



Circular Letter 02/2020

6 April 2020

Subject: Mid Term Assembly of the Industrial Members' Committee of IALA, 5 – 6 October 2020

To: All Industrial members

Dear Industrial member,

The Mid Term Assembly of the Industrial Members' Committee (IMC) is an important highlight of the 2020 IALA calendar and we have the pleasure to invite you to participate. The meeting is scheduled to be held at our Headquarters in St. Germain en Laye on

5 and 6 October 2020

and is already in the planning stage in order to ensure that all required logistical arrangements are in place in good time and meet the expected high standards. The Secretariat is closely monitoring the current, worldwide evolving COVID-19 emergency and its impact at both the local and the global level, following the advice provided by the World Health Organization, the Government of France and other Governments, and taking account of actions taken by sister organizations. Nevertheless, we kindly encourage you to register your attendance online and to do so as soon as possible (<https://www.iala-aism.org/product/imc-mid-term-assembly/>). This would greatly facilitate the advance organization of the event, in case it can take place and bearing in mind that the lifting of restrictions on international travel and people's movements within individual countries' borders might happen at short notice. The Secretariat is fully committed to go ahead with the meeting should that be possible. We also give our personal assurance that any measures that might be required will be in place to protect the safety and well-being of all participants. Meanwhile, we invite you to monitor the news section on the website for updates on any decisions taken by the Secretariat to help avoid further transmission of the virus in our domain; the most recent entry is dated 16 March 2020 (<https://www.iala-aism.org/news-events/news/>).

The meeting, which will also serve to update IMC members on important decisions and events of IALA, will take place against the background of a strong Association that has continued to attract more new members during the past year, in all categories, thus continuing the upward trend of preceding years. By the end of 2019 the total membership had grown to 303.



The ARM, ENG, VTS and ENAV Committees each are attended by National, Industrial and Associate members alike; an average of 100 participants has become the norm and Industrial members' participation is invariably keen. Participants' commitment to work together, both within and across the Committees, in a common effort to improve upon and harmonize Marine Aids to Navigation worldwide has always been the hallmark of IALA. It demonstrates a genuine will to share and compare knowledge and expertise freely and to connect with other people and organizations in an open-minded and friendly manner.

As a driving force in technological innovation, the Industrial members provide input into the Committees which is not only invaluable but also vital to ensuring that IALA's work continues to be relevant for the maritime community into the future. This means that our Standards, Recommendations and Guidelines must give the highest priority to those aids to navigation mariners need to ensure the safe passage of their ships. It also means that our work must be responsive to growing public expectations about maritime accident prevention and protection of the environment.

The cohesion between the Industrial members, as suppliers of equipment and systems for Marine Aids to Navigation, and the authorities responsible for the provision and maintenance of such aids has always been a unique feature of IALA. The dynamic exchanges of information on experiences gained by suppliers and providers underpins IALA's work to help bring about a globally harmonized network of Marine Aids to Navigation that is sustainable and efficient, and to which all coastal States contribute, as envisaged under our Strategic Vision for 2026.

A major challenge for IALA today is to be prepared for the ever-increasing availability of new digital opportunities. We need to have clear policies and standards in place for the development of our work with regard to technologically quite complex and fast evolving digital solutions supporting maritime navigation and communications. This requires a different mindset and a flexible approach.

The successful introduction of transformative technologies and associated practices is especially important in an era when shipping operates in a maritime environment that is far more complex today than it was in the early days of IALA. In addition to the shipping industry, a growing number and variety of other users compete for limited available marine space to conduct their respective activities. The development of e-Navigation holds great potential to manage the safe passage of ships, particularly in crowded waters, provided there are harmonized standards.

IALA's focus is on the shore-based maritime information services needed for the digital transformation, which also extends to increased automation of equipment, systems and indeed vessels – and this has implications for human skills and associated training needs. The need for the continuous development of Recommendations, Guidelines, Manuals and Model Courses cannot be underestimated. Advanced Vessel Traffic Services, resilient Positioning Navigation and Timing, global connectivity, data modelling and a common maritime data infrastructure, as well as standards and harmonization are all areas requiring urgent, detailed and forward-looking work. At the same time, the traditional, visual aids to navigation will continue to require close attention as they will continue to play an important role for many years to come in waters around the world.

