

# Shipping Fleet Statistics 2014



Department  
for Transport

## 1. United Kingdom Shipping Interests

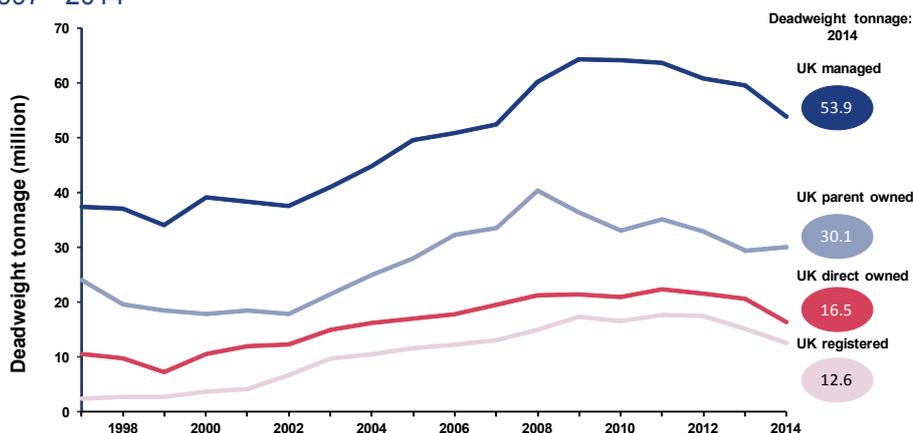
Shipping is a complex international business and many different parties, often based in different countries, may have a commercial interest in a single vessel.

The following chart illustrates four of many ways that the shipping interests of the United Kingdom (UK) might be presented, in each case looking at the deadweight tonnage (dwt - a measure of cargo carrying capacity) of the vessels concerned.

By all four measures - registered, direct owned, parent owned and managed - the UK fleet experienced substantial growth between the late 1990s and 2008/09, when the industry started to feel the impact of the global recession.

Since 2009 there has been a period of decline, with measures falling by between 16 per cent (UK managed ships) and 27 per cent (UK registered ships). The number of UK registered ships is currently at its lowest level since 2006.

UK Shipping interests: trading vessels 100 gross tonnage and over, 1997 - 2014



Despite the decline in recent years, the UK registered fleet is still four times the size it was in the late 1990s, having increased from 2.7 million dwt to 12.6 million dwt. Over the same period, UK direct owned tonnage more than doubled, from 7.2 million dwt to 16.5 dwt.

### About this release

This statistical release presents summary statistics on UK and world shipping fleets.

It includes analyses by country of registration (including UK Crown Dependencies & Overseas Territories), UK ownership, management and parent ownership, and vessel type.

**Next Update: February 2016**

### Definitions

**UK registered:** The vessel is UK registered. (International law requires that every merchant ship be registered in a country – the UK Ship Register is administered by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency.)

**UK direct owned:** The registered owner of the vessel is a company registered in the UK.

**UK parent owned:** The nationality of the company having the controlling interest in the direct owner is United Kingdom.

**UK managed:** The company managing the ship is a UK company.

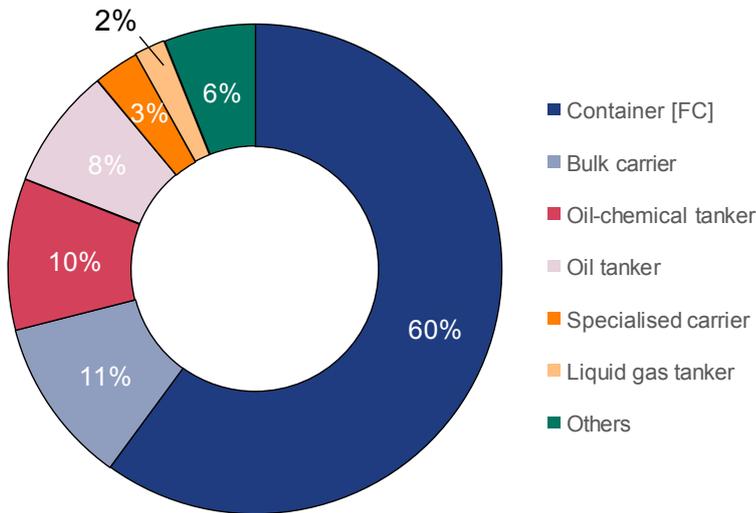
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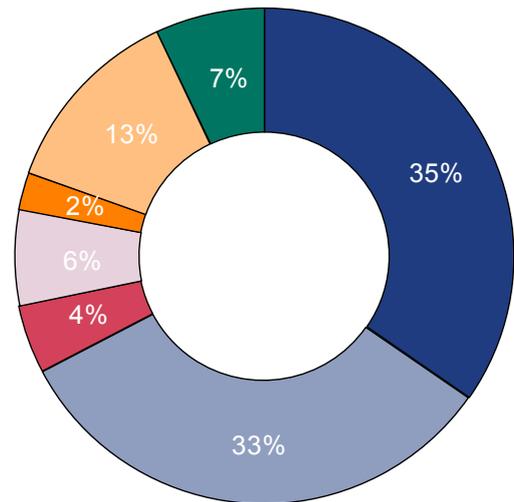
## United Kingdom Type of Vessels

