



भारत सरकार / GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
पत्तन, पोत परिवहन और जलमार्ग मंत्रालय
MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS

नौवहन महानिदेशालय, मुंबई
DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF SHIPPING, MUMBAI

F.No.16-17011/5/2022-SD-DGS

Date: 27.05.2025

To

All Stakeholders

Subject: Invitation for Comments on the Draft DGS Order Regarding Revised Age Norms and Sustainability Indexing for Ships

Dear Sir/Madam,

The Directorate General of Shipping had previously issued DGS Order No. 06 of 2023 dated 24.02.2023, along with Corrigendum I dated 24.06.2023, which specified the age norms for vessels.

In response to representations received from various stakeholders requesting a review of the Order—particularly with regard to exemptions for specific categories of vessels due to factors such as design complexity, construction cost and availability, and financial constraints of certain owners, as well as inputs from the IIM Indore study, a revised draft Order has been prepared and is now open for stakeholder consultation.

You are kindly requested to submit your comments through your respective industry associations to ensure a consolidated response and to avoid duplication of similar representations.

Please submit your comments in the tabular format provided in Annexure I to the email addresses nebu.oommen@gov.in and sd-dgs@nic.in no later than 25th June 2025. The draft Order is enclosed as Annexure II.

Sincerely,

(Nebu Oommen)

Ship Surveyor-cum-DDG (Tech)

Encl.: Annexure I – Format for Submission of Comments

Sl No.	Clause Number (Draft Order)	Comments/Remarks	Suggested Amendment (if any)
1			
2			
3			

Annexure II – Draft Order (Enclosed)

DRAFT FOR STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION

F. No. 16-17011/5/2022-SD-DGS

Dated: 27.05.2025

Draft Amendment Order to DGS Order No. 06 of 2023 (as amended) for stakeholder consultation

Sub: Age Norms and other Qualitative Parameters for Registration/operation of Vessels under Indian flag and, the foreign flag vessels required to apply for Licence under Sec 406 & 407 of The Merchant Shipping Act 1958.

Whereas, considering the objective of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958, which is to foster the development and ensure efficient maintenance of Indian mercantile marine in a manner best suited to serve the national interests, DGS Order 06 of 2023 dated 24.02.2023 and its Corrigendum I dated 24.06.2023 was issued.

2. Whereas, the quality tonnage is paramount for safe and secure expansion of the maritime sector and to achieve sustainability in ocean governance. The safety of life at sea and ships depends on the quality of tonnage registered under the flag of a country. The registration, certification to ensure safety, pollution prevention and security of Indian ships are means to achieve the objective of the Merchant Shipping Act, 1958.

3. Whereas the average age of the world fleet is on the declining trend. However, the average age of the Indian tonnage is on the increasing trend over the years and there is a demanding need to modernise the Indian fleet. The IMO has adopted a strategy for the reduction of Green House Gas and to achieve the targets defined by IMO, the vessel needs to be transformed to alternate fuel ships and age norms will assist in ensuring the gradual phasing out of fossil fuel ships and ushering of alternate/low carbon energy efficient ships.

4. Whereas, the existing guidelines stipulate that no prior technical clearance is required for the acquisition of vessels below twenty five years of age and would be required for vessels exceeding twenty five years of age.

5. Whereas, there is a need to create a level playing field for Indian ships by applying the requirements for quality tonnage over the foreign flag vessels also, which are required to apply for licence under Sec 406 & 407 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1958.

6. Whereas, several representations were received from the stakeholders to review the application of this order or to exempt certain category of vessels due to their complexity, cost of construction and unavailability. Representations were received indicating that the financial scenario of certain owners make it difficult to plan for a replacement vessel at this stage.

7. Whereas, the Directorate appointed IIM Indore as an independent agency for undertaking a study on the subject incorporating the global fleet scenario, Indian context, effect of age on safety, pollution prevention and performance, IMO regulations and its effect on aging vessels, the socio-economic effect considering the forthcoming GHG norms etc and submit a report to the Directorate.

