IMO Style Guide

Third edition, March 2018

Contents

Introduction

This revised IMO English Style Guide sets out the style to be followed in drafting, editing and proofreading IMO documents. It covers those aspects of English written style that are most relevant to the preparation of IMO documents.

This revised version includes new sections on indirect speech, the punctuation of lists and gender-neutral language. Sections on capitalization and italics, among others, have been reworked with a view to providing clearer and more comprehensive guidance.

The online English dictionary at Oxford Dictionaries – English, supplemented by the spelling list in this Guide, is the standard reference work for spelling at IMO. Also available on that website are further reference tools for improving English usage.

To make suggestions for corrections or improvements to this Guide, please contact the Head of the English Translation Section, Adam Henderson (ext. 3159, ahenders@imo.org). The Guide is a living document and will be updated periodically.

Thank you to all colleagues who commented on the draft version in the consultation phase and to the Editorial and Publishing Section for designing the cover page. Also, I would like to acknowledge the assistance of the Editing Section (Documentation Division, DGACM, United Nations, New York), who kindly gave permission to use elements of their Editorial Manual in this Style Guide. Finally, special thanks must go to colleagues in the English Translation Section for their valuable participation throughout the revision process and for their critical feedback on the draft version. This revised Guide benefits greatly from their input.

Chapter 1: Abbreviations

This chapter deals with two kinds of abbreviation: initialisms and acronyms.

Initialisms are abbreviations that are pronounced as individual letters, e.g. MSC, MEPC.

Acronyms are abbreviations formed from the initial letters of the words or occasionally from the initial parts of syllables taken from the words, pronounced as a single word, e.g. SOLAS, MARPOL.

In IMO style, all the letters of initialisms and acronyms are written in capitals, without full stops, e.g. GMDSS.

The full name or title should be written out the first time it occurs in a document, followed by the abbreviation in brackets.

Initialisms and acronyms are not normally included for names or titles that occur only once or twice in a text. However, when the entity referred to is better known by its abbreviation, it may be preferable to include it even if the name occurs only once.

Where possible, avoid using initialisms and acronyms in document titles or headings.

In line with United Nations style, both initialisms and acronyms are normally used without the definite article: the divisions of IMO, the programmes of IACS, the ninety-fourth session of MSC, a joint submission by WTO and FAO. However, there are some established exceptions, such as the BBC.

The choice of indefinite article (a/an) before an initialism or acronym denoting individual items is decided by the pronunciation: a PHF, an MoU, an ECDIS.

As a general rule, try to avoid using initialisms and acronyms in the possessive form, e.g. IMO's staff. Instead, use the expanded form, e.g. the staff of IMO.

The letter "s" (no apostrophe) is added at the end of an abbreviation to signify the plural, e.g. PFDs. This also applies to abbreviations already ending in –S, but care should be taken to avoid too many of these instances in one text.

If a document contains numerous abbreviations or acronyms or if it is destined for an external readership, consideration should be given to including a list either after the table of contents or at the end of the main text.

Finally, use abbreviations sparingly. Abbreviations certainly have an important role to play in expediting communication: The International Code for the Construction and Equipment of Ships Carrying Liquefied Gases in Bulk is, happily, abbreviated to the IGC Code! However, the overuse of abbreviations can leave a document sounding jargonistic and may even hinder communication.

Chapter 2: Capitalization, italics and bold print

Capitalization

Use initial capitals sparingly: if used too liberally, they detract from the importance of words that should rightly have them.

Initial capitals are normally used for:

- <u>All words</u>, except articles (the/a(n)), conjunctions and prepositions, in the titles of:

  - books (*Wide Sargasso Sea*);

  - periodicals (*World Maritime News*);

  - publications (*Limitation of Liability for Maritime Claims, 2016 Edition*);

  - conventions (The Torremolinos International Convention for the Safety of Fishing Vessels, 1977);

  - codes (Seafarers' Training, Certification and Watchkeeping Code);

  - model courses (Security Awareness Training for All Seafarers); and

  - working/drafting/correspondence groups, committees/sub-committees and task forces only if they already exist ("Following discussion, the Meetings re-established the Working Group on the Development of a Strategic Plan for the London Convention and Protocol", but "It is hoped that the Council will establish a committee for the development of reliable speed and distance indicators"); once the name of a working group or other such group has been mentioned, thereafter it should be referred to as the Working Group, the Group, or equivalent, using initial capitals, on the basis that it is a shortened form of the full capitalized title.

  N.B. (1) The first word in a title is always capitalized, even if it is an article, conjunction or preposition (*In Search of Lost Time*); (2) in titles containing hyphenated words, capitalize only the first element (International Code of Safety for Ships using Gases or other Low-flashpoint Fuels).

- The <u>first word</u> of:

  - titles of IMO documents (Results of inspections on packaged dangerous goods);

  - titles of IMO Assembly, Council and committee resolutions and decisions (*Issue of bunkers certificates to ships that are also required to hold a CLC certificate*);

  - titles of IMO guidelines, recommendations and instructions (*Guidelines on the organization and method of work of the respective committees and their subsidiary bodies*); in relation to <u>draft</u> guidelines, recommendations and instructions, in running text – the body of text in a document as distinguished from headings, tables, etc. – both "draft" and "guidelines/recommendations/instructions" should be in lower case and non-italic font, on the basis that the text in question has not yet been

established, e.g. "The Council approved, in principle, the draft Assembly resolution and draft guidelines on the application of the Strategic Plan and High-level Action Plan"; in relation to <u>revised</u> guidelines, recommendations and instructions, if "revised" is part of the established new title of the text, "revised" only should be capitalized, e.g. "The Maritime Safety Committee approved the *Revised guidelines for the preparation of the Cargo Securing Manual*"; if "revised" is not part of the established title, "revised" should be in lower case and non-italic font, e.g. "The Maritime Safety Committee approved the revised *Guidelines for the preparation of the Cargo Securing Manual*");

- headings of chapters, sections, subsections, annexes, appendices, tables, figures and articles (legal provisions);

- legends on figures and maps; and

- titles of articles (in publications).

- The official titles of individual persons, Secretariat divisions/sections/units, organizations and political parties (Director, Maritime Safety Committee, Maritime Knowledge Centre, Green Party); initial capitals should not be used, however, in general references to official titles ("The meeting was attended by the presidents of regional associations"), nor should they be used in reference to posts yet to be created ("In view of the workload it will be necessary to appoint a deputy director for the Division during the next biennium").

- The first word of an item in a list where at least one item in the list consists of several complete sentences, e.g.

"**6.4.9.3.3.1** *Internal pressure*

...

.2 For liquefied gas fuel tanks where there is no temperature control and where the pressure of the liquefied gas fuel is dictated only by the ambient temperature, P_o shall not be less than the gauge vapour pressure of the liquefied gas fuel at a temperature of 45°C except as follows:

.1 Lower values of ambient temperature may be accepted by the Administration for ships operating in restricted areas. Conversely, higher values of ambient temperature may be required.

.2 For ships on voyages of restricted duration, P_o may be calculated based on the actual pressure rise during the voyage and account may be taken of any thermal insulation of the tank."

N.B. For further guidance on the punctuation of lists, see Lists.

- the term "Administration" when it is synonymous with "Government" ("A number of Administrations expressed the wish to submit a formal reservation"); note that the term "maritime administration" is a different entity: it is capitalized in a full title (the Maritime Administration of Panama), but it does not require capitals when used otherwise ("Only three maritime administrations were represented at the seminar"); similarly, avoid capitalizing other terms for entities when used in a general sense.

- The term "Member States" when referring to those of IMO.

- The elements "al", "bin" and "ibn" of proper names transliterated from Arabic when they are the first element in a name, but in lower case when they are in the middle (Ibn Sina; Abu al-Walid ibn Rushd).

The words "appendix", "chapter", "paragraph", "section", "annex", "article" and other terms for divisions of a text are not capitalized in running text. ("The amendment to chapter I will enter into force on…"; SOLAS, article VIII). But in the case of MARPOL each annex is treated as a separate entity and capitalized: "This Certificate is valid subject to surveys in accordance with regulation 4 of MARPOL Annex IV". In addition, the word "article" is capitalized when referring to an Article of the Convention on the International Maritime Organization or of the Charter of the United Nations ("The Assembly adopted resolution A.1000(25) on *Implementation of part (c) of Article 17 of the IMO Convention*").

The existence of an acronym or initialism does not in itself require that the full version of the term be written with initial capitals (very large bulk carrier (VLBC); non-governmental organization (NGO)).

Italics

As a general rule, avoid using italics for emphasis.