Different measures of interest in a vessel have different proportions of vessel type, for example container ships accounted for much of the larger share of the UK registered fleet than the UK owned fleet. In 2014, the majority of UK registered fleet comprised of container vessels (60 per cent of deadweight tonnage) and nearly one fifth was accounted for by oil, or oil-chemical tankers (18 per cent). Eleven per cent of UK registered tonnage was formed of bulk carriers.

UK **registered** vessels (100 gt and over) 2014, by ship type: Percentage of deadweight tonnage



UK **direct owned** vessels (100 gt tonnage and over) 2014, by ship type: Percentage of deadweight tonnage



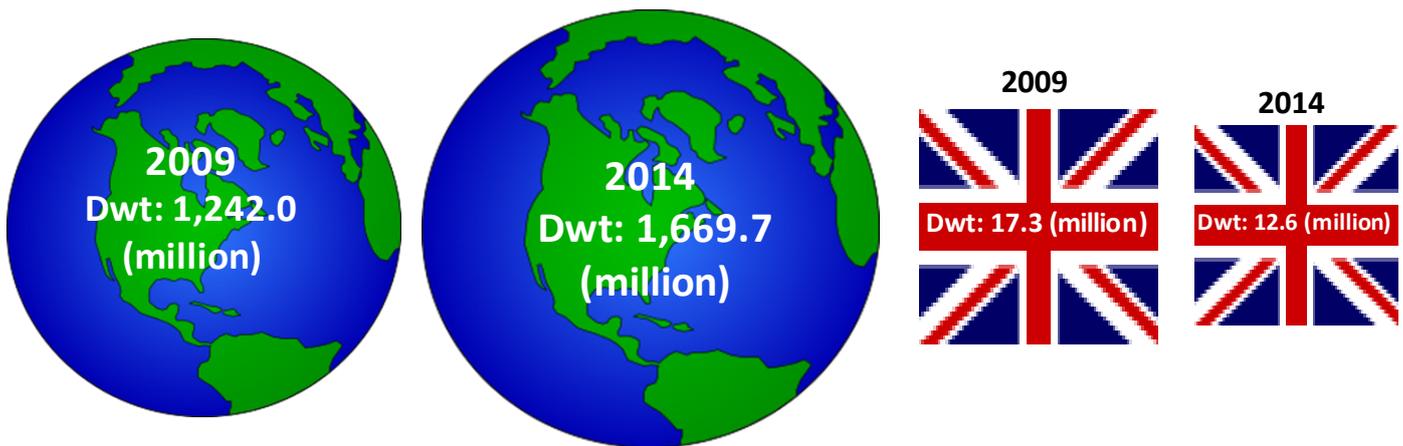
Approximately one third of UK direct owned deadweight tonnage was formed of container ships (35 per cent), and another third came from bulk carriers. Liquid gas tankers accounted for 13 per cent of the UK direct owned fleet and oil and oil-chemical tankers accounted for 10 per cent.

## 2. Global comparison

Since 2009 the combined deadweight tonnage of the world fleet has increased by 34 per cent to 1,669.7 million dwt. In comparison the UK fleet has decreased by 27 per cent to 12.6 million dwt. In terms of the number of vessels, the world fleet increased by 5 per cent from 54,125 to 56,759 ships and the UK registered fleet decreased by 36 per cent, from 712 to 453 vessels.

The UK's share of the world fleet was stable between 1999 and 2008, at around 1 per cent. Since 2009, this has decreased from 1.3 to 0.8 per cent in 2014.