8. Whereas, the IIM Indore report, based on their detailed study supported fully the entry age criteria towards the fleet modernization. The report further recommended certain criteria

while considering the exit age such as dispensation for certain specialized and complex vessels of higher cost and less availability, granting further time period towards replacement planning due to economic impact and market shortage of vessels, imposing certain regulatory criteria based on IMO goals for exit instead of only age etc.,

9. Whereas, a draft of this Order was published on 27.05.2025 for the stakeholder's consultation and the matter was further discussed extensively with Indian Ship-owners Associations such as INSA and ICCSA, comments of stakeholders have been taken. Further, meetings were held on on the subject matter; comments and suggestions from the stakeholders were considered on its merit, towards the culmination of the Order dated

10. Whereas, this order shall be applicable to all the Indian and foreign flag vessels required to be licenced under Sec 406 & 407 of the MS Act 1958. Accordingly, this order shall also be applicable to vessels granted exemption from licencing under sec 406 & 407 of the Act and operating on coastal trade of India.

11. Whereas, this order (except Sustainability Indexing of Ships (SIS) at para 19) shall not be applicable to Passenger Vessels, FSRU, FPSO, Highly Specialized vessels (inter alia, Heavy Lift Installation Barge, crane barge, Pipe laying vessel, cable laying vessel, Research Vessel and Floating Docks), Dredgers, DP2 Diving Support Vessels, DP2 Well Stimulation Vessels and Drilling/Production units certified under MODU/SPS Code, as applicable. However, such vessels shall meet the Sustainability Indexing of Ships mentioned at para 19 for its continuation under Indian registry by the same due date applicable to other vessels that is 31.03.2028.

12. Whereas, the age of the vessel for the purpose of this Order, shall be computed from the "Date of Delivery" as mentioned in the Cargo Ship Safety Construction Certificate or any other Statutory Certificate issued under IMO Convention/Code.

13. Now therefore, in accordance with Section 406, 407 & 456 of the Merchant Shipping Act 1958, read with the notification S.O. No. 3144 dated 17.12.1960 and to meet the objective set out in the preamble of the said Act to ensure efficient maintenance of Indian mercantile marine and to promote acquisition of quality tonnage and enhance the safety of life at sea, the Directorate General of Shipping specifies the following requirements;

Sl. No.	Type of Ships	Application
(1)	(2)	(3)
13.1.	Ships for registration/operation under the Indian flag.	The vessels of type as specified in Column A of the Annexure-I to this Order, shall comply with the requirements stipulated in said Annexure, as made applicable therein. Indian vessels shall meet SIS as at para 19.
13.2.	Ships acquired under Indian Controlled	The age and other qualitative parameters, as specified in the Annexure-I shall also apply to vessels of similar kind

	Tonnage:	acquired under ‘Indian Controlled Tonnage’ regime (put in place vide DGS order 10 of 2014 dated 23.07.2014) carrying coastal cargo or providing services within the Exclusive Economic Zone of India. SIS as at para 19 shall not be applicable.
13.3	Foreign Flag Ships:	The age and other qualitative parameters, as specified in the said Annexure-I shall also apply to all foreign flag vessels of similar kind requiring license under Sec 406 and 407 of M S Act 1958, for operating within the Exclusive Economic Zone of India, whether chartered by an Indian entity or otherwise. In such cases the maximum age of the vessel shall be determined as on the date of commencement of service or cargo carriage, as the case may be. Foreign Flag vessels exceeding the entry age shall not be considered for issuance of license. SIS as at para 19 shall not be applicable.

14. The Director General of Shipping reserves the right to dispense with any requirement of this Order on a case-to-case basis, after considering inputs from INSA, ICCSA or any other organisation, as may be deemed appropriate in the prevailing circumstances, in the public interest.

15. The requirement specified under this order shall come into force from the date of issue of this Order and accordingly amends the conditions indicated in the previous orders in this regard.

