

# **General Purposes Committee**

**Terms of Reference**

**2026**

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## SIGTTO GPC Terms of Reference

### 1. Preamble

SIGTTO is a member-led organisation committed to promoting safe and environmentally responsible operations in the liquefied gas shipping and terminal sectors. The Society's credibility and effectiveness depend on sound governance that is clear, consistent and aligned with its mission.

The General Purposes Committee (GPC) is SIGTTO's principal technical committee for the safety and environmentally responsible operation of gas tankers and terminals. It provides technical direction and approvals for SIGTTO's work programme by setting priorities, sponsoring and overseeing technical work, and approving technical outputs within SIGTTO's remit. It operates as a member-company representative committee and supports continuous improvement through structured learning from operating experience, including incidents and lessons learned.

GPC members are drawn from a cross-section of the Society's membership, to provide a comprehensive spread of expertise and to reflect the range of interests of the broader membership.

The GPC, through its Chair and Vice-Chair, reports to the Board.

This Terms of Reference document supplements SIGTTO's Bye-Laws. It does not replace, override, or amend the Bye-Laws. In case of any inconsistency, the Bye-Laws prevail.

#### Neutrality and compliance

The GPC refrains from any activity that could be construed as representing commercial interests. All meetings and communications comply with SIGTTO anti-trust and anti-competition guidance.

#### Technical excellence and relevance

The GPC prioritises work that is technically sound, operationally practical, and aligned with SIGTTO's purpose.

#### Transparency and discipline

Decisions, actions and project sponsors are recorded in the minutes. Topics are handled through a structured process with clear scope, deliverables and review points.

### 2. Purpose of the GPC

The GPC exists to support SIGTTO's purpose by providing structured technical direction, approvals, and best practices across the membership.

The GPC's purpose is to:

1. Proactively develop best operating practices and guidelines.
2. Direct and prioritise SIGTTO's technical work programme within SIGTTO's remit, including creation and review of publications, guidance notes, and technical position papers that can contribute towards the development of industry Regulations, Codes and Standards.
3. Provide a disciplined approval forum so SIGTTO technical outputs are accurate and practical.,
4. Facilitate incident sharing and lessons learned to inform and direct SIGTTO's work plan.
5. Foster relationships with regulatory authorities and other stakeholders in support of the Society.

6. Support SIGTTO membership engagement, attraction and retention.

### 3. Scope and boundaries

#### Scope

The GPC scope covers technical and operational safety issues relating to ships and terminals handling liquefied gases, including ship shore interfaces, operational practices, and SIGTTO technical input to codes, standards and regulatory activity within remit.

#### Boundaries

The GPC will not:

- engage in advocacy or lobbying on commercial issues;
- discuss pricing, commercial strategy or supplier selection,
- duplicate work where other organisations are better placed to lead, except where SIGTTO technical contribution is necessary and appropriate.

### 4. Responsibilities of the GPC

#### Work programme direction and prioritisation

The GPC's work is progressed through a structured Identify-Define-Solve-Communicate approach. Accordingly, issues brought to the GPC for discussion or action should:

- Be clearly linked to a safety gap within SIGTTO's remit (for example a barrier weakness, emerging risk, incident learning, operational reliability issue affecting safety, or a regulatory/codes gap), rather than general topics for information-only discussion.
- Be defined and evidenced sufficiently to enable the Committee to decide what to do (what is the gap, what is the risk mechanism, what existing regulations/standards/publications already address it, and what is missing).
- Include an intended outcome (for example: initiate a working group, request a short concept note, issue an information bulletin, propose an IMO submission path, update an existing publication, or assign a short fact-finding action).
- Identify a Project Sponsor who will remain engaged through the solution-shaping stage, recognising that the Secretariat facilitates but does not own the solution.
- identify a member sponsor/lead (or a willing lead organisation) who will remain engaged through the solution-shaping stage, recognising that the Secretariat facilitates but does not "own" the solution.

The GPC will:

- Identify, propose solution, communicate
- Review, prioritise, and direct proposed work items and ensure each has a clear scope, deliverables, and review pathway.
- Approve Terms of Reference for working groups and significant scope changes, and monitor progress to completion.

#### Technical approvals and quality control

The GPC will:

- review and approve technical outputs presented for approval, including publications, guidance notes and technical position papers, in accordance with SIGTTO governance.
- ensure outputs are technically accurate, operationally practical, and aligned with SIGTTO remit, neutrality, and compliance obligations.
- support decision-ready papers by requesting clarifications, evidence, and appropriate cross-checks where needed.
- approve GPC deliverables formally at GPC meetings.