In running text, italics are used for:

- titles of books (*Wide Sargasso Sea*);

- titles of periodicals (*World Maritime News*);

- titles of publications (*Limitation of Liability for Maritime Claims, 2016 Edition*);

- titles of IMO Assembly, Council and committee resolutions and decisions (*Issue of bunkers certificates to ships that are also required to hold a CLC certificate* [A 27/Res.1055]);

- titles of IMO guidelines, recommendations, instructions and circulars (*Guidelines on the organization and method of work of the respective committees and their subsidiary bodies*) (N.B. in relation to draft guidelines, recommendations and instructions, in running text both "draft" and "guidelines/recommendations/instructions" should be in lower case and non-italic font, on the basis that the text in question has not yet been established – "The Council approved, in principle, the draft Assembly resolution and draft guidelines on the application of the Strategic Plan and High-level Action Plan")

- titles of laws and decrees in a foreign language;

- titles of court cases (excluding the 'v' for versus);

- foreign, including Latin, words that do not appear in the [Oxford Dictionaries - English](#) (namely, less common foreign words in use in English);

- variables in mathematical expressions;

- names of tropical storms; and

- Latin names of animal and plant species.

Bold print

As a general rule, avoid using bold print for emphasis.
Ships' names, including any prefix, are always in bold print, with no italics or quotation marks, e.g. **MS Golden Hind**.

Chapter 3: Indirect speech

Indirect speech conveys a report of something that was spoken or written rather than the exact words that were spoken or written. It is also known as reported speech.

It is usually initiated with a reporting clause such as "The Committee noted that…", and then the verb tenses of the original statement have to be modified accordingly, while preserving the original sequence of tenses. A common mistake is to assume that if the original statement is still valid at the time of reporting the verb should be in the present tense. Once indirect speech has been initiated, the verbs that follow must be changed in the way outlined below. While this rule is not always abided by in everyday speech, it should be applied in formal written style; it is the most reliable way of reporting past events accurately.

Verb tenses

The verb tenses are changed as follows:

Simple present > Simple past

> *Direct*: The credentials of the delegations attending the session <u>are</u> in due and proper order.

> *Indirect*: The Committee noted that the credentials of the delegations attending the session <u>were</u> in due and proper order.

Present perfect continuous > Past perfect continuous

> *Direct*: I would like to reiterate my sincere appreciation to Member States that <u>have been</u> contributing to the rescue of migrants at sea.

> *Indirect*: The Secretary-General reiterated his sincere appreciation to Member States that <u>had been </u>contributing to the rescue of migrants at sea.

Simple past > Past perfect (pluperfect)

> *Direct*: MSC 96 <u>approved</u> the draft circular.

> *Indirect*: The Chair noted that MSC 96 <u>had approved</u> the draft circular.

Future > Present conditional

> *Direct*: Your advice <u>will</u> be given every consideration in the deliberations of the Sub-Committee.

> *Indirect*: The Chair assured the Secretary-General that his advice <u>would</u> be given every consideration in the deliberations of the Sub-Committee.

Future perfect > Conditional perfect

> *Direct*: Sixteen of these requests <u>will have</u> been met by the end of 2003.

> *Indirect*: The Division estimated that sixteen of those requests <u>would have</u> been met by the end of 2003.

Conditional (no change)

> *Direct*: If the necessary funding were available, the programme <u>would</u> be put into operation.

> *Indirect*: The Director said that if the necessary funding were available, the programme <u>would</u> be put into operation.

Special verb forms

Some auxiliary verbs, such as '<u>must</u>' and '<u>ought to</u>', have only one form, which is used in both direct and indirect speech. The same applies to '<u>should</u>' when used as an auxiliary.

> *Direct*: Delegations [<u>must/ought to/should</u>] limit their statements to five minutes.

> *Indirect*: The Chair emphasized that delegations [<u>must/ought to/should</u>] limit their statements to five minutes.

The modal verb '<u>may</u>', in direct speech, is converted into indirect speech as follows:

Context	Indirect speech
possibility	*might* or *could*
Direct: New opportunities exist that <u>may</u> encourage development of various IMO initiatives.	
Indirect: The report noted that new opportunities existed that <u>might</u> encourage development of various IMO initiatives.	
reduced possibility	*might not*
Direct: Since the substances are compatible, segregation requirements <u>may not</u> be needed.	
Indirect: The Sub-Committee noted that, since the substances were compatible, segregation requirements <u>might not</u> be needed.	
permission	*could*
Direct: The data <u>may</u> be changed only on the authority of the master.	
Indirect: It was confirmed that the data <u>could</u> be changed only on the authority of the master.	
prohibition	*could not*
Direct: The External Auditor <u>may not</u> otherwise be removed from their tenure of office except by the Assembly.	
Indirect: It was reiterated that the External Auditor <u>could not</u> otherwise be removed from their tenure of office except by the Assembly.	

In converting the verb form <u>shall</u> into indirect speech, consider the specific nuance of the term in the given context and render it with an appropriate verb form, such as <u>would</u> or <u>must</u>.

> (a)
> *Direct*: The Assembly adopts the following amendments to the Charter of the World Maritime University and decides that these <u>shall</u> enter into force on 1 January 2016.

> *Indirect*: It was noted that the Assembly adopted the following amendments to the Charter of the World Maritime University and decided that they <u>would</u> enter into force on 1 January 2016.

> (b)
> *Direct*: Advances made from these Funds to finance budgetary appropriations <u>shall</u> be reported to the Council immediately.

> *Indirect*: The Assembly stipulated that advances made from those funds to finance budgetary appropriations <u>must</u> be reported to the Council immediately.

It is also recommended that indications of time and place be changed. Here are some suggestions:

- here > there

- now, at the present time > then, at the time

- present > existing, current

- today > that day, at the time

- tomorrow > the day after, the following day

- yesterday > the day before, the previous day

- ago > before, earlier

Lastly, while the aim is to write consistently in indirect speech, it may be appropriate to write certain sections of a report, such as conclusions or recommendations, in the present tense. It is recommended that those sections be clearly distinguished from the main body of the text.

Chapter 4: Numbers, times and dates

Numbers

Numbers expressed in words

Numbers under 10 are normally expressed in words (eight, not 8). Exceptions are noted in Numbers expressed in figures below.

In the following cases, numbers are always expressed in words:

- at the beginning of a sentence, e.g. Fifteen partnership arrangements were made with developing and developed countries.

- in simple fractions, e.g. The amendments will enter into force 60 days after two thirds of the Contracting Parties have deposited an instrument of acceptance.

All numbers may be expressed in words in isolated references to approximate measures and periods of time, e.g. For almost ten years there had been very little progress on this issue.

Numbers expressed in figures

Numbers between 10 and 999,999 are normally expressed in figures, except as noted above. In whole numbers of more than three digits, the separation between hundreds, thousands, millions, etc., should be indicated by a comma.

Except when at the beginning of a sentence, numbers are always expressed in figures in the following cases:

- percentages, e.g. The percentage share of the basic assessment component was 2%.

N.B. There is no space between the value and the symbol %.

- compound fractions and decimal fractions:

  The offices are located 1½ miles from the port.

  The island measures 14.5 kilometres from east to west.

N.B. In decimal fractions expressing a number that is less than one, a zero is inserted before the decimal point. One or more zeros may be added after the last digit if necessary to indicate the level of accuracy. All numbers in a table or series should be carried to the same decimal place.

- ratios, map scales and geographical coordinates:

  The ratio between the basic assessments and the tonnage assessments was 17:83 in percentage terms.

  A new nautical chart on the scale 1:300,000 was published in November 2007.

  Thence to a point at 56°18'.13 N, 051°49'.42 W.

  (N.B. Geographical coordinates are expressed in degrees, minutes and decimal minutes as follows: XX°XX'.XX(space)N,(space)YYY°YY'.YY(space)W. There is no need to add the words "latitude" and "longitude", and the longitude coordinates should be expressed in three-digit degrees).

- measures and weights:

  The height of the deck cargo was 2 metres.

  The permissible load is limited to 9 tonnes.

- ages:

  For ships over 5 years of age, an internal examination of representative spaces used for water ballast should be carried out.

- temperatures (no space between value and symbol), e.g. 30°C; 80°F.

- sums of money (no space between symbol and value), e.g. £2.40; $6.50; €900.

- results of voting:

  The amendment was rejected by 18 votes to 4, with 1 abstention.

N.B. The figure 0 should not, however, be used here; "none" is preferable.

  The draft resolution was adopted by 25 votes to none, with 9 abstentions.

