

The Nautical Institute Annual Report 2025

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

2025 was a year of sustained delivery, consolidation and strategic positioning for The Nautical Institute, marked by strong operational performance, growing global influence and continued commitment to maritime safety and professional excellence.

Membership remained central to the Institute's work. While growth in full membership stabilised compared with recent years, student membership continued to expand, exceeding 5,000, and engagement was strengthened through targeted regional activity.

Information, publications and knowledge sharing activities performed strongly. *Seaways* was redesigned to align with wider Institute branding and continued to be the most highly valued member benefit. MARS remained a critical safety resource for members and the wider industry.

The Institute's advocacy and research activities maintained a high international profile, with representation across all relevant IMO Committees and working groups. The successful conclusion of the EU funded OCEAN project delivered high impact training resources, while new funding from Lloyd's Register Foundation enabled the launch of the STEER project, addressing the human impacts of technological change in maritime operations.



Launch of the Montenegro Branch

Qualifications Maritime & Offshore issued over 8,000 dynamic positioning certificates with processing times exceeding KPIs. Mandatory CPD continued to embed across the DP community, and accreditation activity supported a global network of 85 training centres.

The Nautical Institute Academy sustained strong growth, launched new programmes aligned to emerging industry needs, and achieved consistently high learner satisfaction.

Internally, the Institute continued to invest in its people, systems and governance.

Overall, 2025 demonstrated the Institute's ability to deliver operational excellence while preparing for future challenges. Through advocacy, education, standards setting and member engagement, The Nautical Institute remains well positioned to support a safer, more professional and more sustainable maritime industry.

MEMBERSHIP AND BRANCHES

Membership is central to the work and representation of The Nautical Institute.

The average number of full members rose slightly during 2025. The overall increase of 235 full members was lower than in the previous three years, but student membership continued to thrive, growing to more than 5,000. The total number of members was 14,340 at the end of the year. Membership fees contribute towards our work, the reach of which is detailed in our Impact Report.

Regular engagement with members is key to their active participation. Efforts have been focused on driving up levels of activity at the regional and local level in particular. 2025 saw the launch of two new branches in Montenegro and Peru respectively. The Norway, Sweden and Denmark branches were re-amalgamated into a single Scandinavia Branch.

In April, the team facilitated the inaugural Regional Online Members' Seminar (ROMS), designed to provide members based in a particular geographic region with an opportunity to engage with each other and discuss topics of local interest. To date ROMS have been held for members in South Asia, Latin America and South East Asia.

A number of branches held major events over the course of the year,

including UAE, Singapore, Hong Kong, Queensland, Pakistan, and UK North West England & North Wales. Most recently, the Brazil Branch held a one-day conference ‘Brazil’s Future – Maritime Skills’ in Rio de Janeiro on 24 November.

In February 2025, we launched the most recent President’s Questionnaire, our five-yearly survey that gives members the opportunity to steer the Institute’s future direction. We received more than 1,600 responses, with the feedback used to inform the Institute’s Strategic Plan 2026-2030.

As part of raising visibility the membership team has created a number of videos that have included ‘Your voice at the IMO’ – a series of interviews with members who have offered their expertise in meetings at the IMO.

Further actions will include a sustained communications programme to encourage the uptake of benefits, a recurring credit card payment option and the introduction of new member benefits.

INFORMATION AND PUBLICATIONS

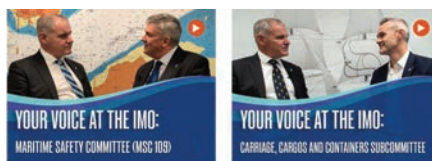
Seaways

The President’s Survey once again identified *Seaways* as the highest-valued member benefit. 2025 saw a redesign refreshing the look and feel and bringing it in line with wider Nautical Institute branding. The magazine retains the mix of technical and professional articles, Branch updates and member coverage which has been its hallmark over the years.

Over the course of the year, we increasingly saw the influence of AI – both as a topic for articles, and appearing in some submissions. We are keeping a close eye on developments in this direction; we want to ensure that *Seaways* remains the voice of the seafarer, not of the computer. As one of our members writes, ‘One of the most powerful influences NI has had on my career is *Seaways*, its monthly magazine. Every issue delivers something no procedure or manual ever could – real stories from real seafarers.’



