

25th Session of APHoMSA

Outcome Statement

1. The 25th session of the Asia-Pacific Heads of Maritime Safety Agencies (APHoMSA) forum was hosted by the Solomon Islands Maritime Authority (SIMA) in Honiara, Solomon Islands from 14 to 16 April 2026. The meeting was Chaired by Mr Thierry Nervale, Director of SIMA.
2. APHoMSA members acknowledged the key-note address by the Honourable Jeremiah Manele, Prime Minister of Solomon Islands, and his call for strengthened cooperation to address the ongoing transformation of the maritime sector, including maritime safety and security challenges, workforce development, decarbonisation and digitalisation, and the need for APHoMSA to move from dialogue to implementation. Members recognised the importance of ensuring all countries, in particular Small Island Developing States (SIDS), are able to participate effectively in this transition and are not being left behind.
3. 20 APHoMSA members were represented: Australia; Canada, Chile; People's Republic of China; Cook Islands; Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji; Kiribati; Mongolia; Nauru; New Zealand; Niue; Palau; Papua New Guinea; Republic of Korea; Samoa; Singapore; Solomon Islands; Vanuatu; and Vietnam.
4. Six standing and one invited observers were represented: International Maritime Organization (IMO); the Regional Cooperation Agreement on Combating Piracy and Armed Robbery against Ships in Asia Information Sharing Centre (ReCAAP ISC); the Pacific Community (SPC); the Secretariat of the Pacific Regional Environment Programme (SPREP); Memorandum of Understanding on Port State Control in the Asia-Pacific Region (Tokyo MoU); International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation (IALA); and International Foundation for Aids to Navigation (IFAN).
5. The Chair, in his opening remarks, reflected on the Middle East crisis and the impact on the Pacific region, recognising the critical work of IMO as a member of the UN Task Force on the Strait of Hormuz, and invited APHoMSA members to support the call of IMO Secretary-General on all Parties to respect the rights and freedoms of navigation and the paramount importance of protecting the safety and wellbeing of seafarers.

Women in Maritime

6. Members commended the leadership of the IMO and SPC in advancing gender equality and the empowerment of women in the maritime sector. Members noted the outcomes of the Regional Workshop and Biennial convening of the Pacific Women in Maritime Association (PACWIMA) held in the Cook Islands in February 2026, as well as progress with the development of the Regional Strategy for Pacific Women in Maritime 2025–2030. Members supported calls for donors and development partners to explore opportunities to support

implementation of the regional strategy, including strengthening data collection and monitoring of women's participation across the maritime sector.

Safety at Sea, Including Seafarer Welfare

7. Members welcomed Singapore's efforts to identify and combat fraudulent ship registrations. Members reiterated the significance of this issue and agreed to implement systems, improve communications, and share best practices among members to strengthen collective responses and cooperation in this area.
8. People's Republic of China presented an interim report of the Correspondence Group on Information and Experience Sharing of Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS), which highlighted recent technological advancements and challenges. While members agreed to continue sharing best practices relating to technological innovation, safety of navigation, ship-to-shore communications, seafarer training and maritime administrations, they also noted updates on technological progress and real-sea demonstration results from the Republic of Korea. Consequently, members acknowledged the Republic of Korea's intention to submit its proposed operational framework for the IMO experience building phase to the 111th session of the IMO Maritime Safety Committee. China agreed to continue to lead the Correspondence Group and provide updates to future sessions of APHoMSA.
9. Members noted People's Republic of China's approach to strengthening the protection of seafarer rights and interests during implementation of the Maritime Labour Convention, 2006. Members agreed to explore ways to further strengthen cooperation by enhancing information exchange and experience sharing, recalling the opening remarks by the Chair on the importance of protecting the safety and wellbeing of seafarers.
10. Members noted the challenges faced by Vanuatu's maritime training institution and agreed on the need to support the development of maritime training institutions to improve seafarer capabilities and employment opportunities. Vanuatu advised members that the position of Chief Executive Officer for the Vanuatu Maritime College is now open for nominations.
11. Solomon Islands introduced the Solomon Islands *Maritime Labour Mobility and Shipping Registry National Roadmap*, which highlighted the importance of strengthening maritime education, training and employment opportunities for Solomon Islands. Members again reaffirmed support to expand maritime labour mobility opportunities for seafarers in the region.
12. Members noted progress of a pilot project in Solomon Islands aimed at improving maritime safety, with a focus on Western Province. Members recognised the value of this project and noted the potential for scalability under the Pacific One-Maritime Framework (POMF). Australia reiterated its support to share information on its approach to safety of navigation.