- when used in citing document symbols, page references or numbered paragraphs, or when identifying a line in a text, e.g. in line 8 on page 14

- when indicating periods of time and when used in association with the word "times":

  the test lasted 3 s

  1.5 times the length of the lifeboat.

SI and other units

The SI (Système International d'Unités) is a globally agreed system of measurement units. For more information on SI units, derived units and other units of measurement, please click here.

All unit names, except Celsius, are written in lower-case letters (newton, kilogram).

For values more than 1 or less than -1 of SI and derived units, the plural of the unit name is used; the singular of the unit name is used for values between 1 and -1, e.g. 5 kilograms; 0.2 newton

For all values, except 1 and -1, of non-SI or derived units, the plural of the unit name is used, e.g. 0.8 nautical miles; a service speed of 0.7 knots

Unit symbols are in lower case, unless the name is derived from a proper name, in which case the relevant letter of the symbol is a capital letter. An exception is that either capital L or lower-case l is allowed for the litre, in order to avoid confusion with the numeral 1. Unit symbols are separated from the value by a space. The symbol is the same for both singular and plural, e.g. a power output of up to 11 kW

Millions, billions and trillions

In running text, numbers in the millions, billions and trillions are written as follows:

13.43 million (not more than two digits after the decimal point); 4 billion; $1.1 trillion

The term "billion" is used in IMO documents to mean a thousand million (10^9). The term "trillion" is used to mean a million million (10^{12}).

Numbers occurring together or in a series

When two numbers are placed next to each other, they should be expressed in different styles, according to the nature of the elements and the context:

The company provided three 10-year-old freighters.

When two or more numbers to which different rules apply occur in a series, the rule applying to the higher or highest number applies to all:

Only 9 of the 25 countries invited were able to attend.

N.B. This rule does not necessarily apply if the series includes disparate items, e.g. A total of 37 hostages were taken in four separate incidents.

Ranges of numbers

When two numbers are used to indicate a range:

−   the two numbers should be homogeneous:

Between 1 million and 1.5 million people tweeted in response to the campaign (not Between 1 million and 1,500,000 people...).

−   the unit or unit symbol is repeated after each number:

Tests should be carried out over a range of influent temperatures representing the normal shipboard operating range of 10°C to 40°C.

The blast furnace is a cylindrical furnace 10 m to 15 m in diameter.

−   to reduce the possibility of confusion, the numbers should be expressed in full, whether in words or figures.

The Council's approval was sought to increase the budget from £1.89 million to £2.84 million for 2011 (not ... from £1.89 to £2.84 million!).

−   to avoid any possible confusion with the minus sign, a hyphen (-) is not used to indicate a range.

Increases ranged from 3% to 4% per year

To indicate a range of dates, use the following forms:

- in running text:

  The Facilitation Committee was held from 24 to 28 October.

  For marine diesel engines ... installed on ships constructed between 1 January 1990 and 31 December 1999

  The fourth session of the Committee was held in Malmö on 12 and 13 June.

- in the top left-hand corner of the cover page:

  London, 10-14 April 2017

  Malmö, 6 and 7 July 2016

Ordinals

Expressed in words:

- ordinal numbers from first to ninety-ninth are expressed in words in running text:

  The sixty-first session of the Committee was held from 27 September to 1 October 2010.

Expressed in figures:

- session numbers where space is limited, as in tables, e.g. LC – 39th session.

- session numbers higher than 99:

  Pursuant to Article 19(a), the Council, at its 104th session, decided to discontinue the preparation of summary records and to replace them with audio files of discussions.

- floors, e.g. 3rd floor; 38th floor.

Times

References to the time of day should generally use the 12-hour system and be written out as follows:

9 a.m. (but 9.00 if the other part of the range includes numbers after the point, e.g. 9.00 - 11.30 a.m.; not 09.00 a.m.); noon; 1.15 p.m.; midnight.

If the 24-hour system is used, the time should be expressed in four figures with a full point separating the hours and minutes, e.g. 09.00; 13.15.

Dates

The day, expressed in cardinal numbers, is followed by the month and the year, without commas, e.g. 17 November 2012.

If the day of the week is also mentioned, this precedes the date and is followed by a comma, e.g. Saturday, 17 November 2012.

When it is necessary to abbreviate the names of months because of lack of space, for example in a table, the following forms should be used:

Jan., Feb., Mar., Apr., May, June, July, Aug., Sept., Oct., Nov., Dec.

In cases where it is necessary to use numbers only, the order of items in the date remains the same, with no leading zeros and the year written out in full, e.g. 7/6/2012 for 7 June 2012.

Collective years

A single period covering two or more full years is written as follows:

1999-2003 (or from 1999 to 2003)

the biennium 2004-2005

the annual average for the period 2005-2008

These are expected to increase by 57% worldwide between 2005 and 2030.

A period of less than 24 months that overlaps two years is written as follows:

2001/02

Decades and centuries

References to decades should be in figures:

the 1990s (not the nineties, the 90s or the 1990's)

References to centuries should be expressed in words in running text:

twenty-first century (not 21st century or XXI century)

Seasons

As the designations of the seasons relate to different times of the year in the northern and southern hemispheres, consider replacing references to seasons with a precise date (or month or quarter), if this can be ascertained.

The names of the seasons are written in lower case.

Ambiguous terms

"Bimonthly", "biweekly" and "biyearly" mean occurring twice a month, twice a week and twice a year, respectively, or occurring every two months, every two weeks and every two years, respectively.
It is best to avoid these words, where possible, and to write "twice a month/week/year" and "every two months/weeks/years", as appropriate.

Note that "biannual" means occurring twice a year and "biennial" means occurring every two years.

References to "this year", "next year" or "last year" should be avoided to avoid ambiguity. Authors should supply the specific year.

Chapter 5: Punctuation

Possessive apostrophes

In report-writing and more formal contexts try to avoid using a possessive apostrophe ('s or s') with an abbreviation, name of country or name of organization. Instead, express possession in the following ways:

> IMO Headquarters
> the Government of France
> World Maritime University publications

Colons

A colon introduces an element or a series of elements illustrating or amplifying what has preceded it:

> Land stations can measure or calculate the following parameters: vapour pressure, relative humidity and dew point temperature.

A colon may be used instead of a full stop to introduce a series of related sentences:

> The ship failed to arrive: What could have happened? Was any distress alert given?

A colon is used to introduce a quotation or a table:

> The Secretary-General has received further communications from Member States, the texts of which are contained in the annexes to this document, as indicated in the table below: [...]

Lowercase the first word after a colon in the following cases:

- When a colon is used within a sentence

  Land stations can measure or calculate the following parameters: vapour pressure, relative humidity and dew point temperature.

- When a colon is used in a title or heading

  Piracy: orchestrating the response

Capitalize the first word after a colon in the following cases:

- To separate an independent clause from a quotation (see also Capitalization and punctuation in chapter 6 on quotations):

  The Chairman quoted Churchill: "However beautiful the strategy, you should occasionally look at the results."

- When the introductory phrase is very brief and the clause following the colon represents the gist of the message:

  Reminder: Return all passes to the Security Office.

Do not use colons at the end of headings.

Avoid using a colon in running text after "namely", "for example" and similar expressions, or before a series introduced by a verb or preposition:

> He emphasized the positive effect of the cost-cutting measures, namely that overall productivity would rise.

> Aid for science and technology supports innovation, for example through international cooperation.

> The CV should include educational background, work experience and contact details of referees.

> The manual deals with (a) the components of the devices; (b) how to maintain them; and (c) where to find replacement parts.

For the use of colons with lists, see the Lists section below.

Commas

A comma is not normally used before "and" when it precedes the last word of a series:

> Structural measures to reduce damage from flooding include the construction of levees, floodwalls and bypass channels.

However, a final comma may sometimes have to be included for the sake of clarity, for example in sentences containing lengthy or complex elements:

> The Ministries of Foreign Affairs, Defence, and Health and Social Affairs were represented.

Very occasionally, in even lengthier or more complex sentences, a semicolon may be used instead of a comma to separate the various constituent phrases (see also Semicolons below):

> Key elements of the tools include understanding placement area locations and capacities; displaying channel shoaling conditions and predicting potential future shoaling patterns; portraying relevant environmental conditions; and estimating placement options based on historical dredging costs.

"Respectively" is preceded by a comma:

> The cuts affected organization A and organization B seriously, to the level of 15% and 25% of their staff, respectively.

A comma is not necessary after "in particular" if it would separate the phrase from the person or thing to which it applies:

> Significant progress has been made throughout the two biennia on a number of modules under GISIS, in particular through the introduction of an Organizational Planning Module to track performance against the Organization's Strategic and High-level Action Plans.