Above: Attendees at the Brazil Branch conference



MARS

The Mariners’ Alerting and Reporting Scheme (MARS) continues to thrive, its confidential incident reporting enabling the sharing of information and the ability to learn from incidents and near misses alike. The Nautical Institute is very grateful to our Nautical Affiliates for their support, both financially and in terms of the expertise that they offer. Some of the key lessons learned in 2025 are about fatigue, management of containers on board, enclosed space safety and fire risk.

This is an invaluable service to Members and for the wider industry and we are pleased to know that many of these reports are the focus of onboard safety meetings.

The Navigator

The Council of The Nautical Institute is very grateful to IFAN and other organisations for their continued support for *The Navigator*, with particular thanks to IFAN for an agreement in 2024 to maintain their funding for another three years. We also thank all those volunteers who distribute the magazine to vessels around the world.

In 2025 we focused on safe anchoring; protection of the environment, particularly routing issues around marine mammals; and the increasing risk of GNSS denial. All copies of *The Navigator* are available online and also as a fully searchable app. Every issue of *The Navigator* is centred around a single theme and makes for excellent material for CPD and to facilitate mentoring.

Publications

The department delivered three key publications in 2025 which, together with its other revenue streams (*Seaways* sales, advertising and MARS donations), led to the highest annual turnover on record – £1.6 million. The three books generating most income were:

- *Shiphandling, the beautiful game*
- *Guidelines for Collecting Maritime Evidence Volume 1, 2nd edition*
- *Bridge Resource Management Volume 1*

Each book was launched and

supported by a free-to-attend global webinar, with recordings made available to Nautical Institute members on the members' portal. The department also delivered the free-to-download brochure *Thrive in Fishing*, sponsored by The Seafarer's Charity, aimed at raising awareness of and promoting careers in the fishing industry.

Digital shift

The slow but steady shift from print to digital books continues. In 2025, e-books accounted for 20% of sales, up from 15% in 2024 and 8% in 2023. With this trend, we began exploring ways to digitise and monetise our content, for example meeting with platforms who can make our e-books more accessible to those who need only short-term access rather than lifetime ownership. This work will continue throughout 2026.

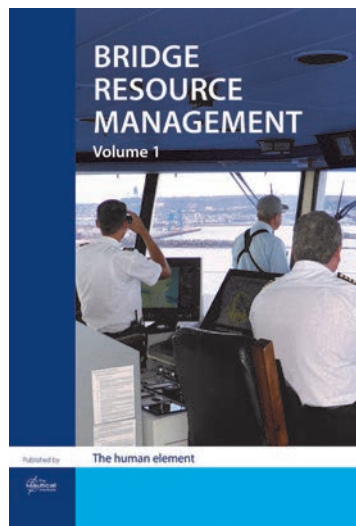
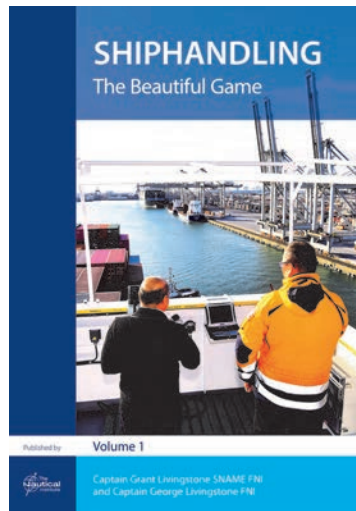
We embarked on a major benchmarking exercise to ensure our book storage and distribution contracts continue to offer good value for money, quality and reliability for our members and customers. These contracts account for a £250k+ annual spend.

Responsibility for the bulk sale of *Seaways* moved fully into the publications department in 2025, delivering an income of £100,000. We expect this to further grow as *Seaways* becomes available digitally to non-members in the same way that it currently is for members.

RESEARCH AND PROJECTS At the IMO

Throughout 2025 our team, led by Capt Chris O'Flaherty AFNI, has ensured the Institute is represented throughout every IMO Committee, sub-Committee and relevant working group.

We have been engaged in numerous discussions on topics including Maritime Autonomous Surface Ship (MASS) trials safety; cargo fumigation; alternative fuel training; seafarer fatigue; lifeboat ventilation; measurement of oceanic significant wave height; electronic nautical publications and NAVTEX/NAVDAT



message prioritisation. Our team has scrutinised thousands of lines of draft regulatory code or IMO guidance, influencing the direction and content of dozens of IMO Codes, Circulars and other regulatory instruments to the benefit of members and seafarers in general.

