



eCMID Accredited Vessel Inspector

NEWSLETTER

MARCH 2022

MARINE
SURVEYING
ACADEMY





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Introduction from IIMS & MSA CEO



Dear Colleague

As I settle down to type my introduction to this newsletter, I do so with the Ukrainian crisis unfurling in the background, (which started just a few days ago), and I remind myself how lucky I am to live where I do. None of us knows yet what the coming period holds, but on behalf of my colleagues and I, we would like to send our positive thoughts to those AVIs and anyone else in the maritime trade operating in this area at a time of great danger and who are affected by this crisis. Coming out of the pandemic remains challenging enough still and now the world is thrown immediately into another testing scenario.



Thinking about this unfolding tragedy made me contemplate the art of communication briefly. It seems certain in the run up to military action that there has been a lack of communication clarity from one side to the other. As individuals in business, we thrive on good communication.

Clear communication is critical for success but is often needlessly fraught with inconsistencies, either unintentionally or sometimes deliberately. All communication consists of just three elements - the 'sender' who originates the communication, the message itself that is being communicated, and the reaction of one or more 'receivers' of the message. True communication is not necessarily the message that the sender intended to send, nor is it even the words that the sender chose to use. It is how the message was understood by the receiver(s). Clear communication exists when the reaction to the message received is the same as the intention with which it was sent by the sender. Often, this is sadly not the case.

As an AVI you have a duty - and there is an expectation - to communicate clearly with your client from the opening meeting of your audit inspection to the close out session. There can be no room for any ambiguity.

The eCMID AVI scheme continues to prosper. We have now had approaching 800 applications since the scheme was launched in mid-2015. The accreditation is widely accepted in the industry as being one of the acceptable and highest available standards and, with IMCA's technological help along the way, it feels we continue to make a difference.

And briefly to conclude, let me touch on the matter of complacency, another subject that is topical for me. Too many things are taken for granted. We all do it. Because we perform the same or similar jobs routinely, we are in danger of becoming complacent. Guard against complacency as it is your enemy!

Regards

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mike". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Mike Schwarz
IIMS & MSA Chief Executive Officer



Update from the eCMID AVI Team

It's time again for us to share some news and information with our eCMID AVI (Accredited Vessel Inspector) community in the form of our quarterly newsletter. We hope you enjoy reading these newsletters and as always, we welcome comments and feedback.

A quick recap of the last few months here at Marine Surveying Academy (MSA). We have been working on various projects and are pleased to report that the eCMID AVI scheme continues to grow with new applications and Accredited Vessel Inspectors coming onboard and despite ongoing challenges, which vary in different parts of the world, the majority of AVIs have adapted to new working regimes and have continued with their inspector roles.

MSA continue to deliver a portfolio of training courses and seminars online and have adapted well. Training is measured by the performance of our courses by way of feedback, regular reviews of course content with IMCA (International Marine Contractors Association) with whom the scheme was born, and other external shareholders and stakeholders.

Last November we successfully delivered our **fourth** eCMID AVI Festival of Knowledge online. More about that a little later... and details of our forthcoming one too.

Our CEO Mike Schwarz has recently updated the MSA (Marine Surveying Academy) website – go to: www.marinesurveyingacademy.com or bitly link: <https://bit.ly/3J8pVQa> - you may find it of interest to see what else we do.

We would like to reassure you that we continue to deliver a professional and reliable service to the eCMID AVI community and beyond.

Here are some words from the eCMID AVI team summing up the first quarter of 2022;



Hilary Excell, Business Manager and Director

Welcome to our first newsletter of 2022 and I wish you a very successful year ahead. Challenges will certainly continue in all walks of life, affecting us all, but as demonstrated, by adopting a flexible approach, these challenges can confidently be conquered.

As was expected, Quarter 1 was quiet, however we are pleased to report we have still received some AVI applications and there continues to be a firm interest in the scheme, with a continuous flow of new enquiries from all over the world. Enquiries come from individuals already working in the field, or from those who are taking a slightly different career path.

