

Abstract

The objective of this thesis is to identify current regulations and future regulatory changes in the USV sector. Currently there is no international regulation covering unmanned shipping as a whole. The International Maritime Organization (IMO) is working on this. This means that each country has to draw up its own regulations. Due to the lack of international rules in the international sector that is shipping, this often leads to grey areas and unclear national regulations. This is also the case in Belgium.

By researching and comparing international guidelines, I was able to understand what the new regulations on this subject should contain at the very least. Through interviews with the government, I researched the regulations in Belgium and Flanders. Through questionnaires I am able to sound out how the Belgian USV sector deals with the regulations.

There is an urgent need for a good regulatory framework for USVs, both internationally and in Belgium. This should also explain what USV operators must be able to do.

The detailed answers to the research questions can be found in the conclusion.