The 2020 Mid Term Assembly of the IMC will be a timely opportunity to meet your peers from around the world face to face and discuss together all these and other topics of common interest in knowledgeable and



frank exchanges. It will also be a useful forum to review or reaffirm, as appropriate, the priorities the IMC identified for the 2018-2022 work period at its General Assembly held during the 19th IALA Conference in Incheon, Republic of Korea, on 31 May 2018. Participants will also be briefed on progress in the planning for the 20th IALA Conference to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil in May/June 2022, when the IMC will once again be responsible for the popular Industrial members' exhibition and the traditional IMC social evening.

In anticipation of the meeting the Secretariat has prepared a new brochure on the IMC, outlining its objectives and functions, and the specific benefits of Industrial membership. The brochure was distributed to all Industrial members last year for your information and also gives prominence to the Value Propositions developed by the IMC. These are fourfold, as follows:

- IALA is the only global technical association for the Marine Aids to Navigation industry.
- Industrial membership of IALA allows commercial organizations to succeed by building long-standing relationships with key decision-makers from domestic and international maritime authorities.
- Working alongside experts in our domain, Industrial members have unique access to technical committees, workshops and conferences to help create the standards that govern the environment in which they operate.
- In a rapidly changing world, IALA also provides the forum to monitor technology trends and innovations that will help the Industrial member's business to stay ahead.

Attached for your general information is a briefing document summarizing the latest developments and events that have taken place in IALA.

We very much look forward to your active participation in the 2020 Mid Term Assembly of the IMC. More detailed information on the programme and the meeting documents will be available from the website in due course. Should you have any questions please feel free to contact us via e-mail (secgen@iala-aism.org).

Meanwhile, we convey our best wishes – may you keep well and stay safe in these unprecedented, challenging times.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marcel Tetu".

Marcel TETU
President, IMC

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "F. Zachariae".

Francis ZACHARIAE
Secretary-General, IALA



Annex

Recent IALA developments

This briefing provides an update on developments at IALA since the 19th IALA Conference took place in Incheon, Republic of Korea, in May-June 2018. Developments are summarised under the following headings:

- 1 - Membership, Strategy and Policy
- 2 - IALA Standards, Recommendations and Guidelines
- 3 - Technical work progress
- 4 - IALA technical events
- 5 - World Marine Aids to Navigation Day
- 6 - IALA Conferences
- 7 - Future governance: change of status to IGO

1 - MEMBERSHIP, STRATEGY AND POLICY

Growth in membership

The year 2018 ended with the welcome confirmation of a continued upward trend in the total size of the membership, which grew in all three categories. New Industrial members joined from a wide range of countries around the world, such as Belgium, Canada, China, India, Indonesia, Iran, Norway, Papua New Guinea and Philippines.

Also very encouraging was the noticeable impact of the activities of the World-Wide Academy in Africa, with Angola and Madagascar joining the Association as National members during 2018, following successful technical needs assessment missions to both countries. The Namibian Ports Authority (NAMPORT) joined as an Associate member in 2019, having made great progress, following a technical needs assessment mission in 2016, to improve safety of navigation in its coastal waters with a well-considered aids to navigation deployment plan and efforts to introduce traffic monitoring.

Membership growth in all three categories continued during 2019, which ended with a record total number of 300 members, consisting of 87 National members, 146 Industrial members, and 67 Associate members. During 2019, 22 applications were received for Industrial membership alone.

Strategic Vision for 2026

The *Strategic Vision for 2026* is a high-level document that sets out two Goals and eight Strategies to facilitate their achievement by 2026. The document is available from the website (<https://www.iala-aism.org/content/uploads/2018/07/Strategic-Vision-2018-2026.pdf>). The two Goals are, respectively, that Marine Aids to Navigation are developed and harmonized through international cooperation and the provision of standards (Goal 1), and that all coastal States have contributed to a sustainable and efficient global network of Marine Aids to Navigation through capacity building and the sharing of expertise (Goal 2).

A more detailed, technical document complements the high-level Strategic Vision and sets out IALA's *Position on the Development of Marine Aids to Navigation Services* for the shorter term. First approved by the Council in December 2017, it is reviewed annually by the Policy Advisory Panel (PAP), with input from the four Committees, and amended as necessary. Its main function is to set out a series of technical position statements, each of which is concerned



with a specific aspect of IALA's technical work. This set of position statements provides a clear link from the Strategic Vision to the distinct work programmes of the individual Committees.