Use a comma before the abbreviations "e.g." or "i.e.", but do not use one after.

> Place each individual item (including the control sample) into a separate suitable container, e.g. paper sack or cardboard box, and seal properly with adhesive tape.

Non-defining (otherwise known as non-restrictive) relative clauses need to be enclosed with commas. These are clauses within a sentence which can be removed without the sentence losing its principal meaning:

> The report, which has been updated to take account of developments since the Council's 114th session, is annexed to document C/ES.28/7.

Compare this with a defining (or restrictive) relative clause, which does not need to be enclosed with commas:

> Defining clauses are clauses which/that cannot be removed without the sentence losing its principal meaning.

Non-defining relative clauses are never introduced by "that", whereas defining relative clauses can be introduced by either "which" or "that", although "that" is often most suitable.

Brackets (parentheses)

If the sentence does not require commas with the brackets removed, it should not have commas when brackets are included:

> The Ad Hoc Council Working Group on the Organization's Strategic Plan (CWGSP) met to discuss its recommendations.

A second set of round brackets can be used to set off text that itself contains text in brackets:

> The conclusions of the analysis (in particular regarding fair trade, the environment and transport (including green cars)) highlighted the following: [...]

When citing numbered paragraphs from legislation, use a pair of brackets closed up to the article number:

> article 3(1); article 3(1)(a).

Opening and closing round brackets are also used to enclose letters or numbers of items in a list:

> It will help provide a framework for national and regional projects to (1) coordinate their activities; (2) agree to standards for research, observations, and modelling; and (3) combine data to enhance the usefulness thereof.

Accents

Accents should be kept in names of people or places of foreign origin, except where the accented letter is capitalized:

> António Guterres; Côte d'Ivoire.

Semicolons

The main function of a semicolon is to mark a break that is stronger than a comma but not as strong as a full stop. It is useful for combining two closely linked clauses into one without the use of a conjunction such as "and" or "but":

> While recognizing that the aim of the MDAT-GoG is to help meet the demand by the global shipping community, its establishment should be seen as a short-term solution only; a long-term solution would require consultation with the countries from the region and should be locally driven.

Also, as mentioned in the Commas section above, a semicolon may be used instead of a comma to separate the various constituent phrases of a lengthier, more complex sentence:

> Key elements of the tools include understanding placement area locations and capacities; displaying channel shoaling conditions and predicting potential future shoaling patterns; portraying relevant environmental conditions; and estimating placement options based on historical dredging costs.

For the use of semicolons with lists, see the Lists section below.

Full stops

Footnotes should end with a full stop, unless they consist solely of an Internet or email address.

A full stop should not be used at the end of a heading.

A full stop is not required to close a sentence that ends in an abbreviation already ending in a point, e.g. The meeting will begin at 9.30 a.m.

Footnotes

The footnote reference mark must be placed at the end of the sentence (or, where necessary, immediately after the last word to which it refers) and after all punctuation marks with the exception of dashes:

> The Council considered five applications for consultative status.[1]

En dash

En dashes can be used in place of commas, brackets and colons to enhance readability or give more emphasis:

> These functional elements are not sequential – all should be concurrent and continuous in practice and should be incorporated appropriately in a risk management framework.

They should be used sparingly, however, as overuse can render a text less formal and more dramatic.

The en dash is created by pressing Ctrl and – on the numeric keyboard simultaneously. It should be preceded and followed by a single space.

Lists

Lists should be punctuated as follows:

1   Where each item completes the introductory sentence, you should:

      .1   introduce the list with a colon;

      .2   start each item with a lower-case letter;

      .3   end each item with a semicolon;

      .4   insert "and" after the penultimate list item; and

      .5   close with a full stop.

e.g.

      3.1   Contracting Governments to the 1974 SOLAS Convention were invited to consider and adopt proposed amendments to:

            .1   chapters II-1, II-2 and III, and the appendix to the annex to the 1974 SOLAS Convention, as amended, in accordance with the provisions of article VIII of the Convention;

            ...

            .5   the International Life-Saving Appliances Code (LSA Code), in accordance with the provisions of article VIII and regulation III/3.10 of the Convention; and

            .6   the International Maritime Solid Bulk Cargoes Code (IMSBC Code), in accordance with the provisions of article VIII and regulation VI/1-1.1 of the Convention.

N.B.   With this type of list, avoid formulating items consisting of more than one phrase separated by a full stop.

2   Where the items do not have a grammatical link to the introductory sentence, proceed as follows:

      .1   introduce the list with a colon;

      .2   start each item with a lower-case letter;

      .3   end each one with a semicolon;

      .4   insert "and" after the penultimate list item; and

      .5   put a full stop at the end.

e.g.

5.6   In the ensuing discussion, the following comments were made:

        .1   since the objective of controlling the bleed-off water when the EGR system operated with compliant fuel oil was to ensure that the 15 ppm oil limit for the discharge was not exceeded, turbidity measurement should be deleted from the bleed-off water discharge requirement;

        ...

        .4   the inclusion of the turbidity measurement in the bleed-off water discharge requirement had been fully discussed by PPR 4 and the Committee should therefore agree to the draft guidelines as finalized by PPR 4; and

        .5   there was a need to link the guidelines to the NO_X Technical Code 2008 and amendments to the 2009 Guidelines for Port State Control of MARPOL Annex VI should be further considered.

3   Where the items do not have a grammatical link to the introductory sentence and any item consists of more than one complete sentence, proceed as indicated below:

        .1   Introduce the list with a colon.

        .2   Start each item with a capital letter.

        .3   End each statement with a full stop. This allows several sentences to be included under a single item using uncomplicated punctuation.

e.g.

3.5   The Committee had for its consideration document MSC 98/3/3 ..., proposing a modified formula for the required subdivision index R for passenger ships in the draft amendment to SOLAS regulation II-1/6, with the following features:

        .1   For the carriage of less than 400 persons on board, R is constant at 0.722. This level will ensure a reasonable increase above the current safety level while still being considered achievable for small passenger ships that have less flexibility in their subdivision arrangements, may have more port facility constraints, and generally encompass a greater variety of primary design types. In addition, the 400 person breakpoint aligns with the regulation II-1/8 one-compartment/two-compartment deterministic damage breakpoint.

        .2   For the carriage of 400 to 1,350 persons on board, R increases linearly to the R level that was approved by MSC 96. This area reflects the transition to larger passenger ships and the proposed R level is considered a suitable "middle ground" given the differing views for ships in this general size range. In addition, the proposed R is smooth and avoids any sharp increases or steps.

        .3   For the carriage of more than 1,350 persons on board, R is the same as approved by MSC 96. In this regard, for the carriage of more than 6,000 persons on board, the two-part formula for calculation of index R, approved at MSC 96, has been simplified to a single formula that provides the same R value.

Chapter 6: Quotations

Direct quotations should reproduce the original text exactly and should be carefully checked for accuracy. Only the following changes are permitted:

- the initial letter may be changed to a capital or lower-case letter as necessary;

- the final punctuation may be omitted as necessary;

- the original footnotes and footnote indicators may be omitted;

- typographical and other clearly unintentional errors may be corrected; and

- where necessary it is acceptable to make minor grammatical changes or to add detail between square brackets, for example "The Chair said, '[the Secretariat] may wish to adopt...'"

Double and single quotation marks

Quoted words, sentences and paragraphs are enclosed within double quotation marks; single quotation marks are used to enclose quotations within quotations:

> He said, "The Organization will go on doing 'business as usual' during the refurbishment".

Double quotation marks are also used around specialized terms when they are first introduced and defined. Thereafter, these words should be written without quotation marks.

> The Committee, with a view to clarifying the term "voluntary early implementation", endorsed the following definition for inclusion in the draft Guidelines: [...]

Capitalization and punctuation

If a quotation forms an essential grammatical part of a larger sentence, it begins with a lower-case letter and the final punctuation is placed outside the quotation marks:

> In the second sentence of paragraph 5.3.3, the words "fuel injection pump" are replaced with the word "engine".

A quotation consisting of one or more complete sentences is normally introduced by a colon and begins with a capital letter. The final punctuation is placed inside the quotation marks when it coincides with the end of the sentence.

> In his keynote address, the Minister said: "The Straits remains one of the busiest and most important shipping lanes in the world. I am heartened by the collective interest and commitment of coastal and user States to work together to ensure that the Straits remain safe and open to shipping."

Block quotations

Quotations that consist of a complete paragraph or more than five typed lines are normally set off as an indented block of text.