13. Chile invited members to consider participation on IALA Aids to Navigation training to be held in Valparaiso, Chile in November 2026.
14. Vanuatu updated members on recent reforms to strengthen maritime safety and security, noting ongoing challenges such as ageing vessels, limited infrastructure, and shortages of trained personal.
15. Members commended Mongolia on their efforts to exit the Port State Control 'Blacklist' by strengthening the effectiveness, transparency, and credibility of its Flag State Control regime. Members encouraged continued dialogue and information sharing and recognised the need for regional capacity-building training for Flag State inspectors to continue to strengthen effectiveness of implementation.
16. Samoa highlighted ongoing challenges of preventing fatalities on small vessels in Samoa and across the region. Members supported the need for regional procurement initiatives to improve access to important life-saving equipment. Australia, Canada and China shared experiences of their own work in remote maritime environments and committed to sharing further information and best practice with APHoMSA members. The APHoMSA secretariat also committed to exploring options to allow the APHoMSA website to support information sharing, with a focus on small vessel safety.
17. Members noted Fiji's role as a central maritime repair hub for the Pacific and agreed to consider how best to support provision of training to strengthen marine compass adjustment training capacity.
18. Australia updated members on its maritime digitalisation activities, focusing specifically on MASS and S-100 implementation. This includes the national S-100 test bed located in the Torres Strait. While members recognised digitalisation as the future of the sector, they also acknowledged the significant resource and personnel shortages facing many SIDS. To ensure ongoing focus, members agreed that maritime digitalisation should feature prominently on the agenda of future APHoMSA sessions.
19. Members noted Canada's update on its navigation safety regulatory framework to enable the use of Electronic Chart Systems (ECS) as an alternative to traditional paper charts for non-SOLAS vessels. While acknowledging the technical and training challenges for seafarers, members agreed to continue sharing best practices and information on domestic ECS regimes.

Marine Environment Protection

20. IMO provides members with an update on IMO's technical cooperation efforts to support ratification and implementation of MARPOL Annex V and the London Convention and Protocol in the Asia-Pacific region, highlighting progress under the IMO-FAO [OceanLitter Programme](#), related capacity-building activities, and initiatives to reduce sea-based marine

plastic litter from shipping, ports and fisheries. Members noted this information and its relevance to ongoing regional technical cooperation and capacity-building, and acknowledged efforts by IMO to streamline technical cooperation under the OceanLitter program to now cover marine litter prevention, waste management and biofouling management.

21. Members noted Fiji's paper, which outlines the growing international shift toward mandatory regulation of ship biofouling management and in-water cleaning at the IMO. Members agreed on the need for stronger regional cooperation to harmonise procedures, build capacity and support smaller administrations, while recognising the environmental, fuel-efficiency and emissions-reduction benefits of effective biofouling management.
22. Members noted Australia's paper highlighting the importance of strong international liability and compensation regimes to ensure adequate funding and clear responsibility in responding to vessel-sourced pollution incidents. Members noted ongoing work at the IMO Legal Committee regarding how these regimes apply to alternative fuels. Members were encouraged to engage in this work and consider accession to relevant IMO liability and compensation conventions to ensure predictable, fair and effective coverage for pollution incidents.
23. Members noted Chile's proposal to strengthen regional cooperation against the Illegal, Unreported, and Unregulated (IUU) fishing through an official information exchange and early warning mechanisms.
24. Members noted the paper co-sponsored by Singapore and China, which presented practical examples of maritime digitalisation with a focus on Just-in-Time (JIT) planning. Members were encouraged to embrace digitalisation and consider leveraging digital solutions to enhance safety at sea, including seafarer welfare, and to protect the marine environment. China highlighted the benefits of participating in its coordinated scheduling project, which improves port entry efficiency and reduces fuel consumption and emissions, and invited interested Members to participate through bilateral arrangements.
25. Solomon Islands introduced its plan for a *Sustainable Maritime Future: Charting the Course Towards Greener Shipping and Ports*. Members agreed to consider supporting through technical cooperation, knowledge sharing and partnership opportunities to support the transition towards sustainable maritime transport in the Pacific.
26. Members noted updates on the outcomes of the *Pacific Maritime Futures: Advancing Sustainable Transport and Climate Resilience Workshop*. Members Acknowledged the importance of collaboration between International, Regional and Member States in the progressing green maritime transport in the region and called on international donors and development partners to explore opportunities to support large scale implementation.

