

The Workboat Association Celebrates Record-Breaking Annual Event and Announces Key Developments for the Year Ahead

The Workboat Association recently hosted its highest attendance Annual General Meeting event in the organisation's 32 year history. Members, partners, and key stakeholders from across the sector came together for a highly successful occasion, marked by lively discussion, valuable networking opportunities, and a shared commitment to the future of the workboat industry.

Attendee feedback has been overwhelmingly positive, with participants commending the relevance, quality, and practicality of the content delivered throughout the programme. The collaborative and constructive nature of the sessions provided an ideal platform for exchanging ideas, and the insights gained will directly inform and shape the Association's ongoing work across its 3 core principals: Training, Technical, and Safety.

Training:

This year the organisation will focus on providing resource/support to the Maritime Skills Alliance and the MCA review of Small Commercial Vessel training. Plus, the further development of Towage Training and Assessment series, including the towage good practice guides, Voluntary Towage Endorsement scheme and towage training courses.

Technical:

This year a co-Chair will be elected to sit alongside Andy Page (Chartwell Marine) to support and push our Technical agenda. Including our continued partnership with Seawork to present the "Get Set for Workboat 2050" series ([more info here](#)).

Safety:

The 2026 Safety Campaign will focus on "Lmies under tension". Following our first Safety Workgroup meeting of the year, more information will be made available on the structure and objectives of this campaign during 2026.

The Association also agreed on a new set of Mission, Vision and Values:

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Mission:

To be the leading centre of excellence for non-convention, sea-going commercial vessels. Upholding the highest standards of safety and competence, ensuring the sector can thrive and contribute to a more sustainable and equitable future.

Vision:

Stimulating a sustainable industry that offers high-quality, safe, and rewarding employment opportunities, by empowering our members through upskilling, networking, and knowledge sharing. Providing the resources and guidance needed to support our community and the broader maritime industry.

Values:

With a just and environmentally conscious approach, we champion a culture of equality, diversity, and unity where every voice is valued. We are dedicated to advancing technical innovation, skills development, and best operational practices through proactive collaboration with industry, academia and government.

Other important agreements made at the event included the Committee (Board) changes: Matt Winney (Boluda) stepped down, to be succeeded by Rich Eggleton (Marine Plant Hire). Also a change to Steve Hills (Serco) seat, which is now filled by Patrick McCabe (also Serco), we thank both Matt and Steve for their tenure on the Committee. We are also delighted to confirm that Harry Johnson will continue in his work for us in the Marketing and Communication capacity.

In recognition of the ongoing economic challenges facing the sector as a result of new and incoming regulation, the membership voted on a membership fee freeze for 2026, maintaining the current 2025 rate for another year.

The Association would like to extend its sincere thanks to all event sponsors. Their generous support played a vital role in the success of the event and continues to ensure that the event remains free to attend for all members and guests.

For more information about the Workboat Association's initiatives, ambitions, membership opportunities, or forthcoming events, please contact:
info@workboatassociation.org