> RCO 17 is explained in MSC 88/INF.6 as follows:
>
> Improvement of cargo stowage especially bulk (other than grain) and heavy items
>
> Cargo shift decreases the stability and can also lead to damage to the ship hull with water ingress; especially in heavy weather a higher probability for cargo shift is observed. These observations may be caused by inadequate stowing requirements (lashing, stowage of bulk). Improved stowing, as well as dividing the cargo hold would reduce the probability of cargo shift in bad weather. It is anticipated that the risk of foundering (FD) and hull damage (HD) could be reduced.

Quotation marks are usually eliminated at the beginning and end of a block quotation. However, they may be used for the sake of clarity – for example, where the quoted material exceeds a page and it is difficult to see that the material is indented or where the quoted material contains a separate set of paragraph numbers.

Omissions

Ellipsis points (dots) are used to mark omissions within a quotation. It is not normally necessary to use ellipsis points for omissions at the beginning or end of a quotation. Three ellipsis points (…) are used for omissions within a sentence and between complete sentences. To indicate the omission of one or more paragraphs within a block quotation, insert the ellipsis points on a separate line of text and align them with the normal paragraph indents.

> In this context, paragraph 5.2 of the Framework stipulates that, among its objectives, the audit will:
>
> .1   foster capacity-building and the provision of related technical assistance by identifying areas that would benefit from further development ... ;
>
> .2   provide the audited Member State with feedback to assist in improving its capacity to implement the applicable instruments;
>
> ...
>
> .4   systematically feedback any lessons learned from the audits, as may be appropriate, for further consideration by the Organization of the effectiveness and appropriateness of its legislation.

Chapter 7: Miscellaneous

Aim to/Aim at

Prefer "aim to do" to "aim at doing", the former being more formal.

Annex/Appendix

The term *annex* is used to refer to a section or table of subsidiary matter such as a background document or survey questionnaire discussed in the text of a publication, while *appendix* is reserved for subsidiary matter discussed in the text of an annex.

Assistance

Prefer *assist(ance) in doing* to *assist(ance) to do*:

> Encourage non-Contracting Parties to provide assistance in meeting compliance obligations.

Attached/Enclosed

Use *Please find attached* for emails, and *Please find enclosed* for letters. Avoid using either in reference to a separate text within the body of an email or to a document contained within another document: instead use phrases such as *Please find below* ... (emails) or *Please find in the annex* ... (documents).

Comprise

Comprise can be used in both active and passive forms to mean "consist of":

> Suspended solids comprise fine particles of inorganic solids and organic solids [active]
> Suspended solids are comprised of fine particles [passive]

It is incorrect to say "Suspended solids comprise of fine particles".

Consequent/Subsequent

Consequent means following on as a result or effect:

> As a result, effects in one domain generate consequent effects in the other domains.

Subsequent means following, coming after a specified event in time:

> A review will be conducted in 2018 and subsequent years.

Continual(ly)/Continuous(ly)

Continual means repeated, happening over and over again:

> Measurement, monitoring and verification will provide valuable feedback for the purpose of continual refinement of injection and management practices.

Continuous means happening constantly without stopping:

>The activation of any fire alarm will automatically sound the 'evacuate' signal (a continuous ringing) throughout the building.

Different

Generally speaking, prefer *different from* to *different than* and *different to.*

Discreet/Discrete

Discreet relates to careful behaviour in conduct and speech:

>The building offers a number of quiet spots for discreet conversation.

Discrete indicates something that is individually separate and distinct:

>The plan divides into several discrete phases.

Effective/Efficient

Effective means successful in producing a desired or intended result:

>The maritime administration did not have an effective system of receiving reports of incidents of marine pollution.

Efficient means doing things in an optimal way:

>The mission of IMO is to promote safe, secure, environmentally sound, efficient and sustainable shipping through cooperation.

Elaborate (to)

To elaborate means to work out carefully or to develop to perfection. It does not mean to write something up as in "The Sub-Committee considered the text elaborated in the break by the Secretariat".

Instead, use draft, draw up, prepare or write.

Enquire/Inquire

Prefer *enquire* when meaning to ask, but prefer *inquire* when meaning to investigate.

Ensuing/Following

Ensuing means occurring as a result:

>Many delegations spoke, and in the ensuing vote the motion was defeated.

It is not a synonym of *following*:

>The Sub-Committee took action as summarized in the following (not "ensuing") paragraphs.

<u>Everyone</u>

Everyone requires a singular verb, e.g. "Everyone is affected by the reforms".

<u>Gender-neutral language</u>

Gender-neutral language denotes language that cannot be taken to refer to one gender only. Strategies for producing gender-neutral language include the following:

1 Pronouns:

- use "he or she" (not "he/she", "(s)he" or "s/he"):

  An inspector should not enter an enclosed space within a cargo transport unit if he or she does not feel it is safe.

  N.B. This can be cumbersome if overused.

- repeat the noun:

  An inspector should not enter an enclosed space within a cargo transport unit if that inspector does not feel it is safe.

- use the third person plural pronoun (they/them/their/theirs) to refer back to a singular noun:

  An inspector should not enter an enclosed space within a cargo transport unit if they do not feel it is safe.

  N.B. This is now acceptable usage. However, avoid using where there is any doubt as to the person being referred to.

2 Nouns:

- use gender-neutral nouns, such as:

  chair
  spokesperson
  fire-fighter
  police officer
  flight attendant

<u>Fewer/Less</u>

Fewer, the comparative of *few*, is used when referring to a smaller number of something countable. The opposite is *more.*

 Fewer than 50 people attended – we had expected many more.

Less, the comparative of *little*, is used when referring to a smaller amount of something non-countable (e.g. equipment, information). The opposite is also *more.*

 We have much less equipment than we feel is safe - please ask the Ministry to provide more, urgently.

<u>First person pronouns</u>

The use of first person pronouns (I/me, we/us) and possessive pronouns (my/our) in formal written submissions should be avoided and the relevant noun, or a different formulation, be used instead, e.g. Given the likely extended timescale to complete this work, we anticipate that interim measures... > Given the likely extended timescale to complete this work, it is anticipated that interim measures...

<u>No. (abbreviation of Number)</u>

Insert a space between No. and the number that follows, e.g. No. 1.

<u>References to money</u>

In resolutions and other formal decisions, the type and unit of currency should be expressed in words. At the first mention, the type of currency must be made clear, and thereafter the unit alone may be used, e.g. United States dollars, then simply "dollars". In other documents, the currency symbol may be used, e.g. £. The symbol $ is used to mean United States dollars, and it is not necessary to specify US$ unless there is any possibility of confusion, for example with Canadian dollars. In such cases, all amounts in United States dollars should be written as US$. Currency types, units and symbols can be found at UNTERM. Prefer these methods of expressing currency to GBP, USD, for example.

<u>Replace with/by</u>

In the active voice, prefer "replace X with Y" to "replace X by Y". However, in the passive voice, prefer "X is replaced by Y" to "X is replaced with Y".

> The Committee agreed to replace the term "seafarers" with "crew members"

> Where the Administration so allows, one of the brakes may be replaced by a manually operated brake

<u>Subjunctive</u>

The subjunctive form of the verb is often encountered in formal writing and is used to express hypothetical situations or situations not yet realized:

> The Working Group recommends that paragraph 3 above <u>be</u> included in the summary report of the meeting.

Be and *were* are used in place of *am/is/are/was*, and with other verbs the final letter *-s* (or *-es*) of the third person singular of the present tense is dropped:

> It is important that the Committee specifically address the practical issues encountered.

<u>Then</u>

In a conditional phrase such as "If our candidate obtains 37 votes, then we shall win", the word "then" is unnecessary: the phrase "If our candidate obtains 37 votes**,** we shall win" is sufficient as it is.

<u>With a view to</u>

"With a view to" is followed by a gerund not an infinitive: "With a view to enhancing its contribution to sustainable development, IMO will strengthen its maritime capacity-building programmes" not "With a view to enhance its contribution to sustainable development, IMO will strengthen its maritime capacity-building programmes."

<u>With regard to</u>
Use *with regard to* not *with regards to*

Chapter 8: Spelling

As mentioned in the introduction, this Guide uses the online English dictionary at Oxford Dictionaries – English as the standard work of reference for spelling. The spelling list below is intended to supplement that dictionary. The list includes words that do not appear in the Oxford dictionary but are relevant to the work of IMO. It also includes words that appear in that dictionary but for which a different spelling is given here, usually on account of customary IMO usage. When checking spellings, search first in the list below and then, if necessary, in the dictionary at Oxford Dictionaries – English. For ease of reference, annexes 1 and 2 to this Guide contain lists of verbs ending in *-ise, -ize* and *-yse*, and plurals of nouns, respectively.

