FORESIGHTS

Shaping a better maritime future

HIGHLIGHTS | OCT/NOV 2026

- Anglo-Eastern's Vetting Desk: Turning findings into fleet learning
- The new meaning of inspection readiness
- How to protect tradability and reduce disruption



Inspection ready, every day?

How Anglo-Eastern's centralised Vetting Desk is turning inspection intelligence into stronger fleet-wide performance

The inspection itself may last only hours. Its commercial consequences can persist for months.

For a dry bulk vessel, a vetting inspection is no longer an occasional administrative hurdle. It can influence whether the ship remains eligible for employment, how confidently charterers assess it and how much disruption the owner must absorb before the next fixture. As inspection thresholds fall and scrutiny broadens alongside a significant increase in RightShip inspection volume, readiness can no longer begin when an inspector is booked. It has to be built into the way the vessel is operated every day.

This is the reason Anglo-Eastern established a centralised Vetting Desk in January 2026. The immediate pressure was scale: annual inspection volume was expected to rise from roughly 22 to around 150. By September, the 2026 programme had already reached 164. Volume, however, is only part of the problem. Every inspection requires preparation, documentation, coordination, analysis, corrective action and follow-through. More importantly, every result contains intelligence that can

help the next vessel perform better, provided the organisation can capture it and act on it, which is a challenge in its own right.

This edition of Foresights examines how vetting is evolving from a vessel-by-vessel exercise into a continuous assurance discipline, and how a central capability can protect tradability, reduce disruption and turn inspection experience into a compounding operational advantage.

THE NEW MEANING OF INSPECTION READINESS

Several changes are converging. RightShip is progressively reducing the vessel age at which a valid inspection is required, from 13 years in October 2025 to 10.5 years in January 2027 (see Table 1). As more vessels enter the inspection population, some will do so for the first time, with crews that may have limited exposure to the process. At the same time, charterers and counterparties are using broader screening and due-diligence processes before they conduct a detailed vessel review.

Table 1: RightShip's reduced inspection age trigger requirement over time:

Effective date	Inspection age trigger
1 October 2025	13 years
1 April 2026	12 years
1 July 2026	11 years
20 January 2027	10.5 years

The emphasis on inspections is also changing. The presence of a procedure, certificate or checklist is not, by itself, persuasive. Inspectors increasingly look for evidence that equipment works, procedures are understood and controls are applied in practice. Concentrated inspection campaigns can add region-specific areas of focus for defined periods, while the quality of an operator's response after an inspection can materially affect the final validity awarded.

Together, these pressures change the operating question from 'Are we ready for the inspection next week?' to 'Can we demonstrate that the vessel is being operated with consistent discipline and that the organisation learns when standards fall short?' The objective is not simply to achieve better inspection outcomes. It is to operate safer, better-maintained and more reliable vessels, with stronger inspection performance as a consequence.

WHY CENTRALISATION MATTERS

Before a fleet-wide model, inspection activity was dispersed across vessels and offices. Considerable work was being done, but experience was harder to aggregate. Similar deficiencies could recur because the lesson from one ship did not always reach another before its own inspection. Root-cause analysis and operator responses could also vary in depth and clarity.

The case for centralisation was therefore not that vessel teams lacked responsibility. It was that no individual vessel, superintendent or business unit could accumulate the same breadth of inspection intelligence as the organisation as a whole. A common desk creates the mechanism to compare findings, identify recurring causes and direct attention to the vessels that face similar exposure.

That wider perspective becomes valuable only when it translates into practical support for the people onboard: clearer priorities, earlier warnings and fleet experience that crews can apply in daily operation and maintenance.

Anglo-Eastern's Vetting Desk operates from our Shared Services Centre in Mumbai. Vetting managers focus on inspection readiness, technical review, root-cause analysis, corrective actions and trend analysis. Coordinators monitor due dates, scheduling, documentation, submissions and follow-up. The division of work keeps specialist attention on the activities that shape outcomes while ensuring that administrative steps are completed consistently.

Crucially, the model does not transfer vessel ownership away from business units. Vessel managers remain responsible for owner relationships, operational decisions and approval of the final response. The desk adds specialist review, a common methodology and a wider perspective from the full managed fleet.