As with any accreditation scheme, we have encountered some withdrawals for various reasons be it retirement or a career change, however, we are pleased to report that currently we have just over 380 active AVIs.

We continue to develop and nurture the eCMID AVI scheme and are confident we can continue to provide a safe and strong community.

We would reiterate that the scheme has proved to be robust and is held in high regard in industry. AVIs are dedicated individuals who are committed to their trade and remain committed and loyal to the standards and expectations of the scheme.

Pui Si Chung, Accreditation Scheme Administrator

As well as the overseeing of and vetting of new AVI applications before they are passed to an Assessor, I am also responsible for processing Part One of the Five-Year Revalidations for AVIs renewing their Five-Year accreditation. Part One is, in essence, a complete review and revalidation of Five-Year accreditation, whereby the AVI submits document-based evidence in relation to their work as an AVI. Some stats follow;

- 72% of those invited have completed Part One
- 13.9% have yet to respond or are in the process of revalidating
- 13.9% have chosen not to revalidate



As some form of normality returns in many parts of the world, this has seen the workload increase for AVIs and, as a result, annual renewals have been steady.

We continue to see new applications from varying regions of the world, from West to East in Florida, Dubai, Abu Dhabi and Europe.

If you have any comments or feedback about the Five-Year Revalidation, please do tell us – we are here to help. Likewise, if you are due for renewal soon and have any questions, please do get in touch. Your point of contact is Pui Si Chung, Accreditation Scheme Administrator, email: info@marinesurveyingacademy.com



Sharon Holland, Events & Course Co-ordinator

My role is to ensure those who achieve AVI status attend an online eCMID AVI course within 2 years of being accredited in order to validate their accreditation. We often find that when AVIs first achieve accreditation, they like to complete a course as soon as they can, to gain further understanding and knowledge of the scheme and generally just get "stuck in". We also receive enquiries from a significant number of non-AVIs, or individuals who are having a career change who wish to attend a course first, before applying to the scheme, such that they can learn more and see if it is the path they wish to follow.

Our first eCMID AVI course for 2022 was delivered online on 9th February. This was very well attended with a total of fourteen delegates online, located in all reaches of the world from Canada and America to Singapore.

Some delegate feedback;

"The course was well planned and conducted seamlessly, especially being an online virtual class. Objective of understanding the scope of an AVI was well informed".

"Excellent course!"

"Well organised"

"Very knowledgeable tutor and such a good course"

I am also responsible for organising Part Two of the Five-Year Revalidation. Part Two comprises a Mandatory Refresher Course, again delivered online via Zoom. The duration of the course is 3 ½ hours and is a review of the many changes and upgrades to IMCA's eCMID system and database.

Our first course this year was held on 10th February, and we had six delegates attending, again from as far west as Canada across to the Philippines.

For all course attendees, we wholly encourage delegate participation and welcome questions and feedback. Our pool of course tutors are well experienced and knowledgeable in their field of work and most of them actively work in the field as eCMID AVIs.

IMCA update - New Findings Analysis feature nears launch



The finishing touches are being made to a new 'analytics portal' within the eCMID database, which is due to launch in the next few weeks. The portal will enable analysis of those elements of the eCMID and eMISW inspections which are resulting in the most frequent inspection findings, with filters available to look at specific periods and vessel types.

For IMCA, this will feed into committee work by identifying areas for targeted communications or changes to guidance, with an intention to publish regular bulletins to the industry highlighting key topics. For inspectors, it may help to identify areas for particular focus during inspections. Vessel operators will also have the option to filter the results to just their fleet, to identify any common findings and areas they can address through company-specific procedures and communications.

All registered users will be advised when this becomes available, and we'll include a more detailed feature on the portal and key findings in the next issue.

An Information Note has been published by IMCA for Members with oil and gas and renewable energy businesses in the USA.