The Nautical Institute's Council would like to especially thank all the volunteers who have supported our IMO interventions with specific technical knowledge, particularly our Sea Going Correspondence Group (SGCG), our volunteer delegates and the IMO Committee.

OCEAN Project

In 2025 The Nautical Institute brought to a successful conclusion our partnership in the EU funded OCEAN (Operator-Centred Enhancement of Awareness in Navigation) project. Of particular note were the high-impact training videos developed by Capt Aly Elsayed AFNI. These free-to-view videos focus on areas where industry best practices outshine minimum requirements and will augment any training syllabus. We are especially pleased to have produced a landmark introduction to avoiding ship/whale strikes, becoming a member of the International Whaling Commission (IWC) working group on this issue.

STEER Project

In 2025 we were awarded funding from Lloyds Register Foundation for a project focused on the effects of technology on seafarers. The Seafarer Technology Engagement, Empowerment and Resilience (STEER) Project is an international research and engagement initiative that explores the real-world impact of the combined introduction of new systems and working practices on seafarers at sea and ashore.

The project officially started in December 2025 with the engagement of Capt Ann Pletschke FNI as project manager, supported by Capt Aly Elsayed AFNI and Katerina Sfaellou MNI as head of communications. Over the next 2.5 years, we will focus on listening to seafarers' views and identifying tools to help seafarers

make better use of technology through Human Centred Design (HCD).

Looking ahead

The Nautical Institute recognises the accelerated rate of change in the maritime industry, from new technologies and regulations to the new generation of seafarers who are the leaders of tomorrow. The role of a professional body is to cooperatively share our knowledge to improve our decision-making capabilities as professional mariners. We pursue this objective by our proactive advocacy activities at the IMO and our services to our membership and the wider maritime community through our events, publications, and international engagement.

QUALIFICATIONS M&O

The Qualifications Maritime & Offshore (M&O) department continues to be at the heart of promoting maritime safety and professional competence worldwide, particularly through dynamic positioning (DP) certification and accreditation. In 2025, we focused on strengthening standards, enhancing services, and staying closely connected with the industry and regulators.

Regional Training Provider Engagement

Our engagement with training providers and industry partners remained strong. In September 2025, the fifth Global DP Conference in Istanbul welcomed around 100 delegates, including representatives from 52 training centres. Discussions covered safe DP operations, training standards, the implementation of CPD requirements and emerging technologies. Delegates shared practical insights and real-world experiences, making it one of the most interactive conferences yet.

Throughout the year, regional provider meetings and DP Training Executive Group (DPTEG) sessions kept us aligned with the needs of the global DP community. A face-to-face DPTEG meeting in January 2025 focused on the IMO STCW review, allowing the Institute to actively shape



upcoming regulatory changes affecting DP qualifications.

The Nautical Institute's globally established Dynamic Positioning accreditation framework has underpinned sustained improvements in operational safety by maintaining rigorous, continuously updated standards for training, assessment and certification, developed in close cooperation with industry, flag states and regulators. We continue to advocate for the retention of dynamic positioning training within Section B of the STCW Code in order to preserve the scheme's flexibility and responsiveness, allowing safety-critical competencies to evolve in line with technological change while remaining subject to robust independent oversight.

Embedding Continuing Professional Development (CPD)

The mandatory CPD scheme for DPO and DPVM revalidation, introduced in 2024, continued to establish itself in 2025. By the end of the year, around 70% of DP operators (DPOs) had enrolled, demonstrating a strong commitment across the community to maintaining competence and promoting a culture of safety.

One DP operator shared: 'Process is now much better than earlier years when we were sent application by mail. Great improvement when we can take CPD courses on board instead of traveling in free time'.

DP Certification and Accreditation

2025 was another strong year for certification. A total of 8,071 DP certificates were issued, with an average processing time of just seven working days, exceeding our KPI targets.

The DPVM scheme also continued to grow steadily, with 2,274 certificates issued. Feedback from certificate holders helped refine our processes, while the recruitment of two additional team members strengthened our capacity to provide faster, more responsive support.

Supporting training centres worldwide

The Institute maintained a global network of 85 accredited DP training centres, completing 28 accreditation and reaccreditation audits, including three new centres.

Other schemes such as Ballast Control Operator, VTS, and Ice Navigation remained stable. Standards were reviewed and revised where necessary to ensure relevance and maintain quality across the industry.

