ETA Conference
Lisbon 2026

James Herbert
Secretary General
International Salvage Union

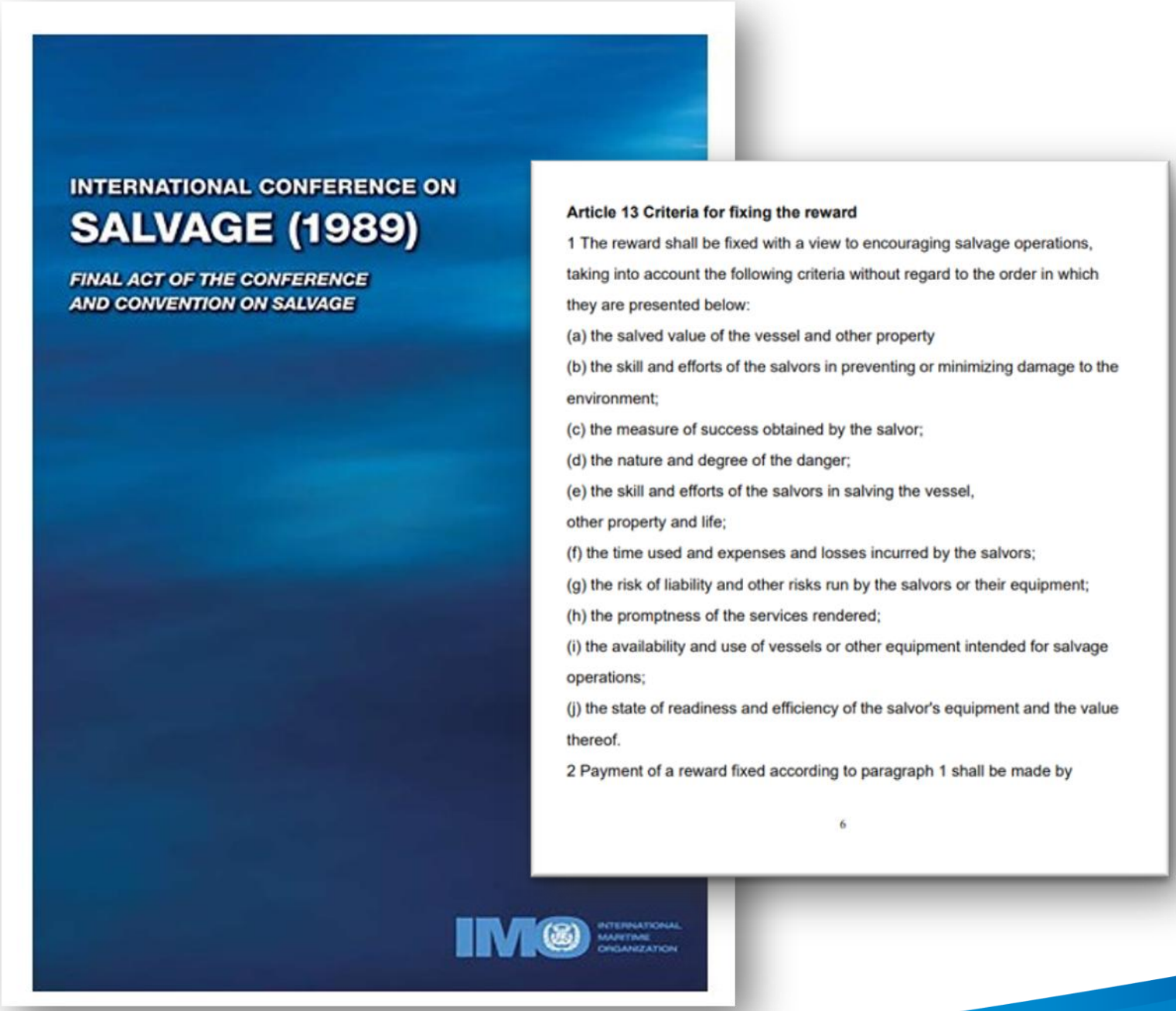
INTERNATIONAL SALVAGE UNION

Salvage in High-Risk Areas and War Zones – historical perspectives and current issues

The salvage industry – a commercial proposition



The Salvage Convention and its Article 13



History part 1

WWII



History part 2

Iran - Iraq 1980s “The Tanker Wars”