27. People's Republic of China updated members on progress by the Correspondence Group on Maritime Decarbonisation in advancing maritime decarbonisation, highlighting real-world deployment of low- and zero-emission technologies and noting current membership spanning Asia, the Pacific and international organisations. China agreed to continue to lead the correspondence group, merging Digitalisation and Decarbonisation into a single correspondence group.

Maritime Incident Response

28. SPREP introduced a paper proposing a revised approach to the implementation of the Pacific Islands Regional Marine Pollution Contingency Plan (PACPLAN) to combat maritime pollution emergencies in the South Pacific region. Members supported the proposal to improve the way PACPLAN arrangements are governed, planned, delivered and implemented and urged SPREP to consider developing effective tools to identify the needs of members. Members also supported the need to identify sustainable funding and resourcing to ensure the long-term viability of PACPLAN.
29. Fiji highlighted the need for stronger regional cooperation for marine oil spill preparedness and response. Members acknowledged the importance of stronger cooperation and recognised the need for regular regional drills and multi-agency exercises. SPREP agreed to consider these needs and incorporate into PACPLAN planning.
30. Members noted Chile's experiences with development of national regulations making the use of Automatic Identification System (AIS) equipment mandatory for vessels with a length of 12 metres or more, or gross tonnage of 15 or more. Members were encouraged to consider similar approaches to enhance safety of navigation and protection of life at sea, acknowledging challenges associated with cost and resourcing.
31. Vietnam presented a paper on strengthening cross-border maritime incident coordination and enhancing SAR rapid-response capacity. Members were encouraged to strengthen coordination mechanisms, enhance rapid-response capacity and promote regular regional cooperation to improve maritime safety, and agreed to share information and experiences.
32. Australia highlighted observations from recent regional engagements, including the 10th Pacific Regional Search and Rescue (PacSAR) Workshop, regarding Search and Rescue (SAR) capability challenges in Pacific Island Countries, noting the importance of a tailored regional training approach focused on practical coastal SAR operations. Members supported the need for tailored training to be focused on coastal operations in low-cost environments and encouraged continued dialogue and cooperation through existing forums such as PacSAR.
33. Mongolia outlined its responsibilities as a landlocked flag State in conducting marine casualty investigations and the challenges it faces. Members supported landlocked states building their capacity and capability to investigate incidents involving vessels sailing under their flag. Members also supported the principles of greater cooperation, knowledge

sharing and improved investigative capability regarding marine casualty investigations. China and Singapore offered to support marine casualty investigation training for Mongolia and APHoMSA members.

