

# IOM REGISTRY: SUPPORTING SAFETY AND ENVIRONMENTAL INNOVATION THROUGH THE SAFETYTECH ACCELERATOR

The maritime industry faces a set of critical safety and environmental challenges that must be addressed, not simply because of commercial drivers, but because of growing regulatory expectations and, fundamentally, because solving these issues makes shipping safer, cleaner and more efficient.

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IOMSR Director Cameron Mitchell

"The reality is that some of the most important safety and environmental challenges we face today are not being driven primarily by commercial incentives, but by the need to protect people, the environment, and the long-term credibility of our industry," says Cameron Mitchell, CEO of the Isle of Man Ship Registry (IOMSR).

From greenhouse gas emissions and fuel transition risks to cargo fires, many of today's most pressing problems require industry-wide collaboration rather than isolated or single-company driven solutions.

Safetytech Accelerator (STA) was established to meet this need, bringing together shipowners, technology providers, insurers, researchers and regulators to work collectively on areas of mutual interest and shared responsibility.

"Safetytech Accelerator provides a rare and valuable platform for the industry to come together and focus on problem-solving, rather than competing in silos," Mitchell says. "It allows us to test ideas, share evidence and accelerate solutions that genuinely improve safety and environmental performance."

### METHANE ABATEMENT IN INDUSTRY INITIATIVE

One of the key programmes within Safetytech Accelerator is the Methane Abatement in the Maritime Industry Initiative. Methane is a highly potent greenhouse gas, with a significantly greater warming impact than carbon dioxide over short timescales. In the maritime context, methane slip – the release of unburned methane from engines fuelled by liquefied natural gas (LNG) is increasingly recognised as a material environmental risk.

"As the industry turns to LNG and other alternative fuels, we must ensure we are not unintentionally creating new environmental problems," Mitchell says. "Methane abatement is essential if alternative fuels are to deliver the climate benefits they promise, and regulation will increasingly reflect that reality."

The initiative brings together industry stakeholders to improve the measurement and reporting of methane emissions, support the

development and deployment of abatement technologies and help ensure regulatory frameworks are both effective and practicable.

### CARGO FIRE AND LOSS INNOVATION INITIATIVE

Another major focus area is the Cargo Fire and Loss Innovation Initiative. Cargo fires remain one of the most serious safety risks at sea, with severe consequences for crew safety, vessel integrity, cargo, and the marine environment. The growing prevalence of dangerous goods, batteries, and misdeclared or improperly stowed cargoes has increased both the frequency and severity of such incidents.

"Cargo fires remain one of the most complex and dangerous operational risks in shipping," Mitchell says. "Reducing these incidents requires better data, stronger standards, improved technology and closer collaboration across the entire supply chain."

This initiative aims to reduce cargo fires and vessel losses through improved data sharing, stronger standards, better detection and firefighting technologies, enhanced training, and more effective regulatory alignment.

### THE ROLE OF A FLAG STATE

The involvement of a flag state in these programmes reflects the important role that regulators play in enabling innovation while maintaining safety and environmental integrity.

"Flags have a responsibility not only to enforce regulations, but to help shape solutions that work in practice," Mitchell says. "By engaging early with industry initiatives like those within Safetytech Accelerator, we can support innovation while ensuring that safety and environmental standards remain robust and effective."

Equally important is the role of the flag as an industry connector – helping to bring together shipowners, technology developers, insurers, classification societies and regulators to share knowledge, align priorities and accelerate the uptake of proven solutions.

"Our role is to help bridge the gap between regulation and innovation," Mitchell adds. "If we want safer ships and cleaner seas, we have to work together – and that's exactly what these programmes are designed to do."

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