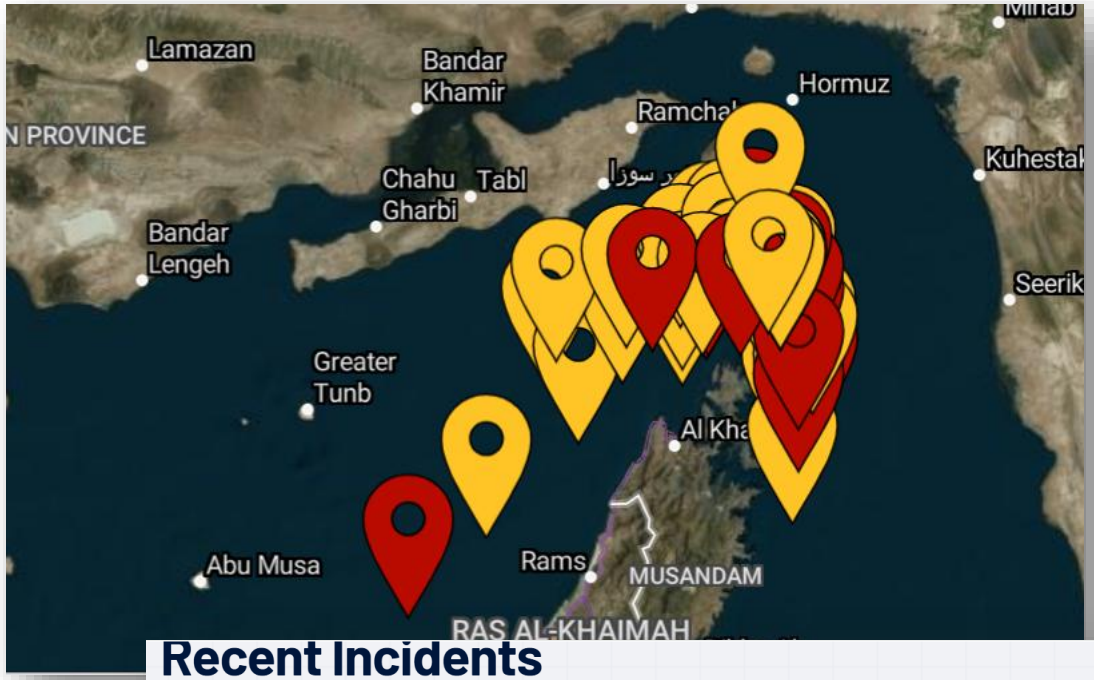
“History repeats itself”

Iran – US 2026





It’s real



Recent Incidents

View all incidents

Attack UKMTO #216

21 November 2026

UKMTO WARNING 216-26 - ATTACK Incident Date: 21 Nov 2026 Incident Time: 0550UTC UKMTO has received a report of an incident 17NM east of Khasab, Oman. A Tanker transiting outbound in the Strait of Hormuz has been hit in the engine room by an unknown projectile. There are no reported casualties at this time. Environmental impact is currently unconfir...

Attack UKMTO #215

21 November 2026

UKMTO WARNING 215-26 - ATTACK Incident Date 21 Nov 2026 Incident Time: 0500UTC UKMTO has received a report of an incident 11NM north of Khasab, Oman. A Tanker transiting outbound in the Strait of Hormuz has been hit on the stern by an unknown projectile. There are no reported casualties at this time. Environmental impact is currently unconfirmed. ...

Attack UKMTO #214

20 November 2026

UKMTO WARNING 214-26 - ATTACK Incident Date: 20 Nov 2026 Incident Time: 1500UTC UKMTO has received a report of an incident 8NM north of Khasab, Oman. A Tanker on an outbound transit of the Strait of Hormuz has been struck on the port bow by an unknown projectile. The CSO has reported a fire onboard the vessel. No casualties have been reported at t...

LOF awards

"…it is clearly in the interests of owners and underwriters that high class professional salvors like the Contractors should dare to provide salvage services in the Persian Gulf despite the conflict between Iraq and Iran.

[Salvors] have to bear exceptional costs of operation and they have to accept unusual risk to their tugs and the men who man them. It is equally clear that they will only be encouraged to do so if the level of award is unusually high".

Current issues

Geopolitics
National requirements
Sanctions
Contracts
Costs
Crewing
Insurance

Conclusion