ADVERSE IMPACTS OF THE AMERICAN OFFSHORE WORKER FAIRNESS ACT (H.R. 6728) ON OFFSHORE ENERGY SECURITY

Information Note 1606

IMCA has published a new Information Note that should be of interest to IMCA Members with offshore oil and gas and renewable energy businesses in the United States. This relates to new proposed legislative amendments called the American Offshore Worker Fairness Act that would dramatically change citizenship crewing requirements for vessels engaged in offshore energy support operations on the outer continental shelf of the United States.

Specifically, Members should be aware of proposed legislative changes that would undermine a regulatory scheme that has served the offshore energy industry well for decades by creating a crew citizenship and visa technical trade barrier that would derail offshore infrastructure development and adversely affect the energy security of the United States.

We have seen similar proposals in the past that were rightly defeated after lawmakers were educated by IMCA and our industry partners on the facts, and we look forward to lawmakers making a similar judgement this year given the criticality of the emerging offshore wind energy market and return of the oil and gas markets. Accordingly, this Information Note sets the record straight.

Follow up Information Note 1608

IMCA explains the unrealistic proposed US crewing exemption process – IMCA (imca-int.com)
H.R. 6728 & S. 3705 Maritime Crewing Bill - Manning Exemption Process – IMCA (imca-int.com)

Allen Leatt
IMCA Chief Executive

Information Notes are available via the Publications Section of our website



Continuous Professional Development (CPD)



Continuous Professional Development is an important and mandatory part of your accreditation and demonstrates a commitment to your professional self-development.

AVIs are required to achieve 10 CPD points per annual renewal year and our dedicated eCMID CPD App can help track your progress.

Submitting your CPD claims is easy to do via the App and you are encouraged to do so on a regular basis. The App keeps a tally of your current annual score so you can always keep up to date with your CPD status.

Full details of the eCMID CPD App can be found here <https://bit.ly/3nufXim>.

As part of the requirements as an AVI, maintaining your Continuous Professional Development is a mandatory part of your accreditation.

Recent trends have shown that in-person events are now starting to open again as we begin to emerge from the pandemic. The decision has therefore been taken that CPD points for any online attendances occurring from 1 January 2022 will revert back to the normal 2 CPD points.

We will of course monitor the situation and remain flexible to individual circumstances.

Any questions or concerns regarding CPD, please contact the Accreditation Scheme Administrator, Pui Si Chung at info@marinesurveyingacademy.com.

You can view the [eCMID Vessel Inspector CPD points table](#) (pdf format).



eCMID Assessment Committee and Fraudulent Documents



The eCMID AVI scheme which we manage on behalf of IMCA (International Marine Contractors Association) has been and continues to be maintained to a high standard, with those applicants only being accepted on the scheme who are suitably qualified and experienced.

Each application received into MSA is firstly checked by Pui Si Chung, Accreditation Scheme Administrator for a non-technical review. It is then passed to an experienced Assessor for the technical check and vetting procedure. Our aim is to turn around, review and notify you of the result of your application within 28 days from receipt.

Two of our longstanding eCMID AVI Assessors, Chris Kelly and Mike Marshall are pleased to share with us their experiences when vetting eCMID AVI applications.



Role of the eCMID Assessment Committee by Chris Kelly, FIIMS

The eCMID Assessment Committee was formed immediately prior to the launch of the IMCA (International Marine Contractors Association) eCMID AVI (Accredited Vessel Inspector) Scheme, administered by Marine Surveying Academy. The committee comprises 9 Assessors who are experienced at senior levels in the marine offshore sector and who are also experienced in application vetting. The combined experience of Assessors covers the full range of vessels subject to eCMID inspections. A further pool of experience is available from suitably experienced IIMS (International Institute of Marine Surveying) members who can advise on specialist areas of the offshore sector in various parts of the world.

