

Rules for Building and Classing

Underwater Vehicles, Systems and Hyperbaric Facilities

Notices and General Information



January 2026



RULES FOR BUILDING AND CLASSING

**UNDERWATER VEHICLES, SYSTEMS AND HYPERBARIC
FACILITIES
JANUARY 2026**

**NOTICES AND
GENERAL INFORMATION**

**American Bureau of Shipping
Incorporated by Act of Legislature of
the State of New York 1862**

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Notices and General Information

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Notices and General Information

Introduction

1. The 2026 edition of the *Rules for Building and Classing Underwater Vehicles, Systems and Hyperbaric Facilities* consists of the Parts as shown in Table 1. Reference is made in these Rules to the following generic Rules:
 - a) *Rules for Conditions of Classification (Part 1A)* includes consolidated requirements for “Classification” applicable to all types of and sizes of vessels, barges and specific shipboard arrangements/systems, etc., except for those in offshore service, as specified in the Foreword to Part 1A. Additional specific requirements are contained in Chapter 5 of Part 1A.
 - b) *Rules for Alternative Arrangements, Novel Concepts and New Technologies (Part 1D)* introduces a procedure for acceptance of alternative arrangements, novel concepts, and new technologies based on Goals and Functional Requirements, including a consolidated list of Tier 1 Goals.
 - c) *Rules for Materials and Welding (Part 2)* contains materials requirements common to ABS-classed vessels, other marine structures and their associated machinery, including steel, aluminum, and FRP materials.
 - d) *Rules for Survey After Construction (Part 7)* contains consolidated requirements for “Surveys After Construction” applicable to all types and sizes of vessels, barges and specific shipboard arrangements/systems, etc., as specified in Part 7, Chapter 1, Section 1.
2. The numbering system applied in the Rules is shown in Table 2.
3. The primary changes from the January 2025 Rules are identified and listed in Table 3. The effective date of the indicated Rule Changes is 1 January 2026, unless specifically indicated otherwise.
4. The effective date of each technical change since 1993 is shown in parenthesis at the end of the subsection/paragraph titles within the text of each Part. Unless a particular date and month are shown, the years in parentheses refer to the following effective dates:

(2000) and after	1 January 2000 (and subsequent years)	(1996)	9 May 1996
(1999)	12 May 1999	(1995)	15 May 1995
(1998)	13 May 1998	(1994)	9 May 1994
(1997)	19 May 1997	(1993)	11 May 1993

TABLE 1
Applicable Editions of Parts Comprising January 2026 Underwater Vehicles Rules

Rules for Building and Classing Underwater Vehicles, Systems and Hyperbaric Facilities		
Notices and General Information		January 2026
Rules for Building and Classing Underwater Vehicles, Systems and Hyperbaric Facilities		January 2026
Rules for Conditions of Classification – not included		
Part 1A:	Rules for Conditions of Classification	January 2026*
Rules for Alternative Arrangements, Novel Concepts and New Technologies – not included		
Part 1D:	Rules for Alternative Arrangements, Novel Concepts and New Technologies	January 2026*
Rules for Materials and Welding – not included		
Part 2:	Rules for Materials and Welding	January 2026*
Rules for Survey After Construction – not included		
Part 7:	Rules for Survey After Construction	January 2026*

* **Note:** The latest edition of these Rules is to be referred to. These Rules may be accessed in Rule Manager.

TABLE 2
Division and Numbering of Rules

<i>Division</i>	<i>Number</i>
Section	Section 1
Subsection (see Note 1)	Subsection 1/1
Paragraph (see Note 1)	1/1.1
Subparagraph	1/1.1.1
Item	1/1.1.1(a)
Subitem	1/1.1.1(a)i
Appendix	Appendix 1 or A1/1.1

Note:

- 1** An odd number (1, 3, 5, etc.) numbering system is used for the Rules. The purpose is to permit future insertions of even-numbered paragraphs (2, 4, 6, etc.) of text and to avoid the necessity of having to renumber the existing text and associated cross-references, as applicable, within the Rules and associated process instructions, check sheets, etc.

Rule Change Notice (2026)

TABLE 3
Summary of Changes from the January 2025 Rules

EFFECTIVE DATE 1 January 2026 – shown as (2026)
(based on the contract date for new construction between builder and Owner)

<i>Part/Para. No.</i>	<i>Title/Subject</i>	<i>Status/Remarks</i>
3/8	General Requirements and Safeguards	To add a new paragraph to address risk assessment of underwater units.
4/3.1, 3.3, 4	Materials	To update Paragraph 3.3 to clarify that fasteners include bolts, studs and nuts and to add new Paragraph 4 to address the materials for exostructures and external structures.
6/12	Metallic Pressure Boundary Components	To consider dissimilar metals when choosing fasteners and the use of isolation sleeves and/or gaskets where applicable to prevent galvanic corrosion.
6/2.3, 2.4, 12, 13, 14	Metallic Pressure Boundary Components	To address lifting lugs and other pressure boundary components. Further clarified some existing requirements.
8/11.5, 13.1, 19, 29.3	Life Support and Environmental Control Systems	To update existing requirements for life support monitoring, cleaning and testing in order to provide further clarification.
10/19	Electrical Systems	To update title to clarify that 10/19 applies to internal lighting (external lighting is covered in a new 11/44).
11/9.1, 9.3, 11.1, 15, 23.3.9, 23.6, 26.2, 31.1, 31.5, 31.7, 31.9, 31.13, 33.1, 35.11, 44, 49.9.1, 49.9.3	Submersibles	To update existing requirements for anchoring, mooring and towing, stability and life support testing in order to provide additional clarification, to add a Commentary considering dissimilar metals when choosing fasteners and the use of isolation sleeves and/or gaskets where applicable to prevent galvanic corrosion, and to add filter recommendation/requirement to bilge pump suction.
12/39.9.1ii)	Lock-Out Submersibles	To consider quick turn valves for manually operated stop valves.
13/35.15.1, 35.15.2, 35.15.5, 35.15.6	Ambient Pressure Submersibles	To use the acronyms KB, KG and KM instead of CB, CG and CM for consistency with other Sections.
14/11.1, 11.3.8, 11.3.22(i), 11.3.23, 11.3.27.ii(a), 11.3.29(d), 11.5.4, 11.7.1, 11.7.2 and 17.1.1	Diving Systems	To update the hyperbaric evacuation and other diving requirements to provide further clarification.