Registered trading vessels 100 gross tonnage and over by deadweight tonnage: 2009 and 2014



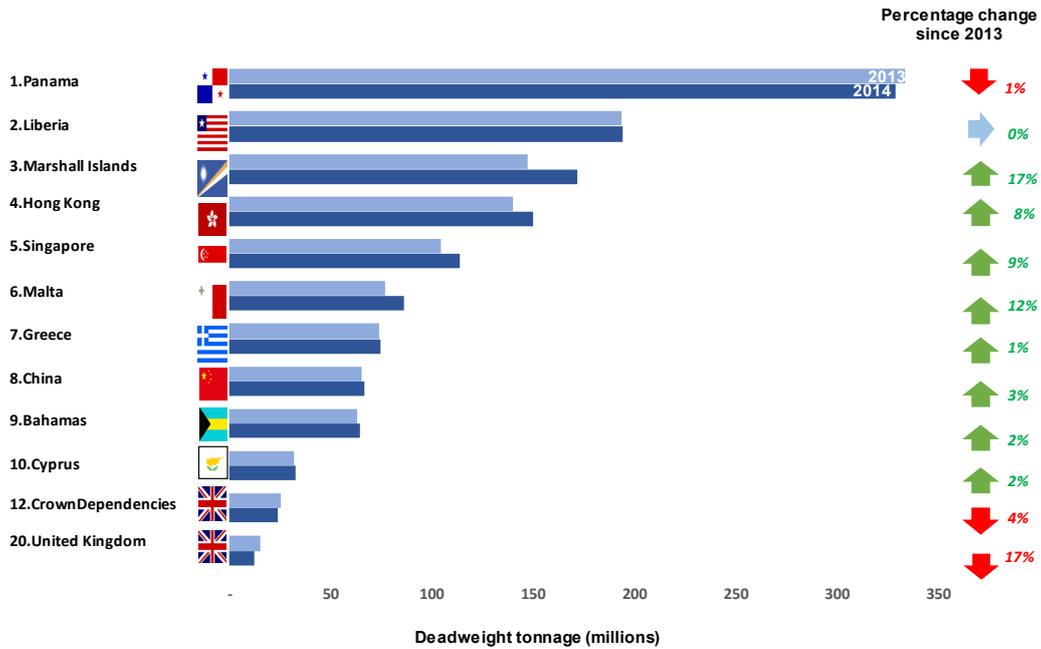
## 3. Top 10 nations plus UK and Crown Dependencies

In 2014 the UK fleet fell from 16th place to 20th place, in terms of deadweight tonnage, decreasing by 17 per cent. Ships registered in the Crown Dependencies (the Isle of Man, Jersey and Guernsey) remained at 12th place despite tonnage decreasing by 4 per cent over the same period.

Panama remained at the top of the global ranking at the end of 2014, although the deadweight tonnage dropped by 1 per cent compared to 2013. There was little change in the size of the Liberian fleet compared to 2013, and it is still ranked at second place.

The Marshall Islands have seen the biggest increase in the deadweight tonnage of registered vessels over the year (7 per cent).

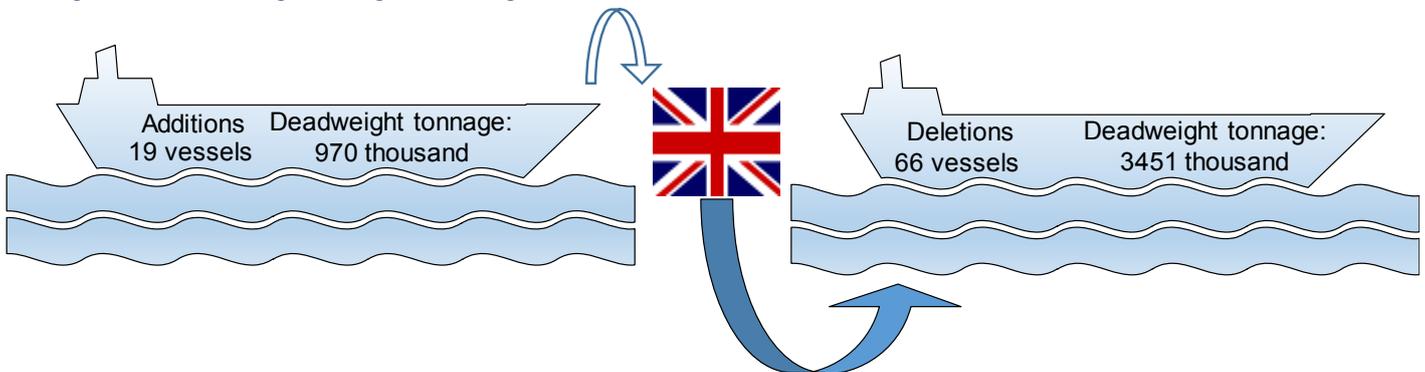
Top 10 Nations plus UK and Crown Dependencies: Trading registered vessels, 100 gross tons and over



In 2014, the top 10 nations held 77 per cent of total deadweight tonnage, whilst the UK held less than 1 per cent of total deadweight tonnage.