The document was reviewed by the PAP at its 37th session held in February 2019 with the aim to look deeper into back-up options for the Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS). The Committees, especially ENG, were subsequently given the opportunity to submit their comments, which were then integrated into the document for submission to the 69th session of the Council held in Rotterdam in June 2019. The amended document was approved by the Council at its 70th session held in Noumea, New Caledonia in December 2019.

White Paper

Also at its 70th session, the Council approved a newly developed White Paper on strategy. This brief document was first outlined at a workshop conducted during the Council's 69th session and was subsequently finalized by the Secretariat. It takes a longer-term view on key global trends or 'drivers' with marine relevance and which are likely to have an impact on IALA.

The Council sees a need to monitor dynamically evolving trends of global maritime significance for the purpose of informed and well-targeted priority setting in the activities of IALA. In this regard a degree of flexibility in the structure of the technical committees is desirable in order to ensure that they adapt quickly to emerging needs.

The White Paper identifies eight core trends, as follows:

1. Increased digitalization, including 'Big Data' and future communication.
2. Development of autonomous, automated and unmanned vessels.
3. Need for increased connectivity and interoperability.
4. Cyber-crime vulnerability and cyber security.
5. Changes in trade patterns due to global economic developments.
6. Large cruise ships operating in remote locations like the Arctic.
7. Growing competition in the use of the world's seas and oceans (Marine Spatial Planning).
8. Efficiency pressures in the transport logistics chain.

In addition, the document highlights a number of priority areas for action, such as:

- a more holistic approach to waterway planning and management;
- the future role of Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) and related training needs;
- further development of the IALA Risk Management Toolbox;
- developing a resilient back-up solution for the GNSS;
- updating guidelines and providing training in smart aids to navigation;
- focusing on smart shore-based and floating maritime infrastructure to cope with smart ships; and
- paying more attention to the interfaces of the transport chain.

2 - IALA STANDARDS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND GUIDELINES

The main outcomes of each Committee meeting and updates on the Recommendations and Guidelines approved by the Council are regularly posted in the news section on the website (<https://www.iala-aism.org/news-events/news/>).

Digital copies of all technical documentation (including Model Courses) can be downloaded, free of charge, from the website (<https://www.iala-aism.org/guidance-publications/>).



The suite of seven IALA Standards approved by the 13th General Assembly held in Incheon, Republic of Korea in May 2018 provides an overarching and robust structure for referencing the Recommendations and Guidelines:

- IALA Standard 1010 Marine Aids to Navigation Planning and Service Requirements
- IALA Standard 1020 Marine Aids to Navigation Design and Delivery
- IALA Standard 1030 Radionavigation Services
- IALA Standard 1040 Vessel Traffic Services
- IALA Standard 1050 Training and Certification
- IALA Standard 1060 Digital Communication Technologies
- IALA Standard 1070 Information Services

A range of graphics providing a visual identity for each of the seven Standards can be accessed on the website (<https://www.iala-aism.org/product-category/publications/standards/>).

The Standards are not intended to be mandatory in any legal sense. Nonetheless, a provider of Marine Aids to Navigation in a coastal State wishing to claim compliance will be expected to fully observe the normative provisions within a Standard, when endeavouring to implement it. As such, the Standards are a vital aspect of the Strategic Vision's dual goal to improve harmonization of Marine Aids to Navigation around the world and that all coastal States contribute to a globally harmonized network of such aids by 2026.

Furthermore, adherence to the Standards will provide a clear and evidence-backed commitment on the part of the concerned coastal State, thereby demonstrating fulfilment of its legal obligations under the International Convention for the Safety Of Life At Sea (SOLAS Convention) concerning the provision of aids to navigation and VTS.

3 - TECHNICAL WORK PROGRESS

Structure of the Committees

The new structure for the Committees that was agreed by the Council at its 66th session held in December 2017 provides for a re-distribution of several work domains and took effect in the latter half of 2018. An infogram of the new structure can be found on the website (<https://www.iala-aism.org/e-bulletin/committee-structure-2018-2022/>).

Feedback indicates that the restructuring has been working well. Members will recall that the changes were introduced mainly to streamline workload in line with the new work programme running to 2022, while also reflecting the urgency of resilient Positioning, Navigation and Timing (PNT) and the growing importance of digital connectivity and the related need for data modelling.

