



**DRYBULK** TERMINALS  
GROUP



**An invitation to Industry bodies  
to  
develop and maintain technical standards  
for administrative and operational data**

IMO Resolution MEPC.323(74) called for voluntary cooperation between the port and shipping sectors to contribute to reducing GHG emissions from ships.

This will support the industry's collective efforts to improve the quality and availability of data and develop necessary global digital standards allowing reliable and efficient data exchange between ship and shore.

The IMO GIA Just In Time Arrival Guide explains how data quality and availability is a cost-effective measure to reduce GHG emissions, whilst also addressing important IMO objectives, namely: vessel safety and security.

Nonetheless, to achieve data quality and availability data owners need to share critical data in real time.

Data from other sources may not be updated regularly enough and is often not binding which results in parties including additional margins: buffer or suffer.

To minimize the administrative burden, errors, and delays in updates data owners are looking for global solutions to share data "one-to-any".

With up to 8.000<sup>1</sup> different ports and up to 98.000 <sup>2</sup> different ships, and with many more different cargo owners and interested parties, the maritime industry must work together on the way forward to create robust global solutions that incentivize both data owner and user.

These global solutions require standards which have the commitment of both shipping and ports.

They must be robust enough to avoid incompatibility between standards and systems. Ultimately the aim is to avoid investments to implement standards that are neither fit-for-purpose nor sustainable and that are simply not viable for all stakeholders across the supply chain.

In a recent initiative between ITPCO and IMO GIA to support low carbon shipping, Subject Matter Experts from both ports and shipping were asked which data elements have most impact on IMO objectives.

To achieve genuine interoperability between independent IT systems among relevant stakeholders, standards are required for:

- Nautical data: general port data, depths, and identification of terminals, berths and berth positions according the IHO standards
- Administrative data: to ensure the IMO GISIS data base is up to date, and to allow data transfer according the IMO Compendium
- Operational data: arrival and departure times at berth and pilot boarding place, starting and completion times of cargo and ship services according the IMO Compendium

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<sup>1</sup> Lloyds Maritime Atlas

<sup>2</sup> UNCTAD report, greater than 100 GT

When combined, these objectives have the most impact on reducing GHG emissions in the long run by reducing overall vessel turnaround times.

They also impact safe berth-to-berth navigation as well as crew rest hour planning and security.

Harmonized data in these three categories demonstrate due diligence for safe port clauses in charter party contracts as well as verifying that the Port Authority and Hydrographic Office have jointly worked together to discharge their collective SOLAS responsibilities.

Where collaboration between the IMO, IHO and Industry is good for nautical data, similar collaboration in administrative and operational data is lacking.

IMO together with NGO's and IMO Member States have put in a significant effort to develop data definitions and data models in the IMO Compendium which is the first and most important step: to have a common language.

***However, the second and third steps, namely developing technical standards and software platforms, - still remain to be addressed.***

**This letter is about the second step.**

Supporting technical standards to ensure Application Program Interfaces (API's) are compatible with one another are not within the competency of IMO.

This requires industry collaboration to develop and maintain such supporting technical standards.

Today, many isolated industry developments exist, from ports, shipping, port community systems, solution providers and research institutes.

Unfortunately, developments to date have only resulted in a proliferation of solutions, no return on investments and not allowing the data owner to share in a “one-to-any” manner.

This proliferation of solutions causes confusion in port and shipping sectors, delaying a pathway for the industry to move forward in a sustainable way.

NGO’s and Industry agree the most robust path forward is to:

***ask existing neutral industry bodies, to deploy their expertise and ability to listen to their key stakeholders’ needs in order to co-create a single supporting technical standard under ISO Technical Committee 8.***

This effectively takes commercial and vested interests out of the equation and allows for governance and fair play in the compromises that need to be reached between stakeholders.

It will also ensure neutrality of such standards and development alongside existing standards of IMO and ISO.

IMO and the Industry together can then accept and promote these standards for implementation. This also ensures sustainable and future-proof maintenance of the standards as well as other developments needed to foster data sharing in the maritime industry.

In summary, this document is a call to action from NGO’s representing both ports and shipping<sup>3</sup> to existing industry and governmental bodies to work together on supporting technical standards for administrative and operational data.

This will allow commercial API’s to be developed on the basis of these technical standards, which are compatible and interoperable.

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<sup>3</sup> BIMCO, DryBulkTerminals, FONASBA, IAPH, ICS, IFSMA, IHMA, IPCSA, ITPCO

Such an approach has the potential to break down barriers and will accelerate the development process dramatically by allowing the technical and subject matter experts to work together in Q2 2021.

In parallel this will permit all parties to prepare for the formal ISO procedures and the governance of such industry alliance under NGO's.

The aim is to result in a permanent working group under ISO TC8/SC11 to continue the work on the alignment of ISO 28005 to the IMO Compendium, assuming responsibility for defining the information exchange needs and API's between ship and shore.

Next step:

Those NGO's and Industry bodies in agreement will propose the way forward to meet Q2 2021.