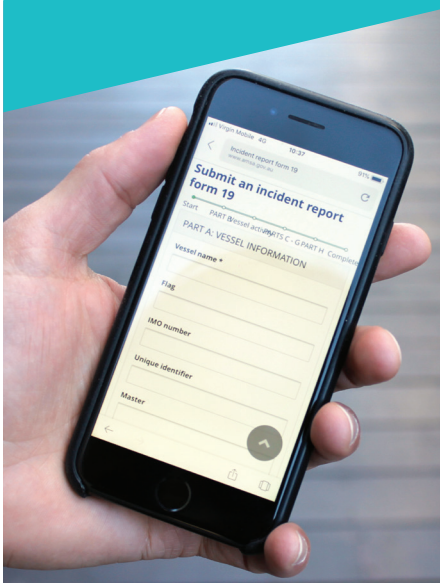




Image source: iStock.com/ nightman1965

In this issue we discuss marine incident reporting:

- what are the benefits
- what are the obligations
- how AMSA enables incident reporting
- how incident reports are processed
- what the incident data tells us



Marine incident reporting

Incident reporting is essential to maritime safety. When you report a marine incident to AMSA, you help shape the way maritime safety is improved.

Benefits of marine incident reporting

The information obtained from marine incidents enable us to:

- identify issues, patterns and trends
- respond to concerns
- share information with the maritime industry
- learn and improve maritime safety.

Case study one

Faulty emergency generator

During routine maintenance onboard a bulk carrier, it was discovered that the emergency generator wasn't working and needed replacing.

As the vessel was travelling to an Australian port, an incident report regarding the faulty emergency

generator was submitted to AMSA.

After assessing the incident report, we notified the vessel owner and master that the generator fault must be rectified or an alternative arrangement be put in place before the vessel could depart the Australian port it was travelling towards. By communicating this expectation at an early stage, there was sufficient time for the vessel owner and master to make the necessary arrangements.

Without the incident report, AMSA would not have been able to communicate this expectation until the vessel berthed. This could have resulted in significant delays to the vessel's departure with substantial associated costs. ►



► *Benefits of marine incident reporting continued from page 1:*

Case study two

Knowledge of rescue helicopters

Following a number of incident reports submitted to AMSA from vessels operating in remote areas around Australia, it became clear that the limited range of rescue helicopters was not widely known among vessel operators.

Their safety procedures were often reliant on helicopter evacuation of an injured crew member. After identifying this issue, we disseminated relevant information to stakeholders and encouraged vessel operators to update their safety procedures.

This effort proved valuable in a recent event where a vessel with an injured crew member immediately proceeded towards a pre-determined area within helicopter range—in accordance with the improved procedures.

Reporting obligation

Australian law imposes reporting obligations on vessel owners and masters. Sometimes there are concerns that reporting a marine incident will result in legal action. However, this is rarely the case.

While we may use the information to support a compliance investigation, this is done to ensure that issues are appropriately dealt with and that safety is maintained.



Figure 1: Loss of cargo from YM Efficiency in Australian waters.

The incident reporting process

Incident reporting is essential to maritime safety. We make it easy—with two simple steps for reporting an incident to AMSA.

Report a marine incident that has affected, or is likely to affect, the safety, operation or seaworthiness of the vessel¹. The alerts let us know that a serious event has occurred. The incident report provides us detailed information about the incident, in particular the measures put in place to prevent reoccurrence.

1. Submit incident alert

As soon as possible and within 4 hours after becoming aware of the incident, submit **Form 18—Incident alert**.

Start	PART B	Consequences	PART C	Complete
PART A: VESSEL INFORMATION				
Vessel name *				
Flag				
IMO number				
Unique identifier				
Master				
Operator/Company name				
Responsible person				
Contact details				

Figure 2: Form 18 Incident alert available as a downloadable form or online as a web form (above).

2. Submit incident report

Within 72 hours after becoming aware of the incident, submit **Form 19—Incident report**.

