INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION

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Circular Letter No.5287
1 October 2026

To: IMO Member States and Associate Members
United Nations and specialized agencies
Intergovernmental organizations
Non-governmental organizations in consultative status
Arctic Indigenous Peoples' organizations
Academic institutions and other organizations with an interest in polar shipping

Subject: **2027 Polar Maritime Seminar – 1 and 2 February 2027**

1 The Secretary-General has the honour to invite representation at the 2027 Polar Maritime Seminar, co-sponsored by IMO and the Kingdom of Denmark's Chairship of the Arctic Council, in cooperation with the Protection of the Arctic Marine Environment Working Group of the Arctic Council (PAME), scheduled to be held in person only, on 1 and 2 February 2027 at IMO Headquarters, 4 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7SR.

2 The purpose of the Seminar is to provide an update on polar shipping developments, including current challenges of polar navigation; recent international legal and policy developments; global market and trade developments; socio-economic, cultural and environmental considerations for Indigenous Peoples and local communities; the perspective of Arctic ports and harbours; lessons learned from recent groundings; the experience of research ship operators; and fishing vessel safety in polar waters and related environmental considerations.

3 The provisional programme for the Seminar is set out in the annex. More detailed information regarding the programme and speakers will be circulated in due course.

4 Participation in the 2027 Polar Maritime Seminar is open to all IMO Member States and Associate Members, United Nations and specialized agencies, intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations in consultative status and, by invitation, to the representatives of Arctic Indigenous Peoples' organizations[1], academic institutions and other organizations with an interest in polar shipping.

5 Seminar participants will be subject to the Code of Conduct for Delegates, Observers and Other Participants at IMO Meetings, Events and Activities to Prevent Harassment including Sexual Harassment (see Circular Letter No.4908 of 20 August 2024).

6 The Seminar will be conducted in English only without interpretation. To participate, registration is required **by 26 January 2027** using the following link: https://pame.is/ourwork/arctic-shipping/forum/meetings/3rd-polar-maritime-seminar/. Any queries should be addressed to the organizers at polarseminar@pame.is.

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[1] The Inuit Circumpolar Council has consultative status with IMO.

ANNEX

PROVISIONAL PROGRAMME FOR THE 2027 POLAR MARITIME SEMINAR[2]

Each session will comprise presentations followed by a 20-minute question-and-answer discussion open to all participants.

1 FEBRUARY 2027

09.30 – 09.50 (UTC): Opening

09:50 – 11.00 SESSION 1: Current challenges of polar navigation	
11.00 – 11.30	**Coffee Break**
11.30 – 13:00 SESSION 2: Recent international legal and policy developments affecting polar shipping	
13.00 – 14.15	**Lunch**
14.15 – 15.30 SESSION 3: Global market and trade developments influencing polar shipping	
15.30 – 16.00	**Coffee Break**
16.00 – 17.20 SESSION 4: The increase in Arctic shipping – Socio-economic, cultural and environmental considerations for Indigenous Peoples and local communities	
END OF DAY 1	

2 FEBRUARY 2027

09.30 – 10.40 SESSION 5: Changes in Arctic shipping: a view from Arctic ports and harbours	
10.40 – 11.10	**Coffee Break**
11.10 – 12.30 SESSION 6: Lessons learned from recent groundings in the polar regions	
12.30 – 13.45	**Lunch**
13.45 – 14.45 SESSION 7: Experience of research ship operators in the Arctic and Antarctic	
14.45 – 15.15	**Coffee Break**
15.15 – 16.35 SESSION 8: Fishing vessel safety and environmental considerations in the polar regions	
16.35	**Closing remarks END OF THE SEMINAR**

[2] Timings are indicative and may change.