

Directive 2009/18/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council of 23 April 2009 establishing the fundamental principles governing the investigation of accidents in the maritime transport sector and amending Council Directive 1999/35/EC and Directive 2002/59/EC of the European Parliament and of the Council (Text with EEA relevance)

*Article 4*

**Status of safety investigations**

1 Member States shall define, in accordance with their legal systems, the legal status of the safety investigation in such a way that such investigations can be carried out as effectively and rapidly as possible.

Member States shall ensure, in accordance with their legislation and, where appropriate, through collaboration with the authorities responsible for the judicial inquiry, that safety investigations are:

- a independent of criminal or other parallel investigations held to determine liability or apportion blame; and
- b not unduly precluded, suspended or delayed by reason of such investigations.

2 The rules to be established by the Member States shall include, in accordance with the permanent cooperation framework referred to in Article 10, provisions for allowing:

- a cooperation and mutual assistance in safety investigations led by other Member States, or the delegation to another Member State of the task of leading such an investigation in accordance with Article 7; and
- b coordination of the activities of their respective investigative bodies to the extent necessary to attain the objective of this Directive.