

# **Directorate General of Shipping, Mumbai**

## **Nautical Wing**

**Draft Merchant Shipping Notice No.     of 2025**

**File Ref. No.25-63011/70/2025-NT-DGS(comp. no.36491)**

**Date: 23.09.2025**

### **Subject: Guidelines and Criteria for Empanelment and Retention of Salvors**

#### **1. Background**

With the rapid expansion of India's maritime sector, including increased vessel traffic and the growth of port infrastructure, the risk of maritime incidents has also risen significantly. This has necessitated the creation of a structured salvage framework to strengthen national preparedness and ensure timely, coordinated responses to marine casualties, in line with international best practices.

#### **2. Statutory Mandate**

The statutory basis for this initiative is provided under the Merchant Shipping Act, 2025 (Act 24 of 2025). Under Part XII, Chapter II, Section 255, the Central Government is empowered to prescribe and implement criteria for the retention and empanelment of salvors in India. This mandate is intended to establish a dedicated mechanism for effective response to maritime emergencies along the Indian coast and in its waters.

#### **3. Framework for a National Salvage Ecosystem**

Pursuant to this mandate, the Directorate General of Shipping has prepared draft criteria for the empanelment and retention of salvors. The objective is to build a national salvage ecosystem with enhanced capacity for emergency response, towing, firefighting, salvage operations, and oil spill response. The framework envisions a financially viable and operationally sustainable model, whereby assets and resources are strategically positioned to enable **deployment within twelve (12) hours of an incident being reported.**

**Under the proposed salvage framework, all vessels calling at Indian ports or transiting through Indian Waters will be required to maintain a standing arrangement with a salvage entity empanelled under the MS Act.** Salvage entities may establish in-house firefighting, oil spill response capacity and deploy high bollard pull tugs at strategic locations

or have an agreement with recognized service providers. Further, arrangements are to be made for emergency response assets which will be deployed at strategic coastal locations to ensure rapid mobilisation. This model is intended to advance the development of a self-sustaining salvage hub for India.

#### **4. Essential Criteria for Empanelment**

The draft criteria set out essential requirements for empanelment and retention of salvors. Applicants must be duly registered entities, either Indian companies or joint ventures with Indian partners in the case of foreign firms, with a minimum paid-up capital requirement and demonstrable financial stability. Further, salvors are required to establish at-least one centralized Headquarters with warehouse and operational bases on both the East and West coasts within six months of empanelment, and to expand the operations nationwide within two years.

Applicants must maintain adequate salvage assets and equipment in India, supported by qualified and experienced personnel. Firms are required to demonstrate operational capability by evidencing successful salvage operations (Wreck Removal/ Refloating/ Oil Recovery/ Underwater repairs) in the preceding five years, with preference given to those with prior experience on the Indian coast, and must also hold membership in the International Salvage Union or an equivalent domestic accreditation.

To ensure integration with India's emergency response system, salvors must have tie-ups with recognised Oil Spill Response Organisations (OSROs), and enter into agreements with ship operators/Tug owners for the emergency deployment of tugs, with mobilisation required within twelve (12) hours of an incident.

#### **5. Stakeholder Consultation**

The **Draft Criteria for Empanelment and Retention of Salvors** are annexed to this Notice as **Annexure–I**. All stakeholders, Indian and foreign, are invited to review the draft and provide their comments and suggestions **within three weeks** of the issuance of this Notice.

A separate implementation notice will be issued after due consideration of the feedback received.

Capt. Harinder Singh,

Nautical Surveyor & DDG(Tech.)