The main cause for the decrease in the size of the UK fleet was the net impact of ships transferring their registration to other countries, with relatively few ships transferring their registration from elsewhere to the UK.

Changes to United Kingdom registered flags: 2014



Of the 19 vessels registered in the UK in 2014, 7 were newly built ships coming into operation for the first time. Vessels were also transferred from Norway, Bermuda, Liberia, Gibraltar, Portugal and the Netherlands.

Singapore, Barbados, Greece, the Marshall Islands, the Isle of Man and China accounted for 80% of the total deadweight tonnage transferred out of United Kingdom. This accounted for 28 vessels out of the total 66 de-flagged vessels.

The most common country to which ships transferred to was Singapore, which accounted for 2.4 million of the deadweight tonnage transferring from the UK to other countries.

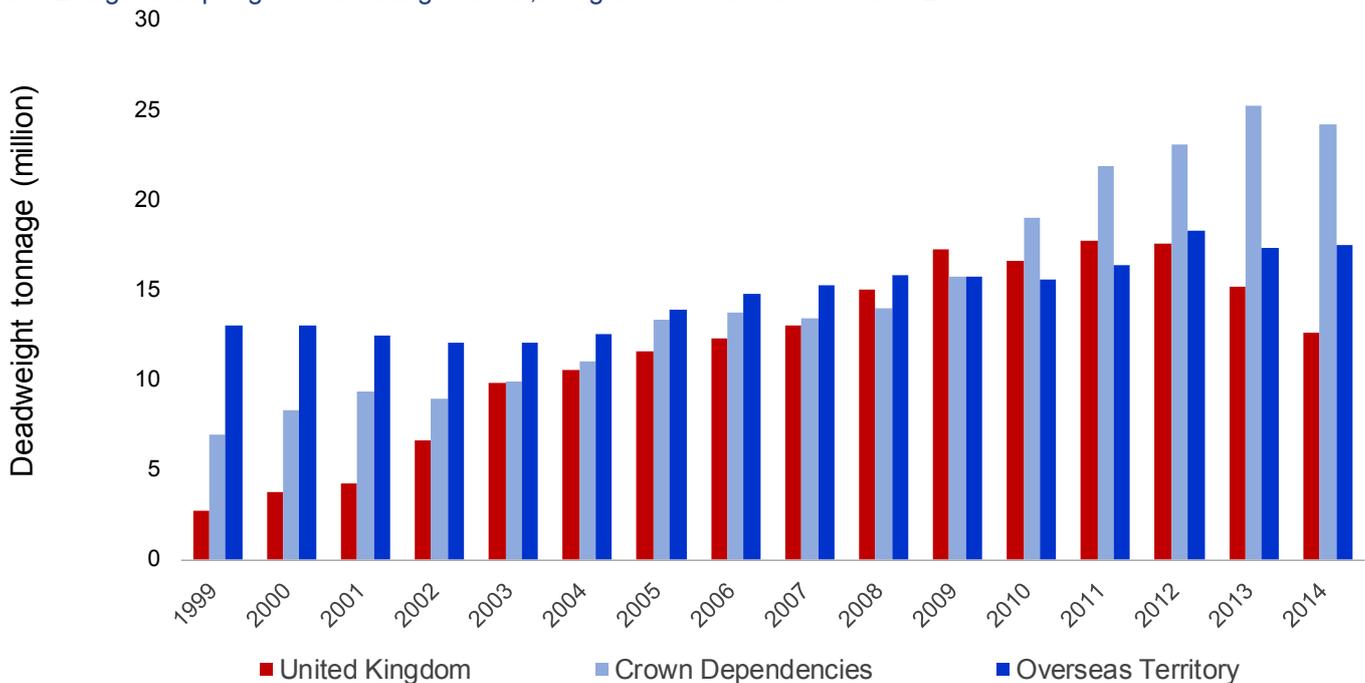
The overall net decrease in 2014 was 47 vessels or 2.6 million deadweight moved from the UK register.