### Representativeness and internal consultation

The GPC will operate as a member-company representative committee. Accordingly, the GPC will:

- expect members to be of sufficient standing within their organisation to represent the organisation's views and to access internal expertise when required.
- expect members, when reviewing documents or providing input on technical positions, to consult internally as appropriate so SIGTTO outputs are representative of the member company view rather than individual opinion.

### Operating experience, incident sharing and learning from incidents

The GPC will:

- maintain a structured approach to incident review and learning, including dedicated agenda time for incident sharing and learning from incidents.
- encourage members to share incident learnings in a manner consistent with confidentiality expectations and meeting conduct.
- support SIGTTO initiatives to strengthen learning from incidents, including structured communication mechanisms such as bulletins where appropriate.

### Internal dissemination of lessons learned

To ensure incident learning leads to safer operations, the GPC will encourage member organisations to disseminate relevant lessons learned internally to appropriate functions, so learnings can be converted into practical controls, procedures, and training.

### Interfaces and coordination

The GPC will:

- coordinate with SIGTTO focus groups and advisory groups through the Secretariat and support alignment of outputs and workstreams.
- support coordination with external bodies where this improves safety outcomes and avoids duplication, while remaining within SIGTTO remit and compliance boundaries.

### Conduct of work activities

The Secretariat will, from time to time, solicit from SIGTTO members topics for consideration by the GPC.

The Secretariat will bring to the GPC issues raised in panel discussions that are considered appropriate for GPC consideration.

The Secretariat will also draw the attention of the Committee to those issues which have been identified through the series of technical enquiries received from both members and non-members at the London Liaison Office.

All issues brought forward for consideration by the Committee shall be formulated in writing and accompanied by supporting papers as appropriate. “Any Other Business” (AOB) items should be forwarded in advance of the GPC meeting.

Proposals made directly by members must define clear objectives, scope and deliverables in the form of a Terms of Reference (TOR) document, which may be supplemented by other supporting information and which will form the basis for an agreed GPC working or other group. Individual member companies, making work proposals to the GPC, must commit their organisation to involvement in the resulting work until completion of the project.

### **Working groups, subcommittees, and projects**

The GPC may form working groups or subcommittees to address specific issues or projects. These may include:

- Subcommittees, formed to lead a particular development area that may lead to one or more related working groups.
- Working groups, formed directly by the GPC or indirectly by a subcommittee to address a specific technical issue.
- Secretariat-led projects, supported by consultation with GPC members as needed.

Detailed technical development is normally undertaken through working groups and other supporting groups, with outputs submitted to the GPC for review and approval.

#### *Group governance (applies to working groups and subcommittees)*

- Each group will have a Terms of Reference approved by the GPC, with clear objectives, scope and deliverables.
- Each group will have nominated Secretariat support.
- Each group will maintain a schedule of milestones or progress points leading to the defined deliverables.
- Groups are normally limited to a maximum of sixteen members.
- Members are normally drawn from SIGTTO member organisations. External participants may be invited by the Chair to observe or make specific contributions where they have specialist knowledge relevant to the topic.
- Member companies proposing a new work item are expected to act as Project Sponsor, including supporting appointment of the Working Group Chair, and to remain engaged through delivery.
- Groups are encouraged to use efficient methods of working to reduce unnecessary travel, including email, teleconference, videoconference and secure shared collaboration sites.

#### *Accountability (Chair reporting)*

- Subcommittee Chair reports to the Chair of the GPC.

- Working group Chair reports to the Chair of the GPC unless the working group is led by a subcommittee, in which case the working group Chair reports to the subcommittee Chair.

#### *Subcommittee membership*

- Subcommittee members must represent full members of the Society. External participants may be invited for specific contributions and are not required to be members.

## 5. Authority and escalation

### Decision rights

Within its remit, the GPC may:

- approve formation of working groups and their Terms of Reference.
- approve or reject technical deliverables submitted for approval.
- request revisions, further evidence, or wider review where needed.

### Escalation

Items should be escalated through SIGTTO governance channels where they involve:

- material resource or budget implications beyond agreed envelopes,
- significant reputational or legal risk,
- positions that could be interpreted as advocacy or commercial alignment,
- changes to governance structure or committee architecture.

## 6. Composition and membership

### Size and representation

The GPC will comprise no more than 35 members. Membership will reflect a balanced cross-section of SIGTTO full members across geography, sector and technical disciplines relevant to the work programme.

### Eligibility

- Each member must represent a SIGTTO full member organisation.
- SIGTTO Directors may not serve as members of the GPC. This restriction does not apply to Alternate Directors, who may also serve as named representatives where permitted.
- From time to time, at the discretion of the Chair, alternates will be allowed to participate in place of named representatives.