Each eCMID AVI application is scrutinised by an Assessor with a range of experience relevant to each application. Where a wide range of experience is claimed, or the supporting evidence submitted is questionable, the application is scrutinised by an additional Assessor(s) with the relevant experience.

The Assessor looks closely for evidence in the application to verify that the claimed qualifications, experience and knowledge for each vessel type meet the criteria set by IMCA. Occasionally, some applications are questioned if irrelevant experience, evidence or references are provided. This can result in prolonged communication with the applicant to verify information.

If an application is considered to be borderline, it is passed to another suitable Assessor for a second opinion and communication will be initiated between Assessors to discuss any questionable points.

It is important to note that all applicants must provide evidence to meet criteria and applications are not approved purely based on job title. However, as with any accreditation scheme, not all applications are successful. This could be due to a lack of relevant qualifications and/or experience. Others are not granted the full range of requested vessel types due to lack of relevant experience. There is an appeal process in place if an applicant wishes to contest the findings of the Assessor, but overall, applicants are fully aware of the robustness and standard of the scheme and respect the Assessor's decision.

An Assessor's Experience of Document Fraud **by Mike Marshall *HonMIIMS, AVI00109***

During my very long career as a Deck Officer, nine years deep sea and forty-one years offshore, I have encountered quite a few instances of fraudulent certification in both the Deck and Engineering Departments.

For thirteen of the offshore years I worked in the Marine Department of a Middle East oil major, and for a few years was Superintendent of a Division, ultimately responsible for the planning and movement of Drilling Units as well as Offshore Marine Spreads. It was during my time in Arabia that I encountered my first cases of CoC fraud.

The first instance was back in 1985 whilst I was serving on a construction spread. Sadly, the two offending parties were British from the North of England. Something happened which caused discreet enquiries to be made about the two gentlemen's professional qualifications. When copies of the two Masters Foreign Going certificates were presented to the Marine Department, both certificates had the same number. The DTI in London confirmed these two characters were wanted for fraud and requested their flight details and time and date of arrival at Heathrow.

In the second half of 1990, whilst serving as Superintendent of the Division, I was responsible for the hiring of Deck Officers, Engineers and Divers. It was during this period that a person arrived in my office one afternoon and declared that he wished to apply for one of the Engineering positions. He produced a Chief Engineers Motor Ship CoC with a Steam Ship Endorsement. In all respects the CoC appeared to be the genuine article. However, when I ran a check with the DTI back in London, the CoC was fraudulent. This character was also a UK citizen.

A few years later, members of the Marine Department unearthed a serious case of fraud where the Port Captain for a Marine Contractor was manufacturing both Masters and Chief Engineers CoC's and selling them to persons of the same nationality for \$100 a go. He had a friend back in his home country, who worked in the Shipping and Seaman's Office, and he supplied the 'blank' original documentation.

Finally, about three to four years ago I had an occasion to speak with a person at the UK Certification Authority concerning someone's CoC, which was possibly suspect. As it turned out, the CoC was genuine. However, before we finished the telephone conversation, and to quote the exact words, I was informed that "I would be surprised at the number of fraudulent CoC's drifting around the North Sea".

The sad thing about this subject is that for those of us who have shed blood and tears to gain our CoC's, there are still people at sea who are risking not only their own lives, but also those of innocent people who are doing an honest day's work. It proves that certification should not be taken on face value, and companies and persons in authority must be more vigilant when assessing someone's authenticity.



Training courses and events for 2022

- **eCMID AVI (Accredited Vessel Inspector) online course: 09:00hrs to 16:30hrs held in UK/GMT**
 - Tuesday 5th April 2022
 - Tuesday 21st June 2022 - TO BE CONFIRMED
- **Five-Year Revalidation Part Two Mandatory Refresher online course: duration 3.5 hours (time to be confirmed)**
 - Thursday 7th April 2022
 - Thursday 23rd June 2022 - TO BE CONFIRMED



Online seminar - 'eCMID AVI Festival of Knowledge V'

To be held online during week of 9th May – exact date to be confirmed

We are delighted to announce that our **fifth** online seminar, the 'eCMID AVI Festival of Knowledge V...' will be delivered online LIVE during the week commencing 9th May 2022.

