions of the key findings of an investigation and are aimed at being read by key stakeholders as quickly as possible. They will accompany publication of an Investigation Report.

SAFETY DIGESTS

Safety Digests⁶, produced every six months, contain anonymised articles based on investigations and administrative enquiries, with an emphasis on the lessons to be learned. Specialised fishing vessel and leisure craft editions are also produced on an occasional basis.

SAFETY STUDIES

From time to time the Chief Inspector will commission a Safety Study⁷ to be conducted. This will focus on a particular aspect of marine safety and is likely to be in response to identified accident rates and trends. In September 2021 it is planned to publish the outcome of a comprehensive Study into the use of Electronic Chart Display and Information Systems (ECDIS) that has been conducted in partnership with the Danish MAIB⁸.

WWW.GOV.UK/MAIB

MAIB's website⁹ is a resource delivering safety messages in a number of forms. As well as providing access to every investigation report the Branch has published since it began operating in 1989, the website continues to be developed with further work planned. MAIB's Twitter, Facebook and LinkedIn presence¹⁰ will continue to be an important means of communication.

⁵ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/maib-safety-flyers>

⁶ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/maib-safety-digests>

⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/maib-safety-studies>

⁸ <https://dmaib.com/>

⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/maib>

¹⁰ <https://twitter.com/maibgovuk>, <https://www.facebook.com/maib.gov>, <https://www.linkedin.com/company/marine-accident-investigation-branch>

ANNUAL REPORT

An Annual Report to the Secretary of State is produced and published¹¹, providing a comprehensive set of accident statistics derived from the MAIB database and a register of recommendations made during the year and the responses made to them.

INFORMATION LEAFLETS

Information leaflets are published on the MAIB website¹² and carried on deployments by inspectors. They are used to inform stakeholders involved in an investigation about the role of the MAIB and the processes involved.

CORONERS' INQUESTS AND FATAL ACCIDENT INQUIRIES

MAIB Inspectors will continue to provide support to Coroners and Procurators Fiscal in the event of deaths caused by marine accidents that occur in UK territorial waters or on UK-registered vessels overseas. In practice, this often involves MAIB inspectors appearing at inquests and fatal accident inquiries to explain the contents of investigation reports and the findings of investigations.

In England and Wales such support is defined in the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) agreed between the Chief Coroner and the three transport accident investigation branches in October 2017¹³. An MoU between the three Accident Investigation Branches (AIBs) and the Crown Office and Procurator Fiscal Service is being developed for signature later this year.

¹¹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/maib-annual-reports>

¹² <https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/maib-information-leaflets>

¹³ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/memorandum-of-understanding-between-the-aibs-and-the-chief-coroner>

INTERNATIONAL

The Chief Inspector represents the UK at the Marine Accident Investigators' International Forum (MAIIF¹⁴) and its European sub-forum E-MAIIF. MAIIF is an international non-profit organisation dedicated to the advancement of maritime safety and the prevention of marine pollution through the exchange of ideas, experiences and information acquired in marine accident investigation. Its purpose is to promote and improve marine accident investigation, and to foster co-operation and communication between marine accident investigators. MAIIF has Intergovernmental Organisation status at the IMO.

The MAIB will continue to offer training for accident investigation practitioners from other countries' administrations. This includes investigator training, along the lines of the IMO Model Course 3.11, and specific training on the recovery and analysis of evidence obtained from Voyage Data Recorders (VDRs) and other electronic recording devices.

The MAIB is an active member of the UK delegation at the IMO's Sub-Committee on Implementation of IMO Instruments (III) and participates in the Working Group on Casualty Analysis. This group distils lessons drawn from the analysis of accident investigations so that they can be recommended for consideration by the relevant IMO sub-committees. The Committee meets annually but is active throughout the year via its Casualty Analysis Correspondence Group.

TECHNICAL DEVELOPMENTS

The Marine Accident Data Analysis Suite (MADAS) will continue to be developed in co-operation with the National Transportation Safety Board¹⁵ of the USA. This has become the industry-standard platform for marine electronic evidence analysis.

¹⁴ <https://maiif.org/>

¹⁵ <https://www.nts.gov/Pages/default.aspx>

Developments within the fields of autonomous shipping, electronic navigation, modern propulsion systems, and other emerging maritime technologies will continue to be kept under review to ensure the MAIB inspectorate are sufficiently informed in these areas.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

MAIB Inspectors are required to develop and maintain an extensive range of professional skills. The Branch maintains an accreditation scheme comprising theoretical and practical modules covering all aspects of marine accident investigation. On recruitment, all inspectors are expected to successfully complete the accreditation scheme and achieve a Post-Graduate Certificate in Marine Accident Investigation, awarded by Cranfield University¹⁶, within two years of joining.