### Application and selection

- Applications are submitted in writing to the Secretariat and include a short CV. A full member of the Society may, at any time, propose a named representative for membership of the GPC.
- The Chair, supported by the Secretariat, approves applications with a view to maintaining balanced representation and capability.

### Resignation and replacement

- Resignations are made in writing to the Secretariat.

- A resigning member may propose a replacement from the same organisation, supported by a CV, but selection is subject to composition and capability needs.
- Where a GPC member changes organisational employer but wishes to remain as a GPC member under the new employer who must be a full SIGTTO member, then this will be considered by the Chair along with a) any replacement from the original employer and b) other candidates. The selection will be made by the GPC Chair in consultation with the Secretariat.

## Observers

Participation is restricted to committee members. Directors of the Society, representatives of SIGTTO member companies and industry organisations may be invited as observers by the Chair in collaboration with the Secretary, but numbers will usually be limited to six. This does not include translators or working group chairs specifically brought in by GPC members.

In addition, non-members or persons from outside the Society may be invited by the Chair to make specific contributions to a particular topic under discussion by the Committee.

## Protocol for SIGTTO Directors attending GPC meetings

Directors do not have an automatic right to attend GPC meetings.

Directors wishing to attend must request permission from the GPC Chair and the Secretary in advance.

Where permitted to attend, Directors attend as observers and do not interject or seek to influence deliberations or conclusions.

To support practical management of the meeting, the number of additional attendees may be limited.

Formal reporting of GPC activities through SIGTTO governance remains the responsibility of the GPC Chair and/or the Secretary.

## 7. Chair, Vice-Chair and Secretariat support

### Chair

The Chair leads the GPC to ensure effective meetings, disciplined decision-making, compliance, and delivery oversight.

The tenure of individual Chairs shall be limited to a maximum of two consecutive three-year terms, save that a previously serving Chair may be re-elected after an intervening period of at least three years, during which the position of the Chair has been held by another.

The Chair, in consultation with the Secretariat, is responsible for ensuring that membership of the GPC comprises a representative geographic and sectorial sample of Society members, having within it a broad spread of experience and expertise, able to address the full range of technical issues of interest to the Society's membership as a whole.

When more than one nomination is received, the choice of Chair shall be determined by an election by the members of the Committee. The Board shall be informed of the Committee's choice and be invited to endorse it.

### Vice-Chair

The Vice-Chair supports the Chair and replaces when the Chair is unable to attend. Succession planning is supported by the Vice-Chair role.

### Project Sponsor

For each working group or significant project progressed through the GPC, a Project Sponsor will be identified. The Project Sponsor is typically the member organisation or GPC member that proposes the work item, or the organisation best placed to lead it. While the Working Group Chair leads the technical work, this ensures organisational commitment and continuity, and supports escalation to the GPC where required.

The Project Sponsor will:

- support the formation of the working group and is expected to provide (or secure) the Working Group Chair.
- work with the Secretariat to ensure the project remains aligned with the approved TOR, including scope discipline and intended outcomes.
- provide periodic project updates to the GPC together with the Working Group Secretary, including progress against milestones and any issues requiring Committee steer.
- help articulate how and why the project was triggered (for example: member proposal, publication review decision, regulatory change), and the key gaps or opportunities addressed.

Where a work item is initiated by a member or stakeholder not directly represented on the GPC, the Chair and Secretariat may seek a volunteer Project Sponsor from the GPC membership to ensure effective ownership, information exchange, and accountability.

### Secretariat

A member of the Secretariat serves as Secretary to the GPC and supports agenda planning, papers, meeting administration, minutes, action tracking, and approvals governance.

## 8. Meetings and operations

### Meeting frequency and format

The GPC will hold two face-to-face meetings per year.

In addition, the GPC will hold two online meetings per year, normally scheduled between the face-to-face meetings, to improve engagement and efficiency and to progress work items that do not require face-to-face discussion.

Where urgent decisions are required between scheduled meetings, the Chair and Secretariat may convene an extraordinary GPC meeting, normally held virtually, to obtain timely decisions.

### Agenda, papers and minutes

Agendas and papers will be circulated in advance by the Secretariat. Decisions shall be recorded in formal minutes. Minutes capture decisions and actions and are not intended to be a transcript.

New agenda items and proposals for GPC action should be submitted to the Secretariat in advance in a short written form that defines the safety gap and the intended outcome, so they can be assessed and scheduled through the structured agenda process.

### Meeting conduct and confidentiality

Meetings are confidential. Recording or distribution of meeting discussions is not permitted, including the use of AI-powered virtual assistants or transcription.