Compound adjectives are usually hyphenated when preceding the noun, e.g. medium-term prospects, produce an up-to-date report; but unhyphenated when following the noun, e.g. prospects for the medium term, bring the report up to date. Where appropriate, this is indicated in the spelling list below by the abbreviation "*adj.*"

Do not hyphenate adverb-adjective modifiers when the adverb ends in *-ly*, e.g. Hazard profiles and evaluation of newly submitted substances to be incorporated into the IBC Code.

Where it is suggested that one spelling be preferred to another, e.g. adapter* (*prefer to* adaptor), this implies that both spellings exist but one is preferred to the other for the sake of consistency.

Notes:

* Indicates a change from the previous version of the IMO English Style Guide.
** Indicates an exception to Oxford Dictionaries – English.
*** Indicates both a change from the previous version of the IMO English Style Guide and an exception to Oxford Dictionaries – English.
n. – noun
v. – verb
adj. – adjective
adv. – adverb
sing. – singular
pl. – plural
conj. – conjunction
rel. adv. – relative adverb

above-mentioned
adapter* (*prefer to* adaptor)
addendum (*pl.* addenda)
adsorb, adsorption (*not to be confused with* absorb, absorption)
adviser (*prefer to* advisor)
aesthetic (*prefer to* esthetic)
aforementioned
afterwards (*prefer to* afterward)
ageing (*prefer to* aging)
age limit*
aide-memoire* (*pl.* aide-memoires**; *prefer to* aides-memoires *and* aides-memoire)
air conditioning* (*n. and adj.*)
air-reactive
airspace (*prefer to* air space *and* air-space)
airspeed (*prefer to* air speed)
airtight (*n., adj. and adv.; prefer to* air tight *and* air-tight)
all right (*prefer to* alright)

aluminium (*prefer to* aluminum)
among (*prefer to* amongst)
analogue (*prefer to* analog)
annex (*n. and v.*) – *the expression* at annex *should be avoided, unless referring to a specific annex, e.g.* at annex 4*. Instead use expressions such as* … annexed to the present resolution *or* … in the annex *or* … in annex 1 to the present resolution*.*
annul, annulled, annulment
antenna (*pl.* antennae *(insects)*; antennas *(aerials)*)
antibacterial
antibiotic
antibody
anti-discrimination (*adj.*)
antifreeze
antifungal
anti-inflammatory
antimicrobial
antioxidant
anti-personnel
appendix (*pl.* appendices)
artefact (*prefer to* artifact)
audiovisual
auto-ignition
awareness-raising (*n. and adj.*)
backflow (*prefer to* back-flow *and* back flow)
backlog
back pressure
backstop (*n. and v.*)
backstopping
back up (*v.*); *but* backup* (*n. and adj.*)
backward (*adj., but* backwards (*adv.*); *prefer to* backward)
balance of payments (*n.*); *but* balance-of-payments (*adj.*)
balance sheet
ballast water management *and* ~ system (*lower case for generic term*)
bandwidth
baseline (*n. and adj.*)
befit, befitted
beforehand
benefited, benefiting
biennium (*pl.* biennia; *prefer to* bienniums)
bilateral
bilingual
biodiversity
biofouling
boiling point*
bookkeeping
borderline (*n. and adj.*)
breakaway (*n. and adj.*)
break down (*v.*); *but* breakdown (*n.*)
break through (*v.*); *but* breakthrough (*n.*)
broadband
broad-based
budget, budgeting, budgeted
build-up (*n.*)
bureau (*pl.* bureaux; *prefer to* bureaus)
by-law (*prefer to* bye-law)
bypass (*n. and v.*)

by-product
cancel, cancelled, cancelling
cannot (*prefer to* can not)
canvas (*n.*, *cloth*); *but* canvass (*v., to solicit*)
capacity-building* (*n. and adj.*)
cargo (*pl.* cargoes; *prefer to* cargos)
case by case (*adv.*, to deal with situations case by case; *but*, *adj.*, the situations were dealt with on a case-by-case basis)
case law
centreboard
centrepiece
checklist
chequered (*prefer to* checkered)
circular letter (*lower case for both words, but initial capitals when referring to a specific one,* Circular Letter No.1234)
clearing house
coastguard (*but* US Coast Guard)
coastline
co-author (*n. and v.*)
co-chair (*n. and v.*)
coexist
co-finance
coloration (*prefer to* colouration)
co-manage
combat, combating (*prefer to* combatting), combated (*prefer to* combatted)
communiqué (*prefer to* communique)
confidence-building (*n. and adj.*)
containership**
conveyor (*prefer to* conveyer)
cooperate (*prefer to* co-operate)
co-opt
coordinate (*prefer to* co-ordinate)
cornerstone
co-sponsor
cost-benefit (*adj.*)
cost-effective, cost-effectiveness
cotton wool (*n. and adj.*)
counteract
counterargument
counterbalance (*n. and v.*)
counterclaim* (*n. and v.*)
countercyclical*
counterfeit (*n., v. and adj.*)
counter-pressure (*n. and adj.*)
counterproductive
countervalue (*n. and adj.*)
countrywide (*adj. and adv.*)
coup d'état* (*pl.* coups d'état)
criterion (*pl.* criteria)
cross reference* (*n.*); *but* cross-reference (*v.*)
cross section* (*n.*); *but* cross-section (*v.*)
cross-sectoral
curriculum vitae (*pl.* curricula vitae)
cut back (*v.*); *but* cutback (*n.*)
cut off (*v.*); *but* cut-off (*n. and adj.*)
cyberattack

cyber risk
data (*now widely accepted as a mass noun, therefore use singular verb*)
databank
database
data collection (*n.*)
dataflow
data processing (*n.*)
data set
daytime
deadweight**
decision maker*
decision-making (*n. and adj.*)
decision tree*
deck cargo
deckhand*
deckhouse*
deep-sea (*adj.*)
deep water (*n.*); *but* deep-water (*adj.*)
defence
demine, demining
dependant (*n.; prefer to* dependent); *but* dependent (*adj.*)
depositary (*n., person to whom something is lodged in trust; prefer to* depository)
despecialization
desulphurization
desynchronize (*prefer to* desynchronise)
dinghy
disc (*but* disk *in computer technology*)
discolour, discoloration (*prefer to* discolouration)
discreet (*prudent, unobtrusive*)
discrete (*distinct, separate*)
dispatch (*n. and v.; prefer to* despatch)
dissociate (*not* disassociate)
down payment*
downturn
downwind (*adj. and adv.*)
drawdown (*n.*)
drinking water*
dry dock (*n.*); *but* dry-dock (*v.*)
dryer (*machine, device or substance; prefer to* drier))
e- compounds are hyphenated except email
east(ern) (*a geographical direction or an area within a country*)
East(ern) (*a major region, e.g.* East Africa, Eastern Europe)
elite (*not* élite)
empirical (*prefer to* empiric)
encyclopedia (*prefer to* encyclopaedia)
end point*
end product*
end result
end user*
endeavour (*prefer to* endeavor)
energy-efficient
engine-room**
enrol (*prefer to* enroll)
enrolment (*prefer to* enrollment)
entry into force (*n.*; *but* entry-into-force *(adj.), e.g.* entry-into-force date)
equal, equalling, equalled (*prefer to* equaling, equaled)

euro (*pl.* euros)
eurozone
ever-changing
everlasting
everyday (*adj.*)
expiry (*prefer to* expiration)
extrabudgetary
extracellular
extrajudicial
extraterritorial
extra-European
fact-finding (*n. and adj.*)
fallback
fall out (*v.*); *but* fallout (*n.*)
far-reaching
favour, favourable (*prefer to* favor, favorable)
feedback
fibre (*prefer to* fiber)
fibreglass (*prefer to* fiberglass)
field test (*n.*); *but* field-test (*v.*)
field trial
field trip
fieldwork
filter paper*
fine-tune
fine tuning*
firearm
firebomb (*n. and v.*)
fire control (*n.*); *but* fire-control (*adj.*)
fire extinguisher
fire-extinguishing (*adj.*)
fire-fighter***
fire fighting (*n.*)***
fire-fighting (*adj.*)***
fire-resistant (*adj.*)
fire-retardant (*n. and adj.*)
first aid
first-aider
first aid kit*
first-hand (*adj. and adv., but* at first hand)
fishing vessel (*n. and adj., e.g.* fishing vessel safety*)
flash drive
flash flood
flow chart
flowsheet*
focus, focuses, focusing, focused (*prefer to* focusses, focussing, focussed)
foghorn*
-fold (*all compounds written as one word:* threefold, a hundredfold)
follow up (*v.*); *but* follow-up (*n. and adj.*)
food chain*
foothold
foregoing (*n. and adj.*)
foreseeable
format, formats, formatting, formatted (*v.*)
forward (*v., adj. and adv.; but use* forwards *(adv.) when used together with* backwards)
freelance (*n., v., adj. and adv.;* freelancer *(n.) also acceptable*)