FROM DUE DATE TO FLEET LEARNING

The inspection cycle is managed as an end-to-end process rather than a single event. It begins with visibility of when a vessel will require inspection and ends only when what has been learned is transferred into the wider fleet (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: A central model to ensure lessons are shared across inspection cycles and vessels



Most of the leverage sits at the beginning and immediately after the inspection. Preparation determines whether known weaknesses are addressed before attendance. Post-inspection analysis determines whether a deficiency is merely closed or genuinely prevented from recurring.

PREPARATION THAT STARTS BEFORE THE PORT CALL

The desk monitors due dates and age thresholds to create visibility in advance. Before attendance, each vessel is briefed using several layers of evidence: its own previous findings, recurring findings on sister vessels and recent trends across the fleet. A structured self-assessment provides a further check. In higher-risk inspection locations, the process may be incorporated into a mandatory pre-arrival protocol completed at least seven days before arrival.

Hybrid inspections provide another practical opportunity. Certificates and supporting records are checked against the RightShip document checklist and submitted in advance for review. This typically shortens the onboard element by two to four hours. That is valuable during a busy port call, when the crew may already be managing cargo operations, visitors and other competing demands.

The advance review is not simply a time-saving device. It creates an early warning point. The Vetting Desk has also used document review to identify outdated checklists, such as those for ship-shore safety and bunkering, as well as outstanding mandatory tests or services, in time for vessels to act before the inspector attends.

THE RESPONSE IS PART OF THE RESULT

An inspection does not end when the inspector leaves. The close-out must explain both what has been corrected and why the issue occurred. A response that addresses only the visible deficiency may leave the underlying weakness in place, allowing the same issue to return on the same vessel or elsewhere in the fleet.

Response quality can also have a direct commercial effect. Gathered data showed strong responses to secure the full 12-month validity in 2026, while a further 13 vessels whose validity had been reduced because of high-risk findings gained an additional three months. These outcomes underline why root-cause analysis is not an exercise in wording: it is evidence that an organisation has understood and controlled the risk.



PROTECTING TRADABILITY AND REDUCING DISRUPTION

A key commercial benefit for owners is the protection of vessel tradability. Screening can influence whether a vessel progresses to detailed charterer consideration. A weak inspection profile can therefore restrict opportunity before a formal commercial conversation begins. A strong inspection record also gives owners vessel-specific evidence of acceptability, which matters when charterers look beyond company-level scores.

Structured preparation, consistent review and stronger close-outs help preserve inspection validity and reduce the likelihood of an earlier reinspection and associated costs, administrative efforts and potential disruption. More fundamentally, they help identify and correct weaknesses in vessel condition and operational practice before those weaknesses affect safety, reliability or commercial performance. Better forward planning also allows an inspection to be fitted into a suitable port call rather than arranged at short notice around an approaching deadline.

Between January and September 2026, more than 88% of inspections across the managed dry fleet achieved the full 12-month validity period. The fleet averaged 11.5 findings per inspection, which compares favourably against a RightShip global average of 17.3.

2026 Results (Jan - Sep)

164	88%+	11.5	17.3
Inspections	Achieved full validity	Anglo-Eastern findings per inspection	Global average findings per inspection

WHAT THE FLEET IS LEARNING

The most useful inspection intelligence is often found in recurring, ordinary weaknesses rather than dramatic failures. Common themes include hatch covers and seals, corrosion, machinery leaks, permit-to-work practices, mooring equipment and lifesaving appliances. Many are preventable through consistent routines, timely maintenance and proper verification.

Of course, completing a checklist is not the same as verifying that a control works. A signature confirms the form has been completed while an effective check confirms that the equipment functions, the crew understands the procedure and the intended controls work in practice. Stronger-performing vessels make this part of normal operations rather than an office-led exercise triggered by an inspection.

The central Vetting Desk can identify patterns, provide specialist guidance and improve consistency across the fleet, but responsibility for vessel condition and operational discipline ultimately sits onboard. Its role is therefore not simply to prepare crews to receive an inspector, but to equip them with better evidence, clearer priorities and lessons from across the fleet so that they can operate and maintain their ships more effectively every day.