### Intersessional communications and approvals

- To improve the speed and effectiveness, intersessional activities other than work progress may from time to time be required of the full GPC membership for which GPC contribution will be requested. These may include preliminary approval and endorsement for work proposals, approval of TORs, contributions to surveys, consensus on regulatory position papers, etc.
- Intersessional communications will be led by the GPC Chair or the Secretary on the Chair's behalf.
- Where intersessional input is requested, a reasonable deadline will be set. If no reply is received by the deadline, this will be taken as tacit agreement.
- Where consensus is not achieved intersessionally, the matter will be deferred to the next GPC meeting for discussion.

## 9. Expectations of GPC members

Members are expected to:

### Participation and cadence

- Attend the scheduled GPC meetings each year, comprising two face-to-face meetings and two online meetings.
- Where a member is unable to attend, an alternate may attend at the discretion of the Chair, in line with the participation provisions of this TOR.
- Participate in additional virtual sessions when required for urgent decisions or time-critical approvals.

### Raising new issues and proposals

- When raising a new issue for GPC consideration, members are expected to:
  - Frame the issue as a safety gap and explain why it matters (including the barrier or failure mode it relates to, where practicable);
  - Provide enough definition to enable a decision. This ideally includes what relevant regulations/standards/publications already exist, and what additional guidance or action is needed.
  - Propose a realistic way forward (for example a draft TOR for a working group, a defined scoping task, or a proposed publication review/update path), and be prepared to support early solution-shaping through their organisation;
  - Inform the Secretariat in advance, so the item can be included on the agenda through the agreed process and supported with appropriate papers.
- Prepare for meetings by reviewing the agenda and papers in advance and providing informed technical input.

- Contribute constructively at meetings and respond to intersessional requests within the requested deadlines.
- Actively participate in the work of the GPC by contributing to its deliberations at meetings or intersessional communications, joining its Subcommittees or Working Groups, and proactively bringing safety and technical issues to the attention of the Committee.

#### Standing and representativeness

- Be of sufficient standing within their organisation to represent the organisation's technical views, and to obtain internal input when needed.
- Ensure comments, approvals, and positions developed through the GPC are representative of member company perspectives, not only individual views. This includes consulting internally with relevant departments or colleagues when reviewing documents and when forming input on technical positions or policy-related papers.

#### Time commitment

Members are expected to dedicate sufficient time to GPC responsibilities, including:

- 3 to 5 hours per meeting for preparation, including review of papers and drafting of comments.
- 2 to 3 days per face-to-face meeting, including travel and meeting participation.
- 4 to 6 hours per online meeting, including preparation and participation.
- Variable time for working groups, subcommittees, intersessional approvals, or urgent matters.

#### Internal communication and knowledge flow

- Share relevant GPC outputs and requests for input within their organisation, as appropriate, to improve the quality and representativeness of feedback and to support working group and review contributions, while respecting SIGTTO confidentiality.
- Support internal dissemination of relevant lessons learned so incident learning can reduce recurrence.

#### Professional conduct, neutrality, and conflicts

- Uphold SIGTTO values of professionalism, integrity, and neutrality.
- Declare conflicts of interest and act in the best interests of SIGTTO and the membership as a whole.

#### External relationships in support of the Secretariat

- Support the Secretariat by fostering relationships with regulatory authorities and other stakeholders.

#### Attendance and continued membership

Members who miss three consecutive GPC meetings (including online meetings) will be contacted by the Secretariat to confirm continued participation, to maintain committee effectiveness.

The Secretariat will maintain a record of GPC attendance and participation. A summary may be included in governance reporting to the Board.

When nominating alternates, the GPC member should coordinate and brief the alternate on prior decisions, ongoing work items, and expectations for the upcoming GPC meeting.

#### Induction and effectiveness review

New members will receive an induction covering:

- SIGTTO remit and governance context,
- the GPC work programme, processes and current priorities,
- competition law and meeting conduct,
- how work items are proposed, reviewed, delivered and approved.

The GPC will conduct an effectiveness review every two years, covering:

- clarity of role and priorities,
- meeting discipline and decision quality,
- engagement and capability balance,
- delivery performance of working groups and outputs,
- effectiveness of Secretariat support.

#### 10. Records and reporting

The Secretariat circulates agendas and action-focused minutes.

A summary of GPC activity, key approvals and priority topics will be prepared for SIGTTO governance reporting as required.

#### 11. Document control

This TOR replaces the prior GPC Constitution document following approval by the Board in May 2026.

Revisions to this TOR are subject to approval through SIGTTO governance channels.