#### 4. Red Ensign Group

The Red Ensign Group registered trading vessel fleet has been increasing since 1999. Of the three regions comprising the Red Ensign Group, the UK had the smallest fleet in 1999 at 2.7 million dwt, compared to the Crown Dependency fleet of 7.0 million dwt and the Overseas Territory fleet of 13.0 million dwt.

The UK fleet was smaller than that of the Overseas Territories and Crown Dependencies until 2007. In 2009, the size of the UK fleet exceeded those of the Crown Dependencies and the Overseas Territories. However, diverging trends in recent years mean that the Crown Dependencies fleet increased between 2009 and 2014 from 287 to 342 vessels or from 15.7 to 24.2 million deadweight tonnage and is now nearly twice the size of the UK fleet.

Red Ensign Group registered trading vessels, 100 gross tons and over: 1999 - 2014



## 5. UK Shipping interests: 2014

### UK registered trading vessels

There were 453 **UK registered** trading vessels (9 per cent less than in 2013). These vessels have a combined gross and deadweight tonnage of 12.3 and 12.6 million tonnes respectively.

UK registered trading vessels: 100 gross tonnage and over	2013	2014	Percentage change	
Number of vessels	500	453	↓	-9%
Gross Tonnage (Millions)	13.6	12.3	↓	-9%
Deadweight Tonnage (Millions)	15.2	12.6	↓	-17%

### UK direct owned trading vessels

There were 606 **UK direct owned** trading vessels (a decrease of 7 per cent), totalling 16.3 million gross tons and 16.5 million deadweight tons.

UK owned trading vessels: 100 gross tonnage and over	2013	2014	Percentage change	
Number of vessels	655	606	↓	-7%
Gross Tonnage (Millions)	19.2	16.3	↓	-15%
Deadweight Tonnage (Millions)	20.6	16.5	↓	-20%

### UK parent owned trading vessels

There were 798 **UK parent owned** trading vessels (an increase of 1 per cent), totalling 22.7 million gross tons and 30.1 million deadweight.

UK parent owned trading vessels: 100 gross tonnage and over	2013	2014	Percentage change	
Number of vessels	789	798	↑	1%
Gross Tonnage (Millions)	22.3	22.7	↑	2%
Deadweight Tonnage (Millions)	29.4	30.1	↑	2%

### UK managed fleet

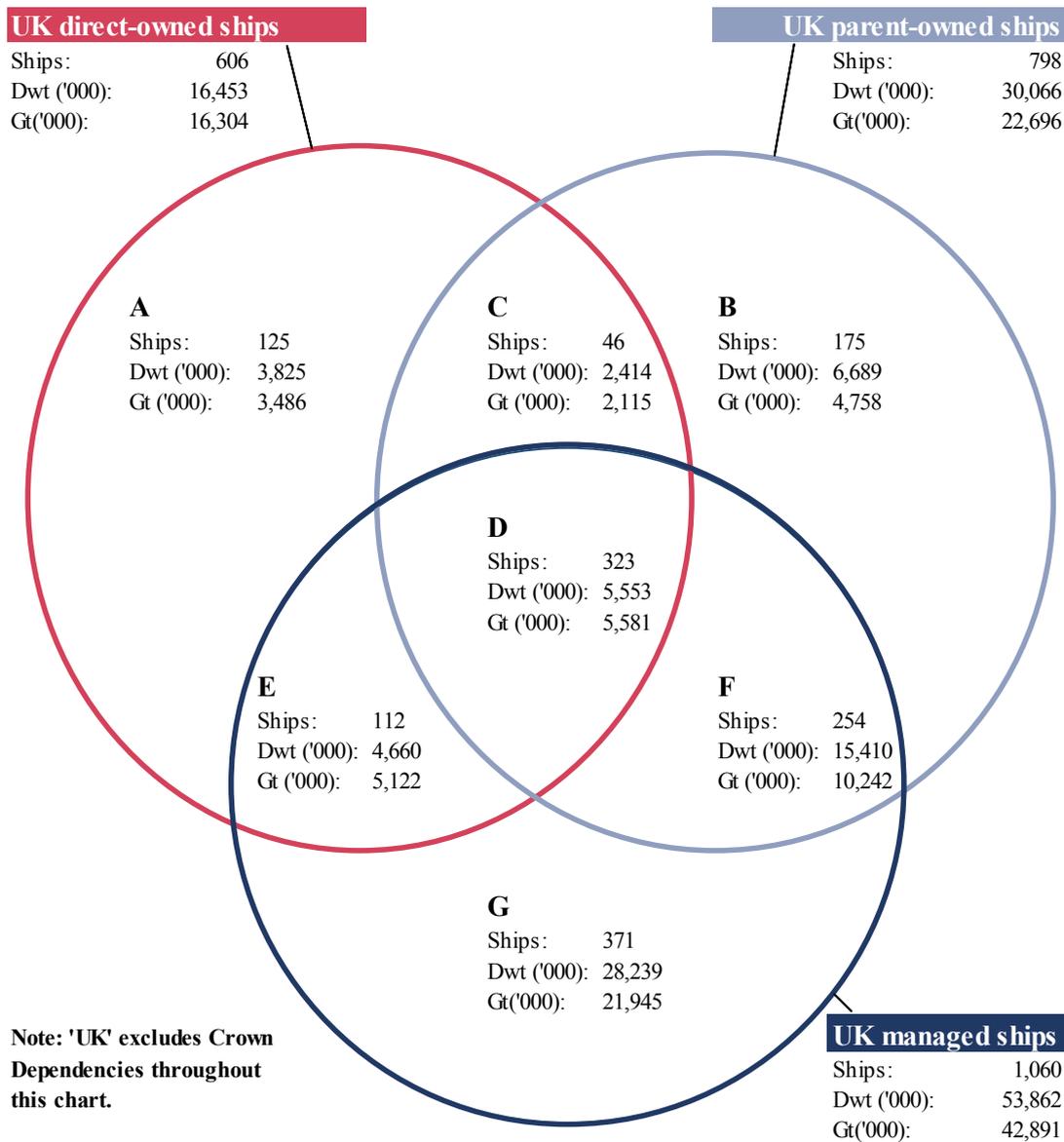
There were 1,060 **UK managed** trading ships (a 5 per cent decrease), totalling 42.9 million gross tons or 53.9 million deadweight tons.

