

DOSI Intervention regarding item 10: Draft Regulations on exploitation of mineral resources in the Area: Fourth meeting of the Informal Working Group on Inspection, Compliance and Enforcement

**DR96 - Inspections: general
Delivered 23 March 2023**

Thank you, Madame Facilitator. As this is the first time the Deep-Ocean Stewardship Initiative has been given the floor during this working group, please let us start by thanking you for your excellent work in guiding us through the process.

Overall, DOSI does not have a position on whether the selection should be for an independent inspectorate or a compliance committee, as long as inspections are conducted in an independent manner. Independent entities lower the risk of conflict of interest that could compromise effective protection of the Marine Environment.

DOSI believes that the independent entity should also have the power to temporarily suspend exploration or exploitation activities, pending review by the Council, if those activities are deemed to be causing harm to the Marine Environment. DOSI recommends that such provision needs to be added to this general regulation on inspection as well as DR98 and DR99.

DOSI also recommends that all Inspectors' reports should be made publicly available within a set time limit of receiving such a report and in the report should be available perpetuity, to promote transparency. We recommend that this provision be added to DR97.

With regard to **DR 96 Para 5 (b bis)** which details the provision of reasonable facilities to Inspectors, DOSI would like to support the addition of an express reference regarding the provision for safe and inclusive working environments of inspectors while on board. We acknowledge the reference to intimidation under **DR 96 Para 5g**, but would suggest rephrasing to expressly link these questions to the overarching physical and psychological well-being of inspectors. Most of these mineral-related activities will require participants, including inspectors, to spend continuous weeks to months on ships at sea, often great distances from the nearest landmass, manifesting in inevitable isolation, and where –unfortunately – harassment, bullying, and discrimination are rife, which may especially be the case for inspectors. We also recommend that the ISA require contractors to have in place appropriate practical measures to safeguard the wellbeing of all persons on vessels, including non-crew and non-employees, such as inspectors and trainees. Further, given the gender disparity in the mining industry mentioned yesterday, DOSI believes that extra care is needed in this regard to ensure the safety of inspectors of all genders.

Thank you, Madame Facilitator.