16. For the purpose of application of this Order, an ‘Existing Vessel’ means a vessel already registered under the Indian Flag on or before the date of issuance of this Order. Vessels acquired/to be acquired under the Indian Control Tonnage regime would also be treated in the same line with the Indian Flag vessel.

17. The ‘Existing Vessels’ regardless of their age on the date of issuance of this Order, affected by the maximum age prescribed in the Order, shall be allowed to operate until 31.03.2028. Further operation is subject to compliance to Sustainability Indexing of Ships as indicate at para 19.

18. Foreign flagged vessels requiring licence under Sec 406 & 407 of the M S Act 1958 shall also be complying with the qualitative parameters as per Annexure I of this order.

19. The criteria permitting extended operation of existing vessels, shall be based on Sustainability Indexing is as below, which shall be duly certified by vessel’s class society. A detailed order explaining the implementation plan for all the existing Indian vessels irrespective of vessel nearing the exit age will be issued separately.

Sustainability Indexing of Ships (SIS) for Age Norms (DGS Order 6 of 2023)

S.No.	Criterion	Threshold / Requirement	Progressive Scoring Methodology	Maximum Points
1	CO₂ Emission Reduction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Vessels rated under IMO CII must maintain or improve rating annually. Non-CII vessels to show minimum % CO₂ reduction per 100 hours of main engine operation using DCS or equivalent. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CII A: 15 pts; B:10; C: 5; D: 3; E: 0. Non-CII: 1 pt per 1% reduction of emissions. (max 15). Propulsion- gCO₂/ton-mile; Auxiliaries- gCO₂/ton-hour 	15
2	EEXI Compliance	Compliance with IMO EEXI standards for existing ships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fully compliant: 10; Partial compliance: 5. 	10
3	Shore Power Readiness (OPS)	OPS-ready for stays >6 hrs at eligible Indian ports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Certified OPS: 10; Technically ready but uncertified: 5. 	10
4	Biofuel / Low-Carbon Fuel Integration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biofuel: B10 to B40 or equivalent LNG: Methane Slip- <0.2%-3%. ZNZ Fuels (verified near-zero LCA GHG) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Biofuel- B10: 3; B20: 5; B30:7; B40 +: 10; LNG: Methane Slip- <0.2%-10; <1%-7; <3%-5; Any DFE with MS >3%-3. ZNZ Fuel -25 pts (verified near-zero LCA GHG) or pro-rata on part use. 	25
5	Energy Efficiency Devices	Use of verified devices (VFDs, boss cap fins, silicone coatings, etc.)	2 points per verified device (max 5 devices)	10
6	NOx and PM Emissions Compliance	Tier II minimum; Tier III for ECAs/green corridors	Tier III: 10; Tier II: 5; Below Tier II: 0	10
7	PSC & FSI Performance Benchmark	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nil deficiency Nil detentions in 3 years 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Nil Deficiency-10 Pts Nil Detention under PSC or FSI in previous 3 calendar years – 5 Pts. (Latest of the PSC or FSI reports as the case may be) 	15

8	Detention under PSC / FSI		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Every Detention under PSC - 15 negative points and additional 2 points for each detainable deficiency reported on the ship (Max-(-25)). Every Detention under FSI-10 negative points and additional 1 points for each detainable deficiency reported on the ship (Max-(-15)). 	(-25)
9	Condition of Class	Every Condition of class imposed/extended	Every CoC imposed/extended on every occasion will carry a negative score of 3 points with a maximum of (-10) points.	(-10)
10	Major NC in SMC audit	Every Major NC raised during SMC	Every Major NC raised during SMC audit will carry a Negative score of 5 points with a maximum of (-10) points.	(-10)
11	Major NC in DOC Audit	Every Major NC raised during DOC	Every Major NC raised during DOC audit of a company will carry a Negative score of 5 points on every ship under the DOC for a certain Ship Type.	(-10)
12	Casualty reporting	Serious casualty and other than serious Casualty reported	Every serious casualty will carry negative 10 score and any casualty other than serious casualty will carry a negative score of 5 points with a maximum of (-10) points.	(-10)
13	Green Ship Recycling Commitment	Commitment to recycle at HKC-compliant yard with indicative EoL timeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Firm commitment of Recycling within 3yrs: 10 pts; General commitment: 5 pts. 	10
14	Condition-Based Rating (CAP/RightShip/OVID/IRS Equivalent)	One recognized structural, safety, or vetting score to be submitted	Best of one selected: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> CAP 1: 10; CAP 2: 7; CAP 3: 4; RightShip Safety Score : ≥ 4.0: 10; 3.5–3.9: 5; < 3.5: 0; RightShip Green Rating: A: 10; B: 7; C: 4; D or below: 0; 	10