Key speakers from industry will bring a variety of current and relevant topics to the table, designed especially for the eCMID AVI community, and for those interested in applying to the eCMID AVI scheme.

Your contributions are welcome

We also welcome contributions from our eCMID AVI community. What subjects would you like to hear about? Would you like to be involved and bring something you know will be of interest to your fellow AVIs and talk about it? Let us know as we would really like to hear from you. Email your comments and contribution ideas to: **courses@marinesurveyingacademy.com**

Reserve your virtual place for just £95.00 and be part of the 'LIVE' event. As always, there will be opportunities to ask questions and be involved in discussions.

Included in the price will be a video recording of the event, copies of presentations, and a Certificate of Attendance awarding 4 CPD points.

A promotional flyer will be available soon with the line-up of speakers. All enquiries to Sharon Holland, Events & Course Co-ordinator at **courses@marinesurveyingacademy.com**

Here's some feedback from our seminar last November...

"An excellent day with good content"

"An informative day with interesting topics"

"Looking forward to next year's event"

"The topic on alternative fuels was very interesting. I think shipping is undergoing a lot of transformations akin to the age when we changed from sail to steam, from wood to steel. I think the Institute does well to include topics related to the latest technologies and trends in the industry."





Feature Interview with **Captain Philip Morris, AVI00306**

Phil is based in the Philippines, currently working for ExxonMobil. He has recently completed his five-year revalidation as an AVI and shares his thoughts with us following his recent attendance to an online Five-Year Part Two Mandatory Refresher Course, and online training in general.

Q1. You attended an online AVI course in February. What were the key learnings you took away?

It was very encouraging to learn that despite the recent difficulties experienced by many of us in the industry, the impact was minimised by the introduction of diversity in terms of managing risk associated with the pandemic, whilst continuing to perform the usual high standards of vessel inspections. The updates and insights on the Progressive Web App (PWA) by Adam Hugo, IMCA, was highly informative and helpful, as we all adjust to the new platform and share experiences on how to maximise our efficiency when using the app, especially during areas/times of limited or intermittent network connectivity, when live input is saved to the cloud, resulting in minimal loss of inspection data. The section on new legislation was certainly a valuable component, as I was unaware of some of the new regulations.

Q2. How might you incorporate these learnings into your work as an AVI going forward?

By using tips and knowledge sharing with colleagues, we can continue to work safely and efficiently and adapt to global challenges. The PWA will give us greater versatility and a robust backup and, (in my case) will save me from having to write and duplicate reporting comments and findings, due to the risk of possibly losing valuable information and back tracking during inspections. The new legislation has prompted me to research in detail on their applications relative to my work scopes.

Q3 How important and relevant is it to refresh your knowledge and keep up to date?

It is imperative for us all to keep up with this rapidly changing industry, in terms of legislation and technological advances. Regardless of our individual specialties and core competencies, there are opportunities to learn every day. Many of us sometimes assume that we know the answers and are often proven wrong in our assumptions. It is vital to know where to find information through the vast array of available resources – we don't need to know every rule and regulation by heart, but we need to know where to reference this information. The inspector and the inspection are only as good as the information that he is able to access. The Continuous Professional Development (CPD) is an excellent (and necessary) tool to benchmark, maintain and improve upon our ongoing professional journey.

Q4. Since the onset of COVID-19, online training is now very much the norm. What kind of impact has this had on your working life and has it created challenges?

At a personal professional level, the increase in availability of online training has proven to provide significant benefits, such as cost saving in terms of travel to training centres, a greater choice of attendance opportunities and a wider choice of opportunities to take training courses that I may not have normally made the effort to take. Being able to attend virtually from almost any global location has been a significant benefit and has supported the work and lifestyle balance significantly. In summary, the increase in the availability of online training has had a positive impact on my work life.