freezing point*
freshwater (*adj.*)
fuel, fuels, fuelling, fuelled (*v.; prefer to* fueling, fueled)
fulfil (*prefer to* fulfill), fulfils, fulfilling, fulfilled
fulfilment (*prefer to* fulfillment)
gas field*
gas free (*v.*); *but* gas-free (*adj.*)
gas freeing*
gas-safe (*adj.*)
gastight**
gender-neutral
geographical (*prefer to* geographic)
glass fibre
glass reinforced*
goal-based
goodwill
government, *as in* a change of government, a government department, *but* Government *in a specific reference to* a Government representing a State, e.g. the Japanese Government, the Government concerned, those Governments)
gram (*abbrev. g*) (*prefer to* gramme)
graving dock
gray (*radiation unit; abbrev. Gy*)
grey (*colour; prefer to* gray)
gross tonnage (*abbrev.* GT)
groundwater (*n. and adj.*)
groundwork
growth curve
growth rate
half hour* (*also* half an hour)
halfway (*adj. and adv.*)
half-yearly (*adj. and adv.*)
handbook
harbour (*prefer to* harbor)
headquarters (*capitalized when referring to IMO:* the Headquarters building; the Organization's Headquarters)
healthcare* (*n. and adj.*)
helpline
high water
high-water mark
high-quality (*adj.*)
hijack (*n. and v.*)
hire purchase (*n.*); *but* hire-purchase (*adj.*)
home-made
home page
homogeneous (*prefer to* homogenous)
horsepower
host (*n. and v.; avoid* hostship)
hot spot**
icebreaker*
ill health*
imperilled (*prefer to* imperiled)
inasmuch as
inboard (*n. and adj.; not* in-board)
in depth (*adv.* to study in depth*; but adj.* an in-depth study)
index (*pl.* indexes *(lists)*, indices *(technical use)*)
index-linked

inflection (*prefer to* inflexion)
information-sharing (*n. and adj.*)
infrared
infrastructure
in-house (*adj. and adv.*)
in kind (*adv.* contributions in kind*; but adj.* in-kind contributions)
in-port (*adj. and adv.*)
in-service (*adj.*)
in-session (*adj.; but adv.* in session, e.g. When in session, the Committee should decide if the proposal is acceptable for consideration by the Committee)
inshore (*adj. and adv.*)
insignia* (*pl. same; prefer to* insignias)
insofar as
install (*v.; prefer to* instal), installs (*prefer to* instals), installing, installed
instalment (*prefer to* installment)
instil (*prefer to* instill), instils, instilling, instilled
inter-company
interconnected
interdependence (*prefer to* interdependency)
inter-enterprise
intergovernmental
interministerial
Internet* (*n. and adj.*)
inter-office
interregional*
interrelated
intersectoral (*not* intersectorial)
intersessional
intership* (*adj.; e.g.* intership communication)
intra-Community
intracontinental*
intra-European
intranet
intraregional*
inward (*adj.*); inwards (*adv., prefer to* inward)
judgement (*general contexts; prefer* judgment *in legal contexts*)
judgemental (*prefer to* judgmental)
jump-start (*n. and v.*)
kerosene (*prefer to* kerosine)
keynote
key ring*
keyword
kick-start (*v. and n.*)
kilogram (*prefer to* kilogramme)
kilometre (*prefer to* kilometer)
kingpost**
know-how
knowledge sharing
label (*v.;* labels, labelling (*prefer to* labeling), labelled (*prefer to* labeled))
labour-intensive
labour-saving
lacklustre (*prefer to* lackluster)
laissez-passer (*sing. and pl.*)
land-based
landfill
landlocked

landmark
large-scale (*adj.; but* on a large scale)
larva (*pl.* larvae)
last-mentioned
Latin American (*n. and adj.*)
lead time
lead-up
leakproof
learned (*prefer to* learnt)
least developed countries
left-hand (*adj.*)
letterhead
level (*v.*) (levels, levelling (*prefer to* leveling), levelled (*prefer to* leveled)
licence (*n.*) (*prefer to* license; *but* license (*v.*))
lifebelt
life cycle*
lifejacket**
lifelong
liferaft**
life-saving (*n. and adj.*)
lifespan
lifestyle
life support (*n.; but* life-support (*adj.*))
life-threatening
lifetime
liquid-tight
litre (*prefer to* liter; *abbrev. l, but L or* litre *where ambiguity might arise*)
logbook*
logistic (*prefer to* logistical)
long-range
long-standing
long-term (*adj.; but* in the long term)
lookout
loophole
low-cost (*adj.; but* at low cost (*n.*))
lower-case (*adj.; but* in lower case*; and* lowercase (*v.*))
low light* (*adj.*)
lump sum* (*n. and adj.*)
machine-readable
macroeconomic
man-hour
man-made
manoeuvre (*prefer to* maneuver)
manpower
man-shift
many-sided
marijuana (*prefer to* marihuana)
marketplace
matrix (*pl.* matrices; *prefer to* matrixes)
media* (*treated as sing. or pl.*)
medium-sized (*prefer to* medium-size)
meeting day*
meeting place*
meeting week*
melting point*
memorandum (*pl.* memoranda*; *prefer to* memorandums)

metadata
microeconomic
mid-1990s
midday
mid-month
midpoint
millennium (*pl.* millennia; *prefer to* millenniums)
millimetre (*prefer to* millimeter)
minesweeping
minicomputer
mismatch
mollusc (*prefer to* mollusk)
monohull
month-end
mosquito (*pl.* mosquitoes)
motorship
mould, mouldy (*prefer to* mold, moldy)
Mr., Mrs., Ms.
multi-currency
multihull
multilateral
multimillion*
multinational
multipurpose*
multisectoral (*not* multisectorial)
multisystem
multi-year
nationwide
nearby* (*adj. and adv.*; *prefer to* near by (*adv.*))
neighbour (*prefer to* neighbor)
newbuilding (*ship construction*)
New Year (*very start of the calendar year, e.g.* Happy New Year!*; but* in the new year)
non-compliance
non-conformity**
nonetheless
non-existent
non-governmental
non-paper
non-penetrative
non-profit-making (*also* non-profit)
non-resident
non-self-governing
non-smoker
no one (*not* noone)
normality (*prefer to* normalcy)
north(ern) (*a geographical direction or an area within a country*)
North(ern) (*a major region, e.g.* North Africa, Northern Europe)
note verbale (*pl.* notes verbales)
ocean-going*
offprint
off season (*n.; but* off-season (*adj. and adv.*))
offset (*n. and v.*)
offshore (*adj., adv. and v.*)
offspring (*sing. and pl.*)
oilfield
oil well*

on board (*adv., e.g.* on board the ship; *but* onboard*** *(adj.), e.g.* the onboard facilities)
oncoming (*n. and adj.*)
one-sided
one third (*n., e.g. of the vote*; *but* one-third *(adj.), e.g.* a one-third share)
ongoing
onshore (*adj. and adv.*)
onward (*adj. and adv.; prefer to* onwards *(adv.)*)
ordinance (*law*); *but* ordnance (*munitions*)
organization chart (*prefer to* organigram *and* organogram)
outboard (*n., adj. and adv.*)
outgoings
out of date (*adv.*, e.g. Check that the hand-held flares are not out of date)
output (*n. and v.*)
outturn**
overall (*n., adj. and adv.*)
overestimate (*n. and v.*)
overextend
overheat
over-optimistic
overproduction
oversimplify
overuse (*n. and v.*)
oxygen-deficient
panellist
paper-smart (*adj.*)
paramedical
participate in (*not* at *or* to)
part-time (*adj. and adv.*)
party (*prefer* be a party to *to* be party to *or* be (a) Party to *a convention/treaty*)
payday*
payroll
per cent (*prefer to* percent)
phase out (*v.*)
phosphorous (*adj.*); *but* phosphorus (*n.*)
physico-chemical
policyholder
policymaker
policymaking* (*n. and adj.*)
post-test (*n. and adj.*)
post-treatment (*n. and adj.*)
post-war
practice (*n.*; *but* practise (*v.), prefer to* practice)
pre-announce
prearrange
précis**
précis-writer, précis-writing
pre-commit
precondition
predefine
predetermine
pre-eminent
prepaid
prepay
pre-sea (*adj., e.g.* pre-sea training)
preselect
present-day (*adj.*)