**Note:**

1. Comments to be submitted latest by 10<sup>th</sup> October 2025
2. The salvage firms (both Indian and foreign) interested to establish salvage hubs in India are invited to submit their interest to the DGS through following email ids.
3. For feedback, comments and any further clarification or support regarding this directive, entities may contact the following officials of the Directorate General of Shipping:
  - a. Capt. Harinder Singh, Nautical Surveyor and DDG(Tech) – [singh.harinder@gov.in](mailto:singh.harinder@gov.in)
  - b. Adv. Manneck Vesuna, Legal Assistant – [nautic.lglassit1-dgs@gov.in](mailto:nautic.lglassit1-dgs@gov.in)
  - c. Shri Madhav Damodar Patil, Assistant – [madhavpatil.dgs@gov.in](mailto:madhavpatil.dgs@gov.in)

**MINISTRY OF PORTS, SHIPPING AND WATERWAYS GOVERNMENT OF**  
**INDIA**

**DIRECTORATE GENERAL OF SHIPPING, MUMBAI**

**DRAFT CHECK LIST FOR EVALUATING APPLICATIONS FOR APPROVAL OF  
EMPANELLED AND RETENTION OF SALVAGE FIRMS UNDER PART XII OF  
THE MERCHANT SHIPPING ACT, 2025.**

<b>Sr. No</b>	<b>Criteria</b>	<b>Requirements</b>	<b>Remarks</b>
<b>(1)</b>	<b>(2)</b>	<b>(3)</b>	<b>(4)</b>
1	Registration with a regulatory body	Mandatory	Copy of certificate of incorporation to be submitted
2	Type of Company (Indian Company or Joint Venture with an Indian Entity by foreign salvage firms)	Mandatory	In case of Joint Venture, details of all entities to be submitted
3	Total paid-up capital of the (Indian) entity	10 crores (Mandatory)	Evidence required to be submitted with the application
4	Financial Statements indicating positive net worth and turnover	Last three years financial statements and 25 Crores turnover (Mandatory)	Evidence required to be submitted with the application
5	Ability to give Bank Guarantee/ LOU (Letter of Undertaking)/ LOI [Letter of Intent]	Mandatory	Specimen to be provided with the application
6	Operational set-up/ Stand-by locations around Indian	Minimum Operational set-up/ of 1 centralized	Evidence to be submitted for the existing facility. Detailed

	Coast	Headquarters with warehouse / Stand-by locations at 1 location on East and West Coast of India each within 6 months  (Assurance of setting up a minimum 6 locations around the Indian Coast within 2 years)	setup plan to be submitted along with the application
7	Assets/Equipment's available on standby	Mandatory	Evidence of assets/ salvage equipment's available in India to be submitted with the application
8	Manpower Requirements (Salvage Master, Naval Architect, Chemist, Firefighting Expert and other salvage personnel)	Mandatory	Details, qualifications and experience of Salvage Master, Naval Architect, Chemist, Firefighting Expert and other salvage personnel to be provided
9	Experience of successful completion of salvage operations in last 05 years.	Successful completion of minimum 5 salvage operations (Wreck Removal/ Refloating/ Oil Recovery/ Underwater repairs)  (Mandatory)	Evidence of successful completion of salvage operation to be submitted
10	Experience of conducting salvage operations around Indian Coast in the last 10	Successful completion of minimum 2 salvage operations as primary Salvor and additional	Evidence of successful completion of salvage operation to be submitted

	years	02 operations as partner (for Indian salvors, In case of JV)  (Preferred)	
11	Details of any unsuccessful salvage operations	As applicable	Details required to be submitted with the application
12	A Member of International Salvage Union or equivalent domestic accreditation	Mandatory	Evidence required to be submitted with the application
13	Tie up with OSRO (Oil Spill Response Organisation) in India with the list of equipment's and its locations	Mandatory	Evidence of tie up with OSRO required to be submitted with the application
14	Tie up/MOU with Ship operators/owners/managers for Emergency deployment of Tugs	Agreement should state that the tugs should be mobilized within 24 hours of reporting  (Mandatory)	Evidence of tie up/MOU with Ship / Tugs / operators/owners/managers required to be submitted with the application
15	24 X 7 availability of Point of Contact for salvage	Mandatory	Declaration to be provided with the details of Point of Contact
16	Affidavit to comply with Indian laws	Mandatory	In compliance with the Merchant Shipping Act, 2025, Indian Ports Act, 2025 & other extant applicable Indian Laws

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