Safety Management 2.0

NorthStandard

DNV

Lovoy

Proceedings from SMS Simplification and Improvement Workshops

Proceedings summarizing lectures, case studies and discussions during the NorthStandard, DNV and Lovoy Safety Management 2.0 Workshops in Athens November 4-6, 2025.

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Workshop Overview

41 DPAs, HSEQ and other managers from Greek shipping companies joined the workshops from 4 to 6 November 2025, in Athens. These workshops are available to NorthStandard members.

NorthStandard, DNV and Lovoy Training Inc. worked together to guide the sessions. The workshops formed part of NorthStandard's Safety Management 2.0 program. They included the core ideas from earlier years' sessions and added new topics about contingency procedures and Permit to Work (PTW) systems.

The goal is one strong, clear and compliant Safety Management System (SMS).

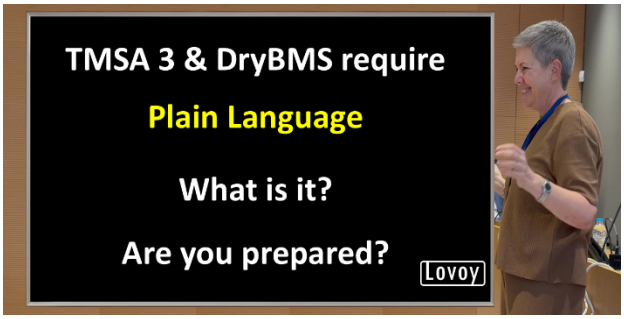
We discussed how to simplify complex text without any loss of experience, compliance or details for inexperienced crew.
We also discussed how to keep full compliance with the ISM Code, TMSA 3, SIRE 2.0, DryBMS and RightShip.

Key Themes

Moving Beyond Superficial Simplification

The workshop confirmed that simplification does not mean loss of content. It means clear structure and useful words.

Participants gained a stronger understanding of plain language. They learned examples from government definitions.



They also learned how to keep a clear logical order between actions and explanations.

The discussions went deeper into SMS structure.

Participants learned that superficial shortcuts like random word cuts or more bullets do not create clarity. The focus stayed on improving the SMS structure. A good SMS follows seafarer workflow, not the legal shape of the standards. This point became clear to the group.

The discussions covered the ISM Code, COSWOP, TMSA 3, SIRE 2.0, DryBMS, RightShip, and ISO 9001/14001. The approach keeps all needed facts and supports real workflows. We discussed how to include every relevant item from each of these standards.

Dominic Menezes, DNV Principal Management Systems Specialist

DNV's Role in the Workshops

DNV helped guide this workshop. DNV staff discussed key points side-by-side with Lovoy and NorthStandard. This cooperation gave the group insight into how modern inspectors think. It also showed how class links SMS quality with safe and efficient ship operation. Many participants said that this part of the workshop gave them a clearer view of how class reads and understands SMS documents.

How Classification Societies Evaluate SMSs

This topic involved ongoing input from Dominic Menezes. He is a Principal Management Systems Specialist and part of DNV's Fleet Quality, Management Systems and PSC team at Høvik, Norway. They work with new DNV auditors. They train them in ISM, ISPS, MLC, ISO and other standards. They guide technical cases related to management system services. They lead and develop DNV's instructions, processes and tools for fleet quality and compliance.

Dominic shared experience throughout the workshop. He explained how class relies on standards from the International Association of Classification Societies (IACS) to interpret, inspect and approve the implementation of the ISM Code.

He shared IACS recommendations saying that the more concise a document is, the more likely people are to read it, and the easier it will be to understand. IACS recommendations include looking for duplication, repetition and ambiguity creating inefficiencies and unacceptable bureaucratic burdens.

Different Ends, Same Mission

DNV and Lovoy come from opposite ends of the SMS process. Lovoy helps shipping companies design their SMS with their own people—this is the start of the journey. DNV, as a classification society, serves as the final control gate. They inspect the system and either approve it or send it back for changes. At first, these roles may look like opposing forces. In reality, both work toward the same goal: an SMS that works at sea.

Expanding Core Lovoy Methods

Many participants had not joined earlier Lovoy sessions. This workshop included the core Lovoy principles. Participants learned to map workflows before they write steps. They also learned to remove duplicate and conflicting text. Lovoy showed how their template layout separates step procedures from explanations. They showed that TMSA and DryBMS expect plain language. Participants saw that you must measure things such as average words per sentence, percent passive sentences, accessibility, and process orientation. These examples help the work move beyond superficial SMS oversimplification. It prevents cosmetic edits and leads to real simplification.

This part showed how clear language and clear structure support each other. The result was short, accurate, and easy to find and follow checklist with clear links to procedures.

Simplifying the PTW System

Old SMSs often made PTW systems hard to use. They split one job into many forms. They mixed content for many different jobs into one generic form. A confined space form sat inside a mixed form that covered many unrelated tasks. The crew faced a long list of boxes that did not relate to their job.