pre-session
preset (*n. and v.*)
pretest (*n. and v.*)
pretreatment
pre-war*
printout
procès-verbal (*pl.* procès-verbaux)
program (*computing only*; programme (*all other uses*))
proofread
propellant* (*n. and adj.*)
pump-room**
radiocommunication
radionavigation
rarefy (*prefer to* rarify)
ready-made (*n. and adj.*)
reagent
real-time (*adj.*)
regime
rendezvous (*n. and v.*)
repellent (*n. and adj.; prefer to* repellant)
report-writing (*n. and adj.*)
reroute*
résumé (*N. American term for* curriculum vitae)
retroactive
retrofit
retrospect
reuse (*n. and v.*)
road map
role (*prefer to* rôle)
roll call* (*n.; but* roll-call (*adj.*))
roll-on roll-off (adj., e.g. roll-on roll-off vessel; *abbreviated to* ro-ro)
round table (*n.; but* round-table (*adj.*))
routeing**
rule-making
salt water (*n.; but* saltwater (*adj.*))
seabed
seaborne
sea floor
seagoing
sea level
seaport
seawater (*n. and adj.*)
Secretary-General (*pl.* Secretaries-General)
sectoral (*not* sectorial)
self-: *compound forms are hyphenated*
semi-annual (*twice a year*)
semicircle
semi-official
semi-quantitative*
semi-skilled
set back (*v.; but* setback (*n.*))
set up (*v.; but* set-up (*n.*))
sewage (*waste matter*; *but* sewerage (*system of drains*))
shakedown
shareholding
shelf life*

shellfish
shift work*
shipboard (*adj.*)
shipborne
shipbuilder
shipbuilding
ship canal*
shipmaster
shipowner
shiprepairer
shipwreck
shipyard
shore-based
shortlist (*n. and v.*)
short-range
shut-off* (*n. and adj.*)
shutdown
sick leave
side effect*
single window (*n. and adj., e.g.* single window concept, single window system)
siphon (*n. and v.; prefer to* syphon)
skilful (*prefer to* skillful)
small scale (*n., e.g.* on a small scale; *but* small-scale (*adj.*)*, e.g.* small-scale projects)
so-called (*adj.*)
sociocultural
socio-economic*
sociopolitical
south(ern) (*a geographical direction or an area within a country*)
South(ern) (*a major region, e.g.* South Asia, Southern Europe)
specialize (*prefer to* specialise)
spectrum (*pl.* spectra*; prefer to* spectrums)
spillover (*n. and adj.)*
stabilize (*prefer to* stabilise)
standby (*n. and adj.*)
starting point*
start-up (*n.*)
stockpile (*n. and v.*)
stocktaking
stopgap
straightforward
sub-aquatic
subcategory
subcommission*
sub-committee**
subdivision
subgroup
sub-issue
sub-item
subject matter*
sub-manager
sub-paragraph
sub-programme**
subregion
sub-Saharan
subsample
subsection

subset
subsoil
substandard
substructure
subsystem
subtitle
subtotal
subtropical
subunit
sulphur
superheavy
superyacht
supranational
takeover (*n.*)
tankship
target (*v.;* targets*,* targeting, targeted)
tax-free
taxpayer
teamwork
teleconference
telegram
test bed (*n.*; *but* test-bed (*adj.*))
thermonuclear
third party (*n.; but* third-party (*adj.*))
three-dimensional
time-bound
time-consuming
time frame
time lag
time limit
timeline
time period
timescale
time span
timetable
title page
titre (*prefer to* titer)
tonne (*prefer to* metric ton *and* metric tonne)
topsoil
total (*v.;* totals*,* totalling, totalled, *prefer to* totals*,* totaling, totaled)
towards (*prefer to* toward)
trademark*
transatlantic
transboundary
transglobal
transnational
trans-Pacific
trans-ship (*prefer to* tranship)
trans-shipment
travel (*v.;* travels, travelling, travelled, *prefer to* travels, traveling, traveled)
turnaround (*n.; prefer to* turnround)
turning point*
twofold
two thirds (*n., e.g.* two thirds of the vote*; but adj.* two-thirds*, e.g.* a two-thirds majority)
two-tier
-type (*in combination, e.g.* float-type system)

tyre (*n.; prefer to* tire)
ultrafiltration
ultra-high frequency (*n.*; *but* ultra-high-frequency (*adj.*))
ultra-long-range (*adj., e.g.* ultra-long-range communications)
ultramicroscopic
ultraviolet
undersecretary
Under-Secretary-General (*pl.* Under-Secretaries-General)
under water (*adv., meaning submerged or flooded*); *but* underwater (*adj. and adv., meaning beneath the surface of the water*)
under way (*prefer to* underway)
United Nations <u>s</u>ystem
upper-case (*adj. but* in upper case *(n.)*)
up to date (*adv., e.g.* bring the report up to date*; but* up-to-date *(adj.), e.g.* an up-to-date report)
vice-chair
vice-president
videoconference
videoconferencing
vis-à-vis
wastewater
watchkeeping
waterborne
watercourse
waterline
waterlock**
waterlogged
water table
watertight
waveband
wavelength
weathertight
weathervane (*n. and v.*)
weathervaning
Web* (Internet)
web page
website
well: *compound adjectives are hyphenated only when preceding a noun* (*e.g.* a well-designed project*;* the project is well designed)
well-being
west(ern) (*a geographical direction or an area within a country*)
West(ern) (*a major region, e.g.* West Africa, Western Europe)
wheelhouse
while (*conj. and rel. adv.; prefer to* whilst)
whitecap*
Wi-Fi
wildlife
word processing (*n.*); *but* word-processing (*adj.*)
workforce
work hour*
working group *in general or specific references, but capitalized when using the short title of an established working group*
workload
work month*
work permit
workplace
work plan

worksheet
workshop
workstation
World Maritime Day parallel event
worldwide (*adj. and adv.*)
write-down (*n.*)
write-off (*n.*)
X-ray (*n. and v.*)
yardstick
yearbook
year-end (*adj.; but* at the year end)
zero (*pl.* zeros)

ANNEX 1

Verb endings *-ise, -ize* and *-yse*

-ise

advertise
advise
comprise
compromise
devise
exercise
improvise
revise
supervise
televise

-ize (*prefer to –*ise)

acclimatize
aggrandize
agonize
alkalize
alphabetize
amortize
anabolize
anglicize
antagonize
apologize
apostrophize
authorize
capitalize
categorize
centralize
computerize
criticize
decentralize
desensitize
destabilize
disorganize
economize
emphasize
equalize
familiarize
finalize
formalize
generalize
globalize
harmonize
homogenize
hospitalize
hypothesize
immunize
industrialize
iodize

ionize
italicize
jeopardize
legitimize
localize
lyophilize
maximize
mechanize
memorize
metabolize
minimize
mobilize
neutralize
operationalize
optimize
organize
oxidize
pasteurize
patronize
pressurize
prioritize
publicize
randomize
rationalize
realize
recognize
scrutinize
sensationalize
sensitize
specialize
stabilize
standardize
sterilize
stigmatize
subsidize
summarize
synthesize
tranquillize
utilize
vaporize
victimize
visualize

-yse (*prefer to* –yze)

analyse
catalyse
hydrolyse
paralyse

ANNEX 2

Plurals of nouns

(a) *Ending in* **-um**

addendum	addenda
bacterium	bacteria
biennium	biennia (*prefer to* bienniums)
corrigendum	corrigenda
curriculum vitae	curricula vitae (CVs)
datum (geodetic)	datums
erratum	errata
forum	forums
memorandum	memoranda (*prefer to* memorandums)
millennium	millennia (*prefer to* millenniums)
quorum	quorums
spectrum	spectra (*prefer to* spectrums)
stratum	strata
symposium	symposia (*prefer to* symposiums)

(b) *Ending in* **–ix** *or* **-ex**

appendix	appendices
index	indexes (*lists*)
	indices (*technical use*)
matrix	matrices (*prefer to* matrixes)
vortex	vortices (*prefer to* vortexes)

(c) *Ending in* **-o**

archipelago	archipelagos (*prefer to* archipelagoes)
cargo	cargoes (*prefer to* cargos)
embargo	embargoes
mosquito	mosquitoes

(d) *Others*

alga	algae
bureau	bureaux (*prefer to* bureaus)
criterion	criteria
formula	formulas (*in general contexts*); formulae (in mathematical and scientific contexts)
genus	genera
larva	larvae
note verbale	notes verbales
phenomenon	phenomena

———————