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • OVID $\geq 90\%$: 10; 80–89%: 7; 70–79%: 5; $< 70\%$: 0; • Equivalent Rating: to be graded on similar scale 	
15	Optional Supplementary Global Rating (if more than one available)	Additional rating if operator chooses to provide two of the above	Same scale as above; only applicable if second vetting score is voluntarily submitted	5 (bonus)
16	Additional Environmental Protection Equipment	Installation of key MARPOL/IMO-compliant environmental systems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • BWT System: 3 pts; • SCR: 3 pts; • EG Scrubber: 2 pts; • STP: 1 pt; • 15ppm OWS: 1 pt (Max: 10 pts) 	10
17	Year on year substantial improvement	Improvement of 5 points or more in SIS score v/s previous year.	Add 1 point for every 5 points improvement subject to a max of 5 points.	5 (bonus)
Note: (1) The total possible score is 125 points (without optional bonus). (2) Any violation reported including non-payment of crew wages may warrant additional negative scores, as decided by the Competent authority concerned.				

Eligibility Thresholds for Extension from Age norms		
Score	Rating	Age norms Relaxation
≥ 100 points	A	May continue to operate irrespective of age, calculated on Calendar Year basis.
90–99 points	B	Eligible for 5yr conditional extension
80–89 points	C	Eligible for 3yr conditional extension to demonstrate improvement to higher score.
65–80 points	D	One-year conditional extension to demonstrate improvement to higher score and not eligible for any further extension from cut-off age, if it fails to improve.
< 65 points	E	No extension beyond 31 st March 2028.
Note: If a ship fails to maintain the Rating Score in one particular year, it falls to the lower grade forthwith and should demonstrate continuous higher score for two consecutive years for upgradation of rating.		

(Shyam Jagannathan)

Director General of Shipping and Additional Secretary to the Government of India

To,

1. All stakeholders/Ship-owners/Charterers/Shippers/All Indian Shipping Companies through the official website of the DGS, GoI.
2. INSA/ICSSA/FOSMA/MASSA.
3. Indian Ports Association.
4. Indian Private Ports and Terminals Association.

Copy also forwarded for kind information to the:

The Secretary to the Govt. of India, Ministry of Ports, Shipping and Waterways,
GoI, Transport Bhawan, 1, Sansad marg. New Delhi-110001.

“Annexure -I of the DGS Order of 2025”

Age Range	COMPLIANCE REQUIREMENT		Remarks	Conclusion
	Entry into the Flag - New vessel or 2nd handvessel	Existing vessels		
A	B	C	D	E
1. OIL TANKERS				
When below 15 years of age	Provided, vessel is Classed with an IACS Member.	No additional condition.		1. Oil Tankers (2nd hand) of 20 years and above age cannot be acquired.
When between 15 and 20 years	Provided, (i) vessel is Classed with an IACS Member, and (ii) CAP 1 rating for Hull and CAP 2 for Machinery & cargo systems, to be obtained not later than the next Drydock Survey.	Must obtain; (i) CAP 1 rating for Hull and minimum CAP 2 rating for Machineryand Cargo Systems from an RO of the GoI, at every dry-docking. (CAP ratings to be obtained from an RO of the GoI, to be obtained not later than the next Drydock Survey and maintained at every dry-docking thereafter)	Withdrawal of GTL in case of non-compliance with conditions in ColumnC Or Upon vessel attaining 25 years, whichever is earlier.	2. Withdrawal of GTL for all tankers of 25 years of age and above. 3. The above remarks 1 and 2 is applicable for RSV/ICV also.
When, 20 to 25 years of age or above.	not permitted	Same as Above.		4. Further operation beyond 25 years of the vessel is subject to its compliance with Para