TestReach

The TestReach examination platform continued to be a reliable tool, facilitating 13,659 secure online assessments, and ensuring consistent, fair evaluation for candidates worldwide.

Looking forward

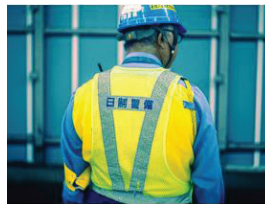
2025 demonstrated the Qualifications M&O department's commitment to raising standards, improving efficiency and supporting the maritime community. By actively engaging with operators, training providers and regulators, we are helping shape the future of maritime safety and professional competence.

As we look ahead to 2026 and beyond, our focus remains on continuous improvement, innovation, and global collaboration, ensuring The Nautical Institute remains a trusted partner in maritime training and certification.

OIL SPILL RESPONSE TRAINING PROVIDER ACCREDITATION SCHEME

In 2025, the Oil Spill Response Training Provider Accreditation Scheme continued to deliver high strategic value by strengthening global preparedness, reinforcing regulatory confidence, and expanding The Nautical Institute's international influence.

The scheme is formally recognised by the IMO and functions as a core international quality assurance mechanism, supporting marine environmental protection and operational readiness. It promotes



Maritime Safety Officer



Mastering Maritime Risk Management

common competency standards across jurisdictions, supporting cross-border cooperation during major pollution incidents.

Impact and outcomes

- Increase in number of accredited organisations delivering training to internationally recognised standards.
- Maintained regulatory assurance from IMO and exclusive authorisation as training provider by the UK MCA.
- Improved training quality: Accreditation and surveillance activity drove greater consistency in course design, assessment and governance, reducing variability and strengthening confidence in trainee competence.

United Kingdom

The UK scheme remained stable with eight accredited providers. The Nautical Institute continues to be the only organisation authorised by the MCA to deliver Training Provider Accreditation.

Innovation and sector leadership

The scheme played an enabling role in guiding the sector through increased adoption of remote delivery and artificial intelligence-supported training development, ensuring innovation strengthened — rather than weakened — training quality, assessment integrity and regulatory confidence.

Strategic development – Trainer Qualification Scheme

A major strategic initiative commenced in 2025 with the development of a formal Trainer Qualification Scheme for Oil Spill Response. This directly addresses regulator and client concerns regarding instructor competence and represents a significant enhancement to the accreditation framework. Implementation is planned for 2026.

Outlook

The scheme continues to offer strong potential for sustainable growth, particularly in regions of expanding maritime and offshore activity. The programme remains well positioned to further enhance global preparedness while reinforcing The Nautical Institute's role as a trusted international authority in oil spill response training.

THE NAUTICAL INSTITUTE ACADEMY

The Academy continued to demonstrate strong and stable growth throughout 2025, building on the momentum of the previous year. Demand for high quality maritime training remains steady, with the number of both open and company-specific course dates rising once again. Overall feedback remained consistently high, with learners reporting an overall average satisfaction rating of 4.7 out of 5.0. This reinforces the Academy's standing as a trusted provider of professional development for both seafarers and shore based personnel.

During 2025, the Academy launched three new programmes: Mastering Risk Management, Safety Officer, and the Maritime Search and Rescue Endorsement Scheme. These additions respond directly to emerging

industry needs and further strengthen the Academy's capacity to support operational safety and specialist career development across the sector.

In parallel, the Academy successfully secured another £30,000 grant from The Seafarers' Charity, allowing it to offer 20 fully funded places on the Leadership and Management Course and a further 20 seats on the Mental Health and Crew Wellbeing Course. This funding significantly improved access to training, particularly for those from less economically developed nations.

The Academy also completed a significant piece of work in 2025 with the review and relaunch of the Certificate of Excellence accreditation scheme for maritime training providers. Originally developed in 2019 in collaboration with The Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (IMarEST), the scheme had limited uptake due to Covid and other external factors. The 2025 revision ensures that the accreditation meets internationally benchmarked standards for maritime education and training and provides a clear, credible mechanism for recognising excellence in education and training standards.

FINANCE

The continued success of The Nautical Institute's operations has been reflected in the financial results for the year. Income for 2025 exceeded budget as activity levels remained strong across the entire portfolio of activities. A gross income of £7.2m (2024: £6m) has been achieved against total expenditure of £5.5m (2024: £5.4m) resulting in a surplus for the year of £1.7m (2024: £0.6m).