Regional Cooperation

34. Australia introduced a paper on the 2021 amendments to the IMO Convention, encouraging Member States of the IMO to ratify the amendments as a matter of priority. Singapore reiterated the importance of these amendments to enhance the inclusiveness and effectiveness of the IMO by creating more opportunities for Asia–Pacific representation, particularly for SIDS and Least Developed Countries (LDC).
35. Members acknowledged recent Tokyo MOU developments and thanked the organization for its diverse training initiatives in the Asia-Pacific, including seminars, expert missions, and PSC officer exchanges. Singapore announced it will host the next annual meeting in September 2026 and looks forward to welcoming delegates.
36. ReCAAP Information Sharing Centre updated members on piracy and armed robbery trends and activities in 2025. Members acknowledged the value of ReCAAP as the region’s central hub for incident reporting, capacity building, analysis and information exchange. ReCAAP agreed to explore future engagement opportunities with the Pacific Fusion Centre.
37. Members noted Chile’s leadership in the UNESCO Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC) South East Pacific Tsunami Warning Working Group and agreed to establish a correspondence group, to be led by Chile, to identify and prioritise cooperation needs across the Asia Pacific region.
38. Members welcomed IALA’s update on capacity building and training activities in the Asia Pacific region and noted a number of training programs planned for delivery in 2026. Members were encouraged to ratify the Convention on the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation.
39. Members were encouraged to participate in a World Maritime Day parallel event, followed by Korea Maritime Week, to be held in Busan, Republic of Korea, from 26-30 October 2026.
40. Members reaffirmed and commended their support for continued growth of the Republic of Korea’s Global On-Board Training Program. Developed in partnership with the IMO through Official Development Assistance, the program focuses on fostering highly skilled seafarers. Members noted that superior training leads to safer maritime operations and highlighted the increasing number of women entering the industry.
41. The Republic of Korea outlined its 2024–2026 Official Development Assistance (ODA) initiative aimed at strengthening maritime and fisheries education in Pacific Island Countries, including the development of a regional master plan focused on education hubs,

curriculum standardisation, licensing cooperation, and digital training platforms. The programme is expected to expand in 2026 to include additional Pacific Island Countries. Republic of Korea confirmed that Pacific nations are now eligible to nominate for participation.

42. Chile proposed a practical framework to strengthen technical cooperation and capacity building among APHoMSA members. Chile agreed to establish and lead a correspondence group to systemically identify and prioritise technical assistance needs across APHoMSA members, recognising the need for the IMO Regional Presence Office to play a central coordinating role within the correspondence group.
43. SPC provided an update on preparation for the Pacific Regional Energy and Transport Ministers Meeting (PRETMM), to be held in Papua New Guinea in May 2026. A key focus of the meeting will be the endorsement of the Pacific One-Maritime Framework (POMF) and Regional Strategy for Women in Maritime. Member States, donors and partners were encouraged to support the forum and express endorsement of key maritime initiatives.
44. IMO updated members on technical cooperation support for the Asia Pacific region, covering amendments to the IMO Integrated Technical Cooperation Program structure, establishment of the Regional Presence Office (RPO) for the Pacific, and enhancements to the IMO's Technical Cooperation Request Management System and Technical Cooperation Dashboard. IMO confirmed the appointment of a regional coordinator will be announced soon. Members also noted the adoption of a two-year theme for World Maritime Day - "From Policy to Practice: Powering Maritime Excellence" – for 2026-27. Members commended IMO on their efforts to support the Asia Pacific region, with Australia confirming that recruitment of a Senior Maritime Professional will soon commence for deployment to Fiji to support the initial set-up of the RPO and early program delivery.
45. APHoMSA Members expressed their appreciation to Solomon Islands and SPC for convening the POMF Breakfast Dialogue in Honiara in an informal "Talanoa" format, reflecting the Pacific way of open and inclusive dialogue. Some Members shared perspectives on their maritime priorities, aspirations and challenges, and recognised the value of this exchange in fostering mutual understanding and trust. APHoMSA Members acknowledged the importance of building on this dialogue to strengthen practical technical cooperation, partnerships and concrete actions under APHoMSA, in support of advancing maritime development across the Asia-Pacific region.
46. Members also noted updates on:
 - outcomes of relevant international and regional organisations.
 - technical cooperation activities planned for the Asia Pacific region.

47. Members reflected on the conclusion of the current APHoMSA Strategy 2022–2026 and the need to consider the future direction of the forum. In doing so, Members noted recent regional developments, including the establishment of IMO Regional Presence Offices, growing momentum behind the POMF, the Regional Action Program for Asia and the Pacific, and the increasing complexity of the maritime regulatory environment. Members agreed to establish a correspondence group, to be led by New Zealand, to review the future role and structure of APHoMSA and table a draft revised strategy at the next session of APHoMSA.

Other Business

48. Canada confirmed arrangements to host the 26th session of APHoMSA in Vancouver in March 2027.