				17 and 19, above
2. BULK CARRIER/GENERAL CARGO VESSELS (Other than <i>Exclusive Container Vessel</i>)				
When below 15 years of age	Provided, vessel is Classed with an IACS Member.	No additional condition.		1. Bulker/GC vessels (2nd hand) of 20 years and above age cannot be acquired.
When between 15 and 20 years	(i) Rightship Inspection or an evaluation by an RO under equivalent rating methodology developed by the DGS, to be obtained within 6 months of registering the vessel.	(i) Rightship Inspection or an evaluation by an RO under an equivalent rating methodology developed by the DGS, to be obtained within one year from the date of this order.	Withdrawal of GTL in case of non-compliance with conditions in Column C Or Upon vessel attaining 25 years, whichever is earlier.	2. Withdrawal of GTL for all vessels of age 25 years and above. 3. No relaxation for Mini Bulk Carrier, RSV, special type vessels such as Ro-Ro etc. 4. Minimum Rightship Safety Score of 3 to be obtained and maintained. 5. Further operation beyond 25 years of the vessel is subject to its compliance with Para 17 and 19, above
When 20 to 25 Years of age or above	not permitted	Same as above.		
3. OFFSHORE FLEET (Other than those addressed under this Order)				
When below 15 years of age	Provided, vessel is Classed with an IACS Member.	No additional condition.		

When between 15 and 20 years	Provided, (i) vessel is Classed with an IACS Member, and (ii) OVID inspection or an evaluation by an RO under equivalent rating methodology developed by the DGS, to be obtained within 6 months of registry of the vessel.	(i) The OVID inspection or an evaluation by an RO under an equivalent rating methodology developed by the DGS, to be completed within one year from the date of the order, and once every year thereafter.	Withdrawal of GTL in case of non-compliance with conditions in Column C Or Upon vessel attaining 25 years, whichever is earlier. (except for vessels fitted with the DP2 system).	1. No 2nd hand acquisition after attaining 20 years of age. 2. Except DP2 for allvessels, Withdrawal of GTL upon attaining 25 years of age. 3. Withdrawal of GTL for DP-2 vessels attaining 30 years of age. 4. Further operation beyond 25 / 30 years of the vessel is subject to its compliance with Para 17 and 19, above
When between 20 to 25 Years	Not Permitted.	Same as above.		
When between 25 to 30 Years	Not Permitted.	Same as above.	Under this category, Only DP 2 vessels are permitted to operate beyond 25 years of age and up to 30 years.	
4. SPECIALISED VESSELS (Diving Support, Geo-technical, Pipe laying, Seismic Survey, Well Simulation, Accommodation Barge) (Note: Applicable for vessels other than those excluded through para 11)				
When below 15 Years of age	Provided, vessel is Classed with an IACS Member.	No additional condition		

When between 15 and 20 years	Provided, (i) vessel is Classed with an IACS Member, and (ii) OVID inspection or an evaluation by an RO under equivalent rating methodology developed by the DGS, to be obtained within 6 months of registry of the vessel.	(i) OVID inspection or an evaluation by an RO under an equivalent rating methodology developed by the DGS within one year of the date of issue of the circular, and every year thereafter.	Withdrawal of GTL in case of non-compliance with conditions in Column C Or Upon vessel attaining 30 years, whichever is earlier.	<div>1. No 2nd hand acquisition after attaining 20 years of age.</div> <div>2. Further operation beyond 30 years of the vessel is subject to its compliance with Para 17 and 19, above</div>
When between 20 to 30 years	not permitted	In addition to the above, (i) Annual FSI/GI is to be carried out.		
5. DEDICATED CONTAINER VESSELS AND DEDICATED CEMENT CARRIERS				
Up to 20 years	Provided, vessel is Classed with an IACS Member.	No additional condition.		<div>1. No 2nd hand</div>

