



AUSTRALASIAN INSTITUTE
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September 2026



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- **Report on AIMS biennial conference**
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Thanks to all AIMS members and the Board for allowing us to be part of your 40th anniversary conference. We enjoyed catching up with existing clients and members.

Congratulations to all the nominees and award winners.

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Front Cover: *Global Mercy*, the world's largest purpose-built civilian hospital ship. Tymor Marine recently completed a lightweight survey and inclining test aboard the vessel. (See page 48.)

Back Cover: Marine Rescue Queensland's *Gladstone Rescue 1* at Gladstone, Queensland.



From the Bridge (Page 5.)



CEO: AMSA stakeholder forum. (Page 7.)



Marine Surveyor Symposium. (Page 11.)



Marine incidents report 2025. (Page 22.)



Cyber security risks. (Page 28.)



Incat 096 overseas-bound. (Page 38.)

ADVERTISING AVAILABLE

Advertising is now available in *Shipshape*, the official journal of the Australasian Institute of Marine Surveyors (AIMS). For all the information about advertising in our quarterly magazine, contact AIMS CEO Eric Perez at gm@aimsurveyors.com.au or on +61 492 881 737.

Marine surveying: more than a checklist

MARINE surveying covers a remarkably broad range of vessels and assignments. Working in the United States, my own progression in the industry has given me the opportunity to work across both yacht and small craft and commercial marine surveying.

One assignment may involve a pre-purchase survey of a recreational vessel, working through the hull, machinery, electrical and onboard systems before continuing with a haul-out and sea trial. Another may involve boarding a commercial ship to conduct an initial or final draft survey associated with thousands of tons of cargo.

The vessels, scale and purpose of these assignments can be very different. Yet the fundamentals remain remarkably similar: careful observation, accuracy, practical vessel knowledge, accepted standards, documentation and professional judgment.

Looking beyond whether it works

On the yacht and small craft side, an inspection cannot be reduced to whether equipment simply works.

An engine may run normally at the dock but reveal a cooling, fuel or operating issue once placed under load. Electrical equipment may function despite an installation that deserves attention.

A vessel that presents well cosmetically may tell a different story in its machinery spaces, bilges, electrical panels or less accessible structural areas.

Sea trials and haul-outs add important pieces to that picture. Operating machinery under load provides information that cannot be obtained at the dock, while hauling the vessel exposes the underwater hull, running gear, through-hulls, anodes and other components that cannot

be adequately inspected while afloat.

The surveyor's job is to bring those individual observations together into an objective picture of the vessel's condition at the time of inspection.

Observation before assumption

Some deficiencies are immediately apparent. Others begin with something much smaller: a sound, unusual temperature, staining, corrosion, movement or an installation that simply doesn't look right.

Following those observations is part of the job, but so is understanding the limits of the survey.

Not every concern can be completely diagnosed during an inspection. Knowing when to document an observed condition and recommending further evaluation by an engine technician, electrician,



Machinery-space inspection aboard the bulk carrier M/V Las Palmas.



Pre-purchase marine survey of a 1988 48-foot Camargue Cockpit Motor Yacht during the out-of-water inspection.

composites specialist or other qualified professional is an important part of providing useful information to the client.

A different scale

Commercial surveying offers a very different perspective.

During a draft survey, for example, the focus shifts from vessel condition to accurate measurement and calculation. Drafts are observed, water density is measured, ballast and other liquids are accounted for, and hydrostatic data is used to determine vessel displacement.

Comparing initial and final conditions allows the quantity of cargo loaded or discharged to be calculated.

When cargo quantities reach tens of thousands of tons, seemingly small observations can have significant consequences.

While that assignment may appear far removed from a recreational pre-purchase survey, the underlying discipline is much the same: observe carefully, measure accurately, verify information, document the findings and avoid assumptions.

That discipline transfers in both directions. Yacht and small

craft surveying builds familiarity with machinery, electrical systems, pumps, piping and vessel operation.

Commercial work reinforces consistency, measurement and documentation. Each side has helped strengthen how I approach the other.

Continuing to learn

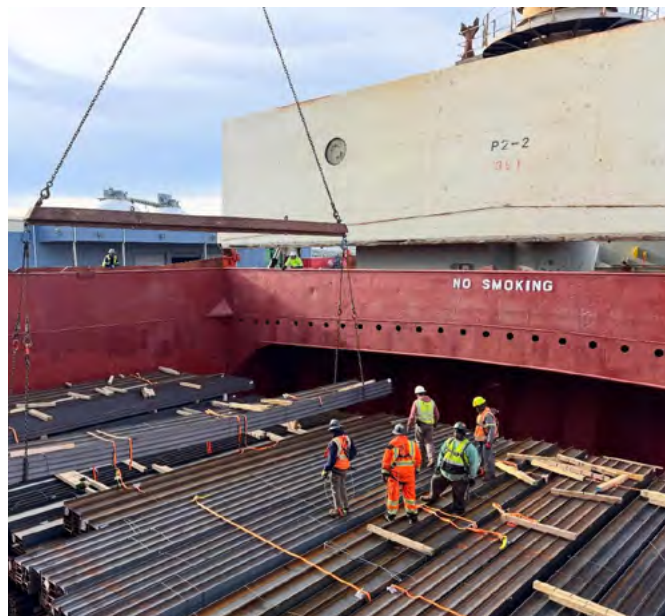
One of the clearest lessons I have learned is just how much there is to know.

No surveyor can be an expert in every hull material, propulsion system, electrical installation or piece of equipment encountered aboard every vessel.

Technology changes, standards evolve and every vessel presents something different.

Continuing education and professional development come from many sources: professional organisations, technical training, industry standards, manufacturers' information, hands-on experience, and relationships with experienced surveyors and other marine professionals.

Just as important is knowing when something falls outside your expertise. The client is better



Discharge supervision of steel products aboard the bulk carrier M/V Nitaya Naree at the Port of Wilmington, North Carolina USA.

served by a recommendation for the appropriate specialist than by speculation.

An independent set of eyes

Ultimately, whether the assignment involves a recreational boat or a commercial ship, the surveyor provides something valuable: an independent and well-documented set of eyes.

A survey cannot predict every future failure. It can document observable conditions, identify concerns within the scope of the inspection and provide information that allows the client to make better-informed decisions.

Working across both yacht and small craft and commercial surveying in the United States has given me an appreciation for just how broad the marine surveying profession is.

The vessels may change dramatically but the responsibility remains much the same: observe carefully, understand what you are seeing, document it accurately and communicate it clearly.

Billy Berg
Owner

Double B Marine Services