Q5. In your location of the world, have you started to see some face-to-face events resuming and, if not, are you looking forward to real-time networking again?

Being based in Philippines and working mainly in Nigeria, I am yet to see any resumption in face-to-face events, although at this point in time, I feel that things are on the brink of changing. Although we have adapted well to working remotely, nothing can replace the value of real-time one on one networking and I'm looking forward to the move back to our traditional socially interacting professional engagements.

Q6. What types of vessels are you most engaged with?

During the course of my work, I am mainly engaged with vessels operating in the oil and gas sector, including PSV's DSV's, Multi-Purpose Offshore Support Vessels, Drilling Rigs, Self-propelled Jack Ups, Construction Barges, Heavy Lift Vessels, Pipe and Cable Lay Vessels.

Q7. From an AVI point of view, which vessels pose the biggest challenges and why?

From an AVI's perspective, multi-purpose offshore support vessels pose the biggest challenges, due to their complexity and specialities. For these vessels, clients often require a huge range of supplement question sections, regardless of the vessel's actual or planned role. An example of this could be a DP Class 3 vessel with a diving spread, an articulated gangway, ROV capability, 300 Tonne crane, 4-point mooring system, pipe and cable lay capability, helideck, FiFi Class notation, Oil spill and control capabilities... the list goes on... and so does the inspection. Clients need to be more aware that such vessels take time to conduct a thorough and quality inspection.

Q8. How do you like to relax and unwind in your spare time?

Playing squash, walking and running (not so quick these days) are my main hobbies. We have 3 dogs in our family so time at home is spent out in the fresh air walking the "Boys" as we call them. Quality family time is crucial to a successful career.

Q9. Favourite food and drink?

Living in Asia we have a wide choice of cuisines, but I never get tired of good old-fashioned fish and chips, traditional full English breakfasts and similar foods – possibly not the healthiest, but nothing is bad for you in moderation. Two of my favourite drinks in Asia are "Buko" juice (water from young coconuts) and "Calimansi" juice (Filipino lime juice).



New Regulations: UK HS-OSC (High Speed Offshore Service Craft)



New HS-OSC regulations passed UK Parliament and came into force on 9th February. These Regulations apply to high-speed offshore service craft which is either a United Kingdom high speed craft, or any other high speed craft in United Kingdom waters.

To view the document in full, visit:
<https://bit.ly/3BuPRCE>

More on this subject matter to come at the eCMID Festival of Knowledge V in May...

WhatsApp

A reminder that there is a WhatsApp group available for you to join, where you can share your experiences, ask questions and support each other. If you would like to join, please email Sharon Holland, Events and Course Co-ordinator at **courses@marinesurveyingacademy.com** with your preferred contact number, and you will be added to the group.



IMCA eCMID YouTube channel

IMCA has a YouTube channel called the IMCA eCMID YouTube channel which has a range of videos and user guides. These videos and demonstrations are comprehensive and extremely useful. You will find information regarding the eCMID Inspection App - the PWA (Progressive Web App) which was introduced in July 2020 and is now in full operation and has been very well received, along with information about the eCMID AVI Database itself. The videos are short, but concise and we encourage you to take advantage of this resource.

IMCA eCMID YouTube channel

Video user guides on the eCMID vessel inspection system from IMCA, the International Marine Contractors Association - www.imcaecmid.com | www.youtube.com

Visit <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UChwqwyCJAKiltRd9z8IYcA>



eCMID AVI YouTube channel

Did you know there is an eCMID YouTube channel which we have created for eCMID AVIs to view past videos from our online seminars. There are currently 30 videos which are free for you to watch – just access via the links:



<https://bit.ly/3vSqudi> - Fest I
<https://bit.ly/3CsERq4> - Fest II

<https://bit.ly/3HQmNHD> - Fest III
<https://bit.ly/34t5O0d> - Fest IV