INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION

E

4 ALBERT EMBANKMENT
LONDON SE1 7SR
Telephone: +44 (0)20 7735 7611 Fax: +44 (0)20 7587 3210

Circular Letter No.5290
12 October 2026

To: All IMO Member States

Subject: **Open call for participation in the NextWave Seafarers (NWS) Phase 2 Global Workshop**

1 The International Maritime Organization (IMO) is pleased to announce the second phase of the onboard cadet training programme under the framework of the IMO NextWave Seafarers (NWS) initiative. Implemented in partnership with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and in collaboration with Bahri, the national shipping line of Saudi Arabia, this initiative seeks to provide onboard training opportunities for cadet seafarers (i.e. candidates for certification as officers in the deck or engine departments, including electro-technical officers). Building on the pilot phase, NWS Phase 2 aims to scale up the initiative globally by: extending participation beyond Least Developed Countries (LDCs) and Small Island Developing States (SIDS) to cadets from other developing countries, such as Landlocked Developing Countries (LLDCs); training a minimum of 30 additional cadets, with a target of 50 per cent women; and addressing the existing barriers to entry into the seafaring profession, thereby contributing to the sustainable development of maritime human resources in these countries. In addition, Phase 2 will develop a partnership model that encourages more shipping companies to join this global effort.

2 In the context of the global scaling-up plan for the initiative, the IMO Secretariat will organize a Global Workshop to present the initiative's achievements to date, share practical insights from the pilot phase and outline how shipping companies can actively contribute to this effort. The workshop is scheduled to take place at **IMO Headquarters, Committee Rooms 11–13, on Friday, 20 November 2026**. The event will also serve as the official launch of the next stage of the NWS initiative, which aims to establish a sustainable global model for seafarer training opportunities in which additional shipping companies and Member States can participate. Through this workshop, IMO aims to build a broad coalition with a common purpose and commitment to strengthening the next generation of seafarers and ensuring a sustainable, future-ready maritime workforce.

Open call for participation

3 The purpose of this open call is to invite Member States, shipping companies and other relevant stakeholders to support IMO's efforts to address seafarer shortages by building a more diverse, resilient and sustainable pipeline of future seafarers through a scaled-up effort to provide training berths to cadets from developing countries. Member States are invited to collaborate with IMO in developing a scalable model for industry participation in cadet training and to bring this circular letter to the attention of shipping companies and shipowners' associations in their countries. Shipping companies are encouraged to provide training berths or onboard placements for cadet seafarers, particularly from LDCs, LLDCs and SIDS. The

initiative also seeks to promote research and dialogue on the evolving needs and expectations of the seafaring workforce.

How to participate

4 Member States and shipping companies are invited to confirm their attendance by email to tcid@imo.org, copied to JMatheic@imo.org, no later than **10 November 2026**. Those wishing to schedule a bilateral meeting during the workshop are invited to indicate this in their response.

5 Further details on the agenda and any updates will be made available through the IMO website and official communication channels. A briefing pack – including the project background, achievements and expansion plans – will be shared with participants at the event.

***