UK managed trading vessels: 100 gross tonnage and over	2013	2014	Percentage change	
Number of vessels	1111	1060	↓	-5%
Gross Tonnage (Millions)	45.9	42.9	↓	-7%
Deadweight Tonnage (Millions)	59.6	53.9	↓	-10%

The schematic diagram below demonstrates the degree of overlap between the UK direct owned, parents owned and managed fleets.

- 21 per cent of the ships directly owned by UK companies (23 per cent of dwt) does not have either a UK parent or a UK manager.
- 22 per cent of the UK parent owned fleet does not have UK owned or UK manager.
- Over half of UK managed tonnage does not have either a direct or a parent UK owner

**THE UK OWNED AND MANAGED TRADING FLEET  
at 31 December 2014**



All 'UK' ships either directly owned, or parent-owned or managed or managed by UK companies	
<b>Ships</b>	<b>1,406</b>
<b>Deadweight tonnage (Dwt) (thousand):</b>	<b>66,790</b>
<b>Gross tonnage (Gt) (thousand):</b>	<b>53,249</b>

Direct owned: A+C+D+E

Parent owned: B+C+D+F

Managed: D+E+F+G

## 6. Strengths and weaknesses of the data

- These statistics are derived from data provided by, IHS, a leading commercial supplier. They are believed to be of good quality, but since the commercial data set is not within DfT's control they are not considered National Statistics.
- The published tables include statistics for ships which are UK registered. For the sake of consistency within this data set, these are based on the same commercial information source as the rest of the data. This means the results may differ slightly from the definitive information on the UK Ship Register provided by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA), who administer the UK register.

## 7. Glossary

For more detail of these and other definitions and concepts, please see the Technical Notes (link in following section).

- Vessels: these statistics refer to all trading vessels of 100 gross tonnes or over, unless otherwise stated
- Gross tons: a volume measure representing the size of a vessel. It is often used when measuring the sizes of different types of ship, where no more specialised measures suit all vessel types.
- Deadweight: a measure of the carrying capacity (in tonnes) of a vessel.

## 8. Background notes

The web tables and charts give further detail of the key results presented in this statistical release. They are available here:

- <https://www.gov.uk/government/organisations/department-for-transport/series/shipping-fleet-statistics>

Further guidance on the methods used to compile these statistics can be found here:

- [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/230408/shipping-fleet-tech-note.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/230408/shipping-fleet-tech-note.pdf)