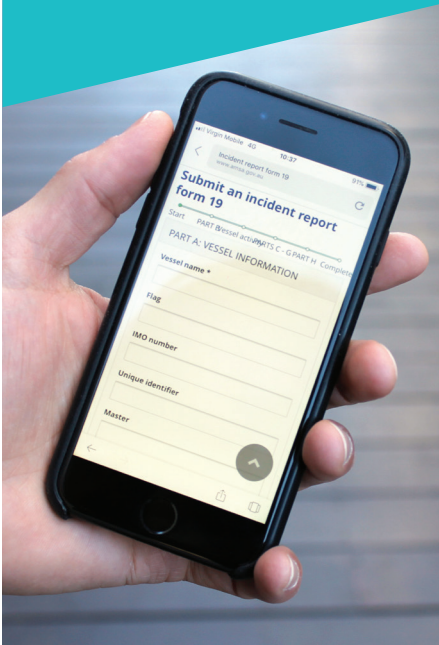
Start	PART B	Vessel activity	PARTS C - G	PART H	Complete
PART A: VESSEL INFORMATION					
Vessel name *					
Flag					
IMO number					
Unique identifier					
Master					
Operator/Company name					
Responsible person					
Contact details					

Figure 3: Form 19 Incident report available as a downloadable form or online as a web form (above).

■ For more information go to amsa.gov.au/incident-reporting



Submitting an incident report online using a smartphone.



Enabling incident reporting

Reporting made easy

To make it as easy as possible to report a marine incident, AMSA has developed new reporting forms. The new forms are designed to be clear and concise. There are pre-determined questions and space for describing the incident in your own words. The forms can be completed and submitted online, for example by using a smart phone, or downloaded and emailed to AMSA.

Ensuring privacy

We make part of the incident data available to the public. However, AMSA is bound to protect the privacy of people who are involved in, or who

report, incidents. Personal information is only used for the purpose it was collected, and it is not disclosed to other persons or organisations without prior consent, unless in accordance with the *Privacy Act 1988*.

Focus on learning

The real value of incident reporting is the development of more effective safety strategies and advice to vessel owners, operators, and crews. We recognise that a high number of incident reports from one vessel or operator does not necessarily indicate serious safety issues. Instead, a high number of incident reports may indicate a willingness to learn, share, and help improve everyone's safety.

From incident to improvement

When you report a marine incident, the information feeds into a large collection of data.

The data is analysed to identify similarities and differences between events across different sectors of the industry, geographical areas, and types of vessels and operations. An incident that may appear insignificant when considered in

isolation may in fact be a frequently occurring problem in the industry as a whole. By collating and analysing a large number of incident reports, issues and trends can be identified that would not otherwise have been recognised.

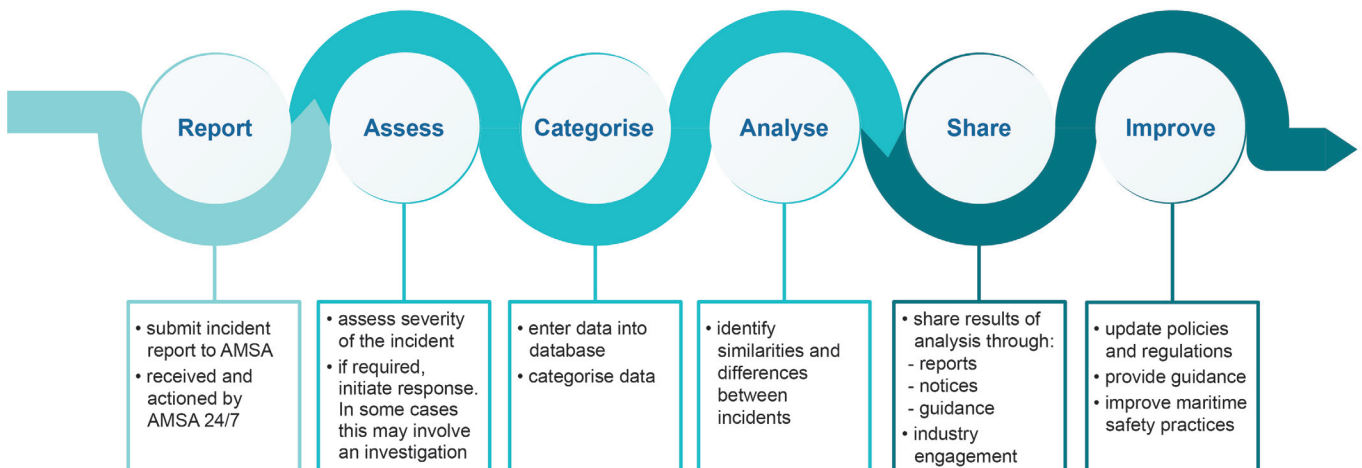


Figure 4: How AMSA process incident reports.

