

Ship Inspection Report programme (SIRE)



What is SIRE?

The Ship Inspection Report programme (SIRE) is a unique tanker and barge risk assessment tool used by charterers, terminal operators and government bodies to assist in the assurance of ship safety standards.

First launched in 1993 to provide a standardised inspection format, with objective reports capable of being shared, it has now gained industry-wide acceptance as a benchmark for vessel inspections and standards. Today, SIRE inspections take place all over the world and are widely recognised as an invaluable tool for raising ship safety standards.

At the heart of the SIRE system is a large database of objective technical and operational information about a range of vessels used for carrying oil, gas and chemicals. This information underpins informed vetting decisions on vessels ahead of charter and focuses attention on the importance of improving vessel quality and safety. The increasing use of SIRE information has corresponded closely to increasing efforts made by the oil industry to find out whether the vessels they use are well managed and maintained.

How does it work?

OCIMF member companies commission vessel inspections and appoint an accredited SIRE inspector to conduct an inspection. The inspector accesses the vessel particulars from the SIRE database and the appropriate Vessel or Barge Inspection Questionnaires (VIQ/BIQ). The inspector then conducts an on-board inspection of activities ranging from cargo handling processes to the vessel's pollution prevention measures. The inspection report contributes to the member company's risk assessment in advance of charter. The report is also uploaded to the SIRE database where, for a nominal fee, it can be accessed by registered companies who charter tankers or operate terminals. SIRE reports are provided for free to government agencies engaged in port state control activities.



The benefits of SIRE

By establishing a standardised, objective inspection process that systematically examines tanker operations and that is shared by OCIMF members and other authorised recipients, SIRE has been instrumental in driving up expectations and behaviours relating to operational and safety standards in the industry. SIRE has also contributed to:

- Improved operational standards and a reduced number of incidents.
- The establishment of uniform standards and training for ship inspectors.
- A reduction in the number of repeat inspections on the same vessel, thereby reducing the burden on the vessel's crew.

SIRE database

The central SIRE database has more than 22,000 ship reports and more than 8,000 barge reports. It is available 24/7 via a simple website. All reports are accessed electronically together with key documents, e.g. VIQs, BIQs and crew matrices.

Inspector training, accreditation and auditing

Confidence in the SIRE system relies heavily on the quality and integrity of the inspection process, which is governed by the Ship Inspector Training and Accreditation Programme.

Prospective inspectors are selected by OCIMF member organisations. They must attend a four-day accreditation course and pass a written examination. To complete the accreditation process, prospective inspectors must then be successfully audited during an inspection.

Each accreditation period runs for three years, during which each inspector must submit a minimum number of inspection reports each year, attend at least one refresher course and successfully complete an audited inspection.

Training and refresher courses take place at various international locations throughout the year. Contact OCIMF for dates of scheduled courses.

Compliance

A set of governing documents define the processes, standards and behaviours expected of all individuals and organisations who participate in the SIRE programme. These documents cover a wide range of issues, from potential conflicts of interest to the quality and integrity of inspectors and inspection reports. All SIRE inspectors are required to sign an updated ethics agreement and declaration at the beginning of each year.

A Compliance Manager, appointed by OCIMF, ensures that participants in SIRE adhere to the principles set out in the governing documents, manages the complaints process and follows up any reported concerns or potential conflicts of interest.

Port state control

OCIMF cooperates with international organisations, such as the International Maritime Organization (IMO), with a view to eliminating sub-standard ships. Port state inspectors are invited to participate in specialised tanker training and to attend relevant seminars and events. SIRE inspection reports are free for port authorities.

Looking ahead

SIRE has evolved and improved in line with the wishes of OCIMF members and in the light of key external developments. Improvements have been made to all aspects of the programme, from inspection questionnaires and training programmes to the database itself. Looking ahead, we expect further developments as IMO standards evolve and as issues arise that demand updated documentation or more in-depth inspector knowledge.

For further information visit www.ocimf.org/sire or contact sire@ocimf.org.

SIRE history

- 1993** SIRE introduced
- 1997** Uniform Inspection report introduced
- 2000** SIRE Inspector Training and Accreditation Programme introduced
- 2001** SIRE QMS gained ISO 9002:1994 accreditation
- 2004** SIRE extended to barges and small vessels
- 2008** Compliance Manager role created
- 2017** SIRE QMS gained ISO 9001:2015 accreditation

Vessels covered

For inspection purposes, the vessels covered in SIRE are grouped into three categories:

Categories 1 and 2, depending on tonnage

- Oil tankers.
- Chemical tankers.
- LPG carriers.
- LNG carriers.
- Combination carriers.

Category 3

- Offshore barges.
- Inland barges.
- Integrated barges.

For more information, visit www.ocimf.org or email enquiries@ocimf.org

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