All Inspectors receive continued professional development and training in core skills such as interview techniques, human factor investigation, and evidence handling, making full use of post-graduate courses where available.

The Branch is continuing to maintain its training and development programme for all staff for job-specific skills as well as personal development. The MAIB has held Investors in People accreditation since 1996 and was successfully reassessed in April 2019.

PRESENTATIONS AND OTHER EXTERNAL COMMITMENTS

MAIB staff will continue to engage with industry sectors by delivering a programme of presentations to relevant stakeholder organisations. This will include maritime trade organisations, nautical and fishing colleges, the police and fire services, and leisure craft organisations.

¹⁶ <https://www.cranfield.ac.uk/>

JOINT ACTIVITIES AND OTHER INITIATIVES

Oversight of the AIBs by the Department for Transport (DfT) for governance purposes is carried out by the Board of Accident Investigation Branches (BAIB), which is chaired by the DfT's Director General for Aviation, Maritime, International and Security. BAIB meetings are attended by the Chief Inspectors of the Air, Marine and Rail Accident Investigation Branches, the modal Directors for Air, Rail and Maritime, and other DfT staff. The relationship between the AIBs and DfT is formalised in a protocol, available on the MAIB's website¹⁷.

In 2018/19 work began on a replacement Case Management System for all three AIBs, which completed in 2020 and is now live. Further development of the system continues with all three AIBs sharing ideas, processes and resources.

Under the auspices of the Accident Investigation Chief's Council (AICC¹⁸), the following joint initiatives have been agreed to take advantage of synergies between the three Branches:

- Continued development of common processes and practices for accident investigation.
- Share technical facilities, equipment and expertise where appropriate, including cross-Branch auditing, in order to improve efficiency and effectiveness.
- Promote, use and continue to develop joint accident investigation training for new and existing staff.
- Share resources and expertise in public relations, recruitment, career progression and personal development.

¹⁷ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/protocol-the-role-of-air-marine-and-rail-accident-investigation-branches-and-their-relationship-with-the-department-for-transport>

¹⁸ <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/accident-investigation-chiefs-council>

- Update and establish joint-AIB memoranda of understanding as required with stakeholders.

In 2018, Sir Richard Garwood was appointed as the non-executive Chair of the AICC, and in 2020 the AICC's Head of Joint Policy was appointed to coordinate the development of tri-Branch MOUs, Protocols and other matters of common interest.

A further shared resource in the Head of External Communications, who supports all three AIBs, coordinates and promotes the safety messages identified during investigations to industry stakeholders and the public.

RED ENSIGN GROUP

In 2020, the MAIB agreed to take responsibility for the investigation of Very Serious Marine Casualties involving vessels on the Red Ensign Group (REG) Category 1 registers of Bermuda, Cayman Islands, Gibraltar, and Isle of Man¹⁹. The first report²⁰ under this agreement was published in July 2021, and a number of other investigations on behalf of the REG Category 1 registers are ongoing.

STAFFING

With the increase in both the complexity of data technology and the quantity of data available to accident investigators, the MAIB has expanded its technical team. The increased size of the team has also created capacity for improved horizon-scanning, tracking emerging technologies so the Branch remains at the technical forefront of accident investigation.

¹⁹ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/maib-to-carry-out-investigations-on-behalf-of-red-ensign-group-cat-1-registries>

²⁰ <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/stolt-groenland-report-published>

The Branch has also increased its headcount by one Principal Inspector and one Inspector, funded by the REG Category 1 registers, to ensure it can react immediately to REG vessel accidents when they occur.

FINANCE

MAIB is primarily funded from the DfT's Programme budget. However, in 2018/19 it was allocated a Capital budget to cover expenditure on the tri-Branch case management system, and a national database for MAIB aimed at addressing disruptions to data access as a result of the UK leaving the European Union. The small capital budget for 2021/22 and following years is to cover the costs of maintaining and developing the case management systems and database.

Where accident investigation services are provided to other countries or international organisations those costs are recovered. The budgets for the three years of this Business Plan are shown in the table below, together with the budget for 2021/22.

£k	2021/22	2022/23	2023/24
Pay	3 429	3 512	3 596
Non-Pay	1 385	1 419	1 453
Total Programme	4 814	4 931	5 049
Capital	50	50	50