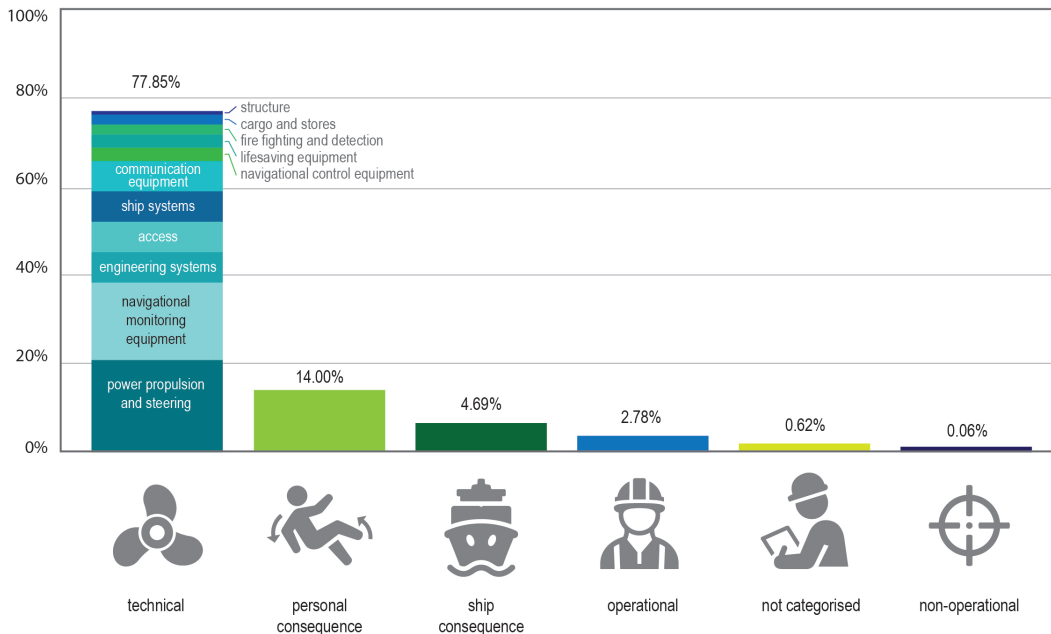


Figure 5: Occurrence types coded by AMSA in the six month period 1 January – 30 June 2018.

AMSA's incident data

There has been a steady increase in incident reports sent to AMSA from 1721 reports in 2013, to 3017 reports in 2017.

This represents a 75% increase over a five-year period. During the same period, the number of ship arrivals to Australian ports has increased by 21%.

Between 1 January and 30 June 2018, we received 1611 incident reports. These were coded into occurrence types with the vast majority of occurrences (78%) concerning some form of technical issue.

Among the technical issues, the most predominant occurrences relate to power, propulsion, and steering. This includes, for example, issues with a vessel's main and auxiliary engines, and the steering gear and rudder.

AMSA uses incident data in combination with other sources of information, such as inspection and survey reports, research findings, accident investigations, and our day-to-day interaction with vessel crews, owners, and operators. This helps us gain a better understanding of the safety-related challenges and opportunities that exist in the maritime industry, and to develop strategies and support to suit the industry.

Take-away message

Incident reporting is essential to maritime safety. When you report a marine incident to AMSA, you help shape the way maritime safety is improved.

Your incident reports help us to help you—and everyone else at sea.

References

¹ *Navigation Act 2012*, Australian Government

Useful resources

Incident reporting

amsa.gov.au/incident-reporting

Guide to our privacy policy

amsa.gov.au/guide-our-privacy-policy



- an incident report is not a distress call.
- the definition of a marine incident may differ between countries or international organisations.