Lovoy discussed how their new method can fix this. It cuts the number of forms to one quarter of the old total. Each form now covers one job. A confined space entry form covers only that job. The team no longer searches

through mixed forms.

From Copy and Paste to Operational Logic

Old PTW systems grew from copy-and-paste habits. Writers copied guidance text and copied its structure. They did not convert content into operational forms. Guidance lists what to include, not how to structure it. Lovoy discussed how their new design puts all related content in one place. The user opens one file and finds every needed fact. They prepare faster and with more confidence.

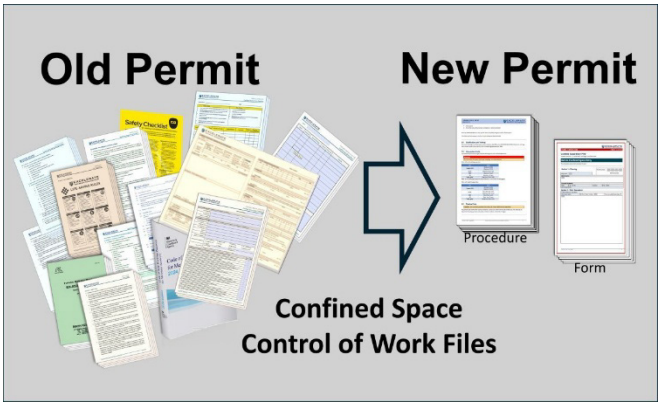
Each PTW follows one job type. Nothing overlaps. Nothing repeats. Reading time dropped while content stayed complete.

What Complacency Really Means

Some people think user-friendliness does not matter. They think people either follow rules or ignore them. The workshop facilitators had a different view. Overly complicated PTW systems can create complacency. Complacency grows when systems demand more reading time than action time. People feel that someone far from the workplace created the system without real insight. They feel that text works on paper, not on deck.

Procedural Complacency

Lovoy uses the term procedural complacency. It does not come from laziness. It grows when the system gets in the way of safe work. A good procedure gives fast access to needed facts. A good procedure keeps the focus on real hazards. A poor procedure does the opposite.



Before and after case study of a PTW, shared with permission from Excelerate Energy, Inc.

Less Text, More Meaning

The new PTW layout has more technical details than before. It feels shorter because the structure is clean. It splits content into clear sections for before, during and after work.

The crew spends less time searching and more time working in a safe way.

Case Study: Steering Gear Failure

John Southam from NorthStandard shared case studies from several incidents. Poor procedures and poor PTWs played a major part in these events. He showed how to improve these procedures with the Lovoy Method.

The group discussed a steering gear failure procedure. They applied Lovoy rules to the example. They put the most important steps first. They kept every technical detail. They separated mixed content. They gave the bridge team one clear path with one clear order.

Examples of After-Failure Actions

After-failure actions include calls to the P&I club and drug and alcohol tests. Old procedures mixed these steps with urgent steps. The new version moved them to a later section. This will reduce the critical workload.

Active seafarers in one of the workshops discussing how to improve a steering gear failure procedure.

Misconceptions About Technical Procedures

Some people say each ship differs, so no clear procedure is possible. Lovoy explained why this is not true.
All certified ships have redundant steering gear systems. Each ship has two independent control systems. Each has a backup power source. Each bridge has an alternate mode and a way to shift control.
A correct procedure must include all these systems.

Less Becomes More

The new procedure includes more facts. It reads shorter because the order is clear.
It guides officers to try alternate control, backup circuits and Non-Follow-Up mode. It guides them to shift control to the steering gear room when needed.
Old procedures often missed these steps. They placed paperwork before recovery. That delay increased the chance of grounding.

Adding the Missing Steps

The new structure also added needed steps. It moved them to the start. It helped the bridge team act fast.
The design used condition statements. Each statement told the officer what they could see, hear or feel. This removed guesswork and helped them choose the correct procedure.

Lessons from Aviation

The structure came from aviation. Aviation uses short and clear steps. Pilots act first and report later.
This structure reduced delay and confusion. It gave the bridge team a better chance to recover control.

Summary and Takeaways

The Athens workshops confirmed that SMS improvement needs structure and clear language.
The Lovoy Method can help companies meet ISM, TMSA, SIRE, DryBMS and RightShip requirements without copying their structure.
It can help them shape text so it follows real workflows.
It can help them train their own writers to keep SMSs clear and accurate.

Participants shared positive feedback. They valued the focus and the practical examples.

Lovoy, DNV and NorthStandard will continue to support companies that want clear and usable SMSs.

References

SMS simplification material is available at https://lovoy.info/

For information about the Lovoy Method and SMS writer training, contact Lovoy Training Inc. terje@lovoy.ca
Lovoy publishes new research through LinkedIn. Follow Lovoy to receive updates.

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