

NAVIGATOR

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S-Mode

Standardising navigation displays – have your say





Maintaining standards

Imagine joining a ship, going to the bridge and finding a navigation system (ECDIS, Radar...) that you're unfamiliar with. I'm sure you can – and probably have already done so. You struggle to find the key operations you need to stand a competent and confident watch. It is hard to acquire a target, to use EBLs and VRMs or know where to look for CPA/TCPA, never mind set up parallel indexing or plot manual lines of position.

These design challenges cause frequent complaints from both mariners and trainers. If there was just one major manufacturer we might not have this challenge. However, a study a few years ago identified up to 35 different manufacturers selling ECDIS, each one producing the system that they feel is the best and easiest to use.

The Nautical Institute (NI), International Association of Institutes of Navigation (IAIN) and many others have proposed that the IMO should agree a single set of

guidelines for manufacturers to use when designing navigation systems.

Our proposal is for an S-Mode, or Standard Mode of operation, to be the same across all manufacturers at a basic level, although more specialist modes

THIS IS YOUR CHANCE TO SHAPE THE FUTURE OF NAVIGATION SYSTEMS. THERE ARE NO WRONG ANSWERS

would also be available. Mariners would need less time to become familiar with the basics of a navigation system. They would be more competent and confident while standing navigation watches, improving safety and environmental protection.

This standard interface has to suit the needs of the people who use it – the

seafarers. So what should standard interface look like? What makes a navigation system easy or difficult to use, and why? Thanks to the assistance and support of more than 1,000 volunteers, 100,000 copies of each issue of *The Navigator* go out to ships around the world to be read by around 400,000 navigating officers. We would like to invite every single one of our readers to visit our website at www.surveymonkey.com/r/Nav-Funct to take a short survey about what S-Mode should look like.

This is your chance to shape the future of navigation systems. There are no wrong answers. The Nautical Institute simply wants to present the IMO and the wider industry with feedback from as many mariners and trainers as possible. In this issue, you can find out more about standardisation, explored from different perspectives – and about what you can do if you find yourself on a ship with an unfamiliar system. Please read it, think about it, discuss it and share it. Then join in the online survey and give us your thoughts.

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Take our S-Mode survey today and be part of an industry-wide call for change. Get your voice heard on this key issue.



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