

Sourcing OEM Industrial and Marine Spare Parts: A Buyer's Guide

cBallast · 2026 edition · Buyer guide

Identifying a part before you source it

Every industrial and marine spare part carries at least one manufacturer part number (MPN). The MPN is the OEM's own catalog identifier and uniquely resolves the physical component regardless of where it is bought. For marine deck, engine-room and cargo-handling parts, a secondary IMPA code (six or seven digits, International Marine Purchasing Association) is usually present. Requisitions that capture both identifiers reduce sourcing risk.

Common identifier fields

Identifier	Issued by	Format
MPN	OEM	Alphanumeric (e.g. 3RT2015-1BB41)
IMPA	IMPA	6 or 7 digit numeric
EAN / GTIN	GS1	13-digit numeric
ISSA	ISSA	6 digit numeric
Class-society ref	DNV / ABS / LR / BV / ClassNK	Certificate number

Sourcing routes

Direct from the OEM suits high-value first-fit orders; lead times 6-16 weeks. Authorised distributor suits stocked repeatable-order items and holds local inventory. Quote-to-invoice sourcing house suits mixed baskets across many OEMs, obsolete-line items and consolidated international freight; this is the model cBallast operates.

Documentation the buyer should expect

A compliant delivery includes: commercial invoice with MPN + quantity + Incoterm + HS code + country of origin; packing list with carton dimensions and IMDG class; certificate of origin (EUR.1 or equivalent); manufacturer's certificate of conformity; type-approval certificate matched to the vessel's classification society; and

material certificate (EN 10204 3.1 / 3.2) on pressure-retaining components and lifting hardware.

Cross-referencing

When the exact MPN is superseded or discontinued, the buyer cross-references to an interchangeable part. Strong cross-references share mechanical envelope, electrical or hydraulic ratings, and type-approval status. Weak cross-references share only marketing category names and should be validated by the OEM before installation.

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