Trend analysis turns this principle into measurable fleet action. Mooring equipment was the most frequent recurring theme in the first half of 2026. After it was highlighted through fleet insights and pre-inspection briefings, mooring findings per inspection fell by around one fifth between Q2 and Q3. High-risk mooring findings fell from six in the first quarter to two in the third. Findings related to lifesaving appliances and corrosion also declined over the same period.

EARLY INTERVENTION: VALUE THAT OFTEN LEAVES NO TRACE

The strongest evidence of prevention is sometimes the finding that never appears. When recurring risk is recognised early, the desk can alter preparation before the next vessel is inspected.

Rest-hour management provides one example. Analysis linked breaches to periods of peak workload around canal and lake transits, additional security duties and bunkering. Vessels approaching similar operations can now be briefed to plan work and rest more carefully. In another case, high-risk findings involving worn hatch-cover bearing pads led to pad condition being added to pre-inspection checks across the fleet.

These interventions are modest when viewed individually. Their value comes from repetition and reach. A single observation becomes a fleet check. A single deficiency becomes a briefing topic. A single close-out becomes evidence that can sharpen future preparation. Figure 2 sets out four common misconceptions about vetting that this approach is designed to correct.

Figure 2: Four misconceptions about vetting

✗ "Fewer findings always mean a safer vessel"	✗ "Vetting tests only the crew"	✗ "A younger vessel will naturally perform well"	✗ "Vetting is mainly paperwork"
✓ Severity and close-out quality can matter more than the simple total. One serious finding may create greater concern than several minor observations.	✓ Some findings arise from design, equipment configuration, procurement or long-term maintenance and require shore-side action.	✓ As thresholds fall, newer vessels and crews may enter the RightShip inspection programme without prior experience.	✓ Used properly, the process is an early-warning system for technical, operational and management weaknesses.

FROM PREDICTIVE PREPARATION TO PREVENTIVE FLEET MANAGEMENT

Every completed inspection is added to a common fleet record. Findings are classified by category, immediate cause and root cause, so patterns can be compared across vessels, owners, regions and inspection contexts. Through the quarterly Vetting Insights programme, those patterns become practical guidance for the whole fleet.

Historical reporting explains what the fleet has already experienced. Predictive analysis offers the opportunity to go further: not only to anticipate what an inspector might find, but to identify where an operational weakness may be developing before it becomes a deficiency.

As the common record grows, AI-assisted pattern recognition can compare inspection findings, vessel characteristics, operating environments and root causes. Over time, this may reveal whether vessels of a particular age, design, trading pattern or operating profile face greater exposure to particular types of weakness. That insight can support earlier intervention through maintenance, technical support or operational guidance, irrespective of when the vessel's next inspection is due.

The result is a more preventive approach shaped around the vessel rather than a generic checklist

or inspection date. It gives masters and vessel managers a sharper, evidence-based starting point while supporting, rather than replacing, their professional judgement. In this way, the Vetting Desk can evolve from an inspection support function into a broader contributor to preventive fleet management.

CONCLUSION

Vetting is likely to continue moving away from a periodic inspection event and towards continuous vessel assurance. Inspection performance will sit alongside safety culture, operational reliability, environmental performance, cyber maturity and wider due diligence. The vessel's record will need to demonstrate consistent performance long before an inspector steps aboard.

That future raises the required standard for both ship and shore. Crews will need clearer preparation and specialist support without losing ownership of onboard discipline. Business units will need consistent methods without losing accountability for the vessel and the client. Owners will need more than a pass or fail; they will need visibility of patterns, recurrence and required actions being taken across their ships.

A central Vetting Desk connects these needs by combining specialist capability with the accumulated experience of the managed fleet. Its value lies not simply in helping a vessel perform better at its next inspection, but in turning individual findings into earlier maintenance, stronger operational guidance and more effective support for crews across the fleet.

Used in this way, scale becomes an operational advantage. A weakness identified on one vessel can inform action on many others before the same issue recurs. The ultimate measure of success is therefore not fewer findings alone, but safer, better-maintained and more reliably operated ships, with stronger inspection outcomes following from that performance.

The goal is not to chase readiness but to carry it, vessel by vessel, day by day.



Interested to know more about our Vetting Desk and how we are driving inspection readiness and resilience?

Contact us for more information at: **commercial@angloeastern.com**

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