20 to 30 years	Not Permitted.	(i) Annual FSI as per rules.	Withdrawal of GTL upon completion of 30 days in case of non-compliance with conditions in Column C Or Upon vessel attaining 30 years, whichever is earlier.	acquisition after attaining 20 years of age. 2. Further operation of the vessel beyond 30 years is subject to its compliance with Para 17 and 19, above
6. GAS/CHEMICAL CARRIERS				
When below 20 years of age	Provided, vessel is Classed with an IACS Member.	No additional condition.		1. No 2nd hand acquisition after attaining 25 years of age. 2. Further operation beyond 30 years of the vessel is subject to its compliance with Para 17 and 19, above
When between 20 and 25 years	Provided; (i) vessel is classed with an IACS member, and (ii)CAP 1 rating for Hull and CAP 2 for machinery and cargo systems from an IACS member, to be obtained not later than next Drydock Survey.	Must obtain; (i) CAP 1 rating for Hull and CAP 2 for Machinery & cargo systems from an RO of the GoI. (CAP ratings as above to be obtained not later than next Drydock Survey., and at every dry-docking thereafter.)	Withdrawal of GTL upon completion of 30 days in case of non-compliance with conditions in Column C Or Upon vessel attaining 30 years, whichever is earlier.	
25 to 30 years	Not Permitted.	Same as above.		
7. HARBOUR TUGS				
up to 20 years	Provided, vessel is Classed with an IACS Member.	No additional condition.		

20 to 25 years	Not Permitted.	Regular Class surveys, DD inspection.		1. Harbour tug means, tugs operating within harbour/port.
25 to 30 years	Not Permitted.	Annual FSI.	Withdrawal of GTL upon completion of 30 days in case of non-compliance with conditions in Column C Or Upon vessel attaining 30 years of age, whichever is earlier.	2. No 2nd hand acquisition after attaining 20 years of age. 3. Further operation beyond 30 years of the vessel is subject to its compliance with Para 17 and 19, above
8. AHT's & TUGS INVOLVED IN LONG TOW				
up to 20 years	Provided, vessel is Classed with an IACS Member.	No additional condition.		1. No 2nd hand acquisition after attaining 20 years of age.
20 to 25 years	Not Permitted.	(i) TIQ inspection or an evaluation by an RO under equivalent rating methodology developed by the DGS, to be completed within one year from the date of the Order, and once every year thereafter.	Withdrawal of GTL upon completion of 30 days in case of non-compliance with conditions in Column C Or Upon vessel attaining 25 years of age, whichever is earlier.	2. GTL to be withdrawn for all existing AHT's/Tow tugs of age above 25 years. 3. Further operation beyond 25 years of the vessel is subject to its compliance with Para 17 and 19, above
9. NON-SELF-PROPELLED OCEAN-GOING CARGO CARRYING BARGES (Dumb Barges)				

up to 20 years	Provided, vessel is Classed with an IACS Member.	No additional condition.		
20 to 25 years of age	Not Permitted.	(i) BIQ inspection or an evaluation by an RO under equivalent rating methodology developed by the DGS, to be completed within one year from the date of the Order, and once every year thereafter.	Withdrawal of GTL of vessel upon the vessel attaining 25years of age.	Further operation beyond 25 years of the vessel is subject to additional surveys equivalent to Renewal survey, every 2.5years by the RO
10. FOR VESSELS, OTHER THAN ABOVE (except those exempted at para 11)				
up to 20 years	Provided, vessel is Classed with an IACS Member.	No additional condition.		
20 to 25 years of age	Not Permitted.	(i) Annual Class and FSI.	Withdrawal of GTL of vessel upon the vessel attaining 25 years of age.	Further operation beyond 25 years of the vessel is subject to its compliance with Para 17 and 19, above