



An tÚdarás Rialála Limistéir Mhuiri
Maritime Area Regulatory Authority

Minutes of the Maritime Area Regulatory Authority (MARA) Board Meeting

Date	09 December 2025
Venue	Sage Advocacy HQ, Dublin 1
Time	14.30 – 17.00
Chair	Mark Mellett Vice Admiral DSM (Rtd), Phd (MM)
Board Members Present	Ms. Karen Banks (KB) Dr. Ruth Brennan (RB) Mr. Philip Daly (PD) Mr. Patrick Gibbons (PG) (online) Ms. Niamh Kenny (NK) Dr. James Massey (JM) Ms. Alma Walsh (AW) Mr. Brendan McGrath (BMCG) (online) Mr. Patrick Moran (PM) (online)
In attendance	MARA Executive – Ms. Laura Brien (CEO), Ms. Sorcha Byrne and Ms. Aisling Murray (Secretariat), Mr. Frank Ronan (FR) (online), Mr. Eoin Leahy (EL)

Agenda Items

1. Non-Executive Session

Matters raised during the non-executive session for discussion were raised at agenda item 13.0 – AOB.

2. Welcome and Apologies

The Chair welcomed board members with apologies from Paul O’Neill.
Quorum in place.

3. Declarations of Interest

None declared.

4. Minutes

4.1 Board Minutes – The Board approved the following resolution:

At its meeting on 9 December 2025, the Board adopted the minutes of the MARA board meeting of 19 November 2025 attached at agenda item 4.1.

5. Matters Arising

5.1 Action Log –

The Board reviewed outstanding actions from previous meetings noting that any outstanding actions are being progressed.

5.2 Top 10 Suppliers -

Board has read and noted the information attached to agenda item 5.2. The Board is comfortable that the appropriate governance and procurement procedures are being followed.

5.2 SoS Tracker –

The Board approves the use of the SoS tracker at agenda item 5.3 for future updates.

5.3 Organisation optimisation review –

CEO provided a brief synopsis of the paper linked at agenda item 5.3

The Board has accepted the paper as read.

6. PPC Report

The Chair of the PPC, updated the Board on the work of the PPC to date and advised that the next meeting is due to take place on 18 December 2025.

6.1 PPC – Terms of Reference

At its meeting on 9 December 2025, the Board approved the Terms of Reference for the Planning and Performance Committee as appended to agenda item 6.2.

7. ARC Report

The Chair of the ARC updated the Board on the work of the ARC to date. The Chair advised that the requested terms of reference for the Internal Controls Audit have been received.

Action: Secretariat to provide the Board with the terms of reference for the Internal Controls audit.

7.1 Procurement for Internal Audit Services

At its meeting on 9 December 2025, the Board approved the business case, appended to agenda item 7.1. The business case will be submitted to the Department of Climate, Energy and the Environment for its approval before MARA initiate the procurement process.

8. Governance Matters

8.1 2026 Board Work Programme

At its meeting on 9 December 2025, the Board approved the proposed work programme pending the following updates:

- Away day in Cork to be a 2 day event – 11 and 12 May.
- Meeting to be held in Wexford HQ in September to be an overnight stay – 14 and 15 September.
- Remaining meetings to be held in a Dublin location – 10 February, 24 March, 30 June, 8 December.
- All meetings will retain a hybrid element to facilitate those unable to attend in person.

Action: Secretariat to update the work programme with the above amendments.

Action: Secretariat to circulate Outlook invites for 2026 meetings.

9. Compliance, Enforcement and Revenue Collection Matters

9.1 Fuinneamh Sceirdre Teoranta Options Paper

The Director of Compliance, Enforcement and Revenue, Yvonne Doris, provided the Board with the background to the case.

The Board has noted the contents of the paper.

9.2 MV Shingle

The Director of Compliance, Enforcement and Revenue, Yvonne Doris, provided the Board with the background to the case.

The Board discussed the case and decisions made and noted that lessons had been learned. An update to be provided to the Board at the next meeting.

To be noted that the Board believes that this action is a breach of the conditions of MAC202430007.

Action: Director of Compliance, Enforcement and Revenue to provide an update on MV Shingle at the next Board meeting.

10 Policy Matters

10.1 Competitive MAC Framework

The Director of Policy and External Affairs, Eoin Leahy, provided the Board with a background to the development of the proposed Competitive MAC Framework.

At its meeting on 9 December 2025, the Board received, discussed and approved the *approval of the price factor competencies* of the Competitive MAC Framework, appended to agenda item 10.1. The framework will now be published on the MARA website.

Action: The Competitive MAC Framework is to be published on the MAFRA website.

Action: Following discussions at the Board, the Secretariat is to update the Schedule of Matters to ensure that both non-price factor competencies and price factor competencies on future frameworks are to fall to the Board for approval.

10.2: Proposal for legislative Amendments

The Director of Policy and External Affairs, Eoin Leahy, advised the Board that the document amended and agenda item 10.2 is as received from DCEE.

The Bord was advised that work in continuing and that further updates are expected in January/February 2026.

11 Corporate Affaire Matters

11.1 2026 Budget and Business Plan

The CEO, explained to the Board that the plan presented is a draft pending the confirmation of the 2026 Exchequer allocation.

The 2026 plan focuses on key deliverables and outputs, working on the assumption that there will be additional staff allocated for 2026 and that non-pay and capital expenditure will be as per the estimates request.

The Board noted the proposed 2026 Budget and Business plan and that it may be subject to change following the inclusion of the Accelerating Infrastructure Report and Action Plans and following confirmation of the 2026 Exchequer allocation a revised plan and budget will be presented to the Board for its consideration and approval.

12 CEO Report

The Board noted the report as read.

NK left meeting.

13 AOB.

13.1: Accelerating Infrastructure 2025 report and action plan:

The Chair provide the Board with an overview of the report and the possible implications for MARA.

The Board approves for the CEO and Senior Management to proceed with the following actions:

- **Agreement** that MARA will proactively align with the *Accelerating Infrastructure* agenda, balancing speed with legal and environmental robustness;
- **Confirmation** that the Board wishes to see:
 - A diagnostic on MAC/MUL timelines,
 - A draft Reform and Delivery Plan,
 - Proposed KPIs, including clear 90th percentile targets anchored to MAPA timelines, and any associated resourcing case, within an agreed timeframe.
- CEO to proceed on that basis and to bring back proposals at the earliest practical opportunity – suggest end Jan 2026.

Action: Secretariat to circulate the PowerPoint provided by the Chair.