The surplus reflects a very successful year across the board, especially in the areas of Publications and Qualifications. Overall expenditure for the year remained close to budget due to effective budgeting and cost control.

The management of the investment portfolio was kept under regular review in what was generally a steady market for investments. Management of the funds is delegated to external investment managers Rathbones on a discretionary basis, with the objective



of maximising the total return from capital and income combined while maintaining a medium level of risk. The trustees review the performance of the investment managers against benchmarks on a regular basis. During the year, the investment portfolio performed satisfactorily against market comparators. The Capital Reserve Fund value at year end was £4.6m (2024: £4.3m). The investment portfolio resulted in a total return of £358,000 (2024: £267,000) for the financial year; a return of 8.30% (2024: 6.59%).

The Institute holds reserves to ensure as far as possible that its objectives may be met in future. The reserves policy has proved to be effective and ensures the Institute has adequate cover as a going concern.

STAFFING

The NI continued to take its responsibilities as an employer to its workforce seriously, investing in staff training and development, and offering benchmarked pay and flexible working arrangements.

In addition to regular staff engagement activities, the management team had an away day in April to begin development of the Institute's next five-year strategy, which commences in 2026. All-staff events took place in July and December to enhance inter-departmental staff engagement and collaboration, and to celebrate mid-year and end of year achievements.

Staff retention remained satisfactory during 2025 with the total number of employees increasing from 43 at the beginning of the year to 45 at the end of the year. New appointments in 2025 included a full time Academy Registrar and three Qualifications Administrators. Our operational and financial success in 2025 and our continued ambition to grow means we will continue to invest in our workforce with our headcount expected to reach about 48 in 2026.

ISO AUDIT

The ISO 9001:2015 Quality Management Systems (QMS) certification Surveillance Audit was once again held on site with no non-conformities reported. The ISO auditor's report concluded that the system has been found to be providing the required level of control, the organisation's context is well defined, leadership has been effectively demonstrated, and commitment levels are fully evident. It was also noted that the availability of documented information to demonstrate that the system is well implemented and well understood throughout the organisation is acceptable. Our internal audit process and effective member and customer engagement continue to be key factors in the positive report from the ISO auditor.

The Nautical Institute will undertake a full Recertification Audit in 2026.

JOINT GOVERNANCE MEETING (JGM)

Following the success of two previous JGMs, a joint meeting was held in November 2025 in a slightly different format. Attendees from our specialist committees came together for their periodic meeting and to provide valuable input on our future ambitions

and plans. We welcomed attendees' contributions on The Nautical Institute's overall impact and areas where it could add value through new initiatives, such as the increased use of special interest groups. Attendees provided valuable suggestions on topics which would most benefit seafarers and contribute to their increased safety and ongoing professionalism.

EVENTS

Every year, our events bring together maritime professionals, decision-makers and innovators to exchange ideas, share knowledge and advance our mission of a safer, more professional and sustainable maritime industry. In 2025, these included:

- A technical conference in Dubai which brought together more than 130 delegates to explore the future of maritime skills;
- The Nautical Institute's Annual General Meeting, held to coincide with the Dubai technical conference;
- An event co-hosted with WISTA during London International Shipping Week on future-ready capabilities for the industry;
- An exclusive evening networking event at Lambeth Palace, uniting maritime leaders committed to advancing thought leadership and safety;



- The fifth Global Dynamic Positioning and Offshore Energy Conference, bringing together industry experts in the DP sector.

BUSINESS SUPPORT SYSTEMS

The Nautical Institute is committed to continually improving our internal processes and our external offering to the wider maritime community. Internally, all teams have been contributing towards major database improvements. A new version of The Nautical Institute website is due to be released in 2026 offering a much improved customer experience.

THE NAUTICAL INSTITUTE FOUNDATION

During 2025, The Nautical Institute Foundation focused on clarifying its purpose and strengthening its role in supporting maritime safety, education and professional development for the public benefit. The trustees refocused the Foundation's longer term direction, ensuring its activities are clearly aligned with charitable objectives and complementary to, but distinct from, the work of The Nautical Institute. Progress was made in shaping a future programme of activity that builds on existing strengths, particularly in education, outreach and welfare related initiatives, while laying the groundwork for sustainable growth and wider impact. These developments position the Foundation to play an increasingly visible role in advancing safety, competence and opportunity across the global maritime community.