Resilient PNT: a major strategic concern

Thus, the work on radionavigation and on PNT (including satellite and terrestrial positioning and timing, racon and radar positioning, and augmentation services) has been assigned to the ENG Committee.

Resilient PNT continues to be a major strategic concern of IALA because it is vital for electronic navigation and will become even more important as autonomous vessels enter service now and in the future. A special working group of the ENG Committee is looking deeper into alternative back-up solutions for the GNSS. While there is as yet no global approach to how best to achieve the necessary resilience, ongoing research and development work is intensifying and IALA plays a critical role in coordinating such efforts. There is general recognition that a mix of dissimilar systems will be required to achieve resilient PNT.



A four-day workshop on Ranging Mode (R-Mode) was held at IALA headquarters in September 2019. It sought to take stock of worldwide R-Mode research activities and results and to agree on the way forward to achieve standardization and implementation of R-Mode (supported by a digital data exchange system such as the VDES) as a transnational terrestrial PNT system, on MF and VHF transmissions, capable of supporting vessels operating in coastal waters.

The Council, at its 69th session in May 2019, discussed the future of Differential GNSS services, recognizing that many national authorities were facing urgent decisions regarding the upgrade of their DGNSS/DGPS stations. This led to a workshop, hosted by the Northern Lighthouse Board in Edinburgh, Scotland, in January 2020, on the future of marine radiobeacon DGNSS services and to enable IALA to update its guidance. Participants came from Europe, Egypt, Canada, Korea, Bahrain, Brazil, Malaysia, Japan and Australia. Marine radiobeacons have played a major role in Differential Global Positioning System (DGPS) provision around coasts. Advances in technology have meant that radionavigation systems' signals provide long-range transmissions from a network of terrestrial and satellite stations, ensuring consistency throughout a ship's voyage.

Digital connectivity and the importance of data modelling

The work on shore-based Maritime Information Services has been split between the ARM and ENAV Committees. ARM now takes care of the management of information services and the S-200 standard. The focus of ENAV, renamed Information Services and Communications Committee but retaining the ENAV acronym, is on the digitalization of information services including data modelling.

Members will recall that digital connectivity was a strong focus of the 19th IALA Conference in Incheon. The seamless electronic exchange of information and the reliable and secure use of data are transformative processes that require a common maritime data infrastructure. IALA is driving important work on communication technologies and data models for the digital transformation of shore-to-ship connectivity, with a strong focus on the harmonization of information services to support seafarers in the conduct of safe and efficient navigation.

The ENAV 23 session took place in Singapore in April 2019, when IALA and the Maritime and Port Authority also held a joint workshop on e-navigation services. The aim was to develop a work programme to achieve the initial operational capability phase of selected shore-based digital information services, taking account of results from major international collaborative testbeds such as SESAME Straits, SMART/eMIR and EfficienSea.

VDES is key to meeting expanding demand for digital data exchange

Work on the VHF-based digital Data Exchange System (VDES) has also progressed in the context of making reliable and secure digital communications a reality. This work is concerned with the evolution of the existing Automatic Identification System (AIS) into the VDES in order to accommodate the fast-growing demand for the robust transfer of ever-larger volumes of data. The VDES, which has both a terrestrial and a space component, is designed effectively to incorporate and protect the existing AIS channels, which will remain unchanged and which will be specifically reserved for messages related to safety of navigation. In addition, it provides extra communication channels for Application Specific Messages and for digital transmission of the increasing number of data of a non-safety specific nature currently overloading the AIS frequencies.

A one-day IALA seminar on VDES developments, hosted by the China Maritime Safety Administration and IALA in Yiwu city in July 2018, also discussed the possible use of the VDES to support PNT through VDES R-Mode. The seminar was a major success with more than 100 participants from China and abroad.

Following the seminar, the ENAV Committee's Working Group on Communications met for four days. The meeting's objective included reviewing and improving the IALA Guideline 1139 to capture the technical description of the



VDES, with the expectation that the ENAV Committee would then update this Guideline with a new draft text (at ENAV 22 in October 2018).

The 2019 World Radiocommunication Conference of the International Telecommunication Union completed its allocation of frequencies for the VDES to enable digital data communications ship-to-ship, ship-to-shore, shore-to-ship, ship-to-satellite and satellite-to-ship on a global basis. With the allocation of new radio frequency spectrum for VDE-SAT, the satellite component of the VDES, the system now has the potential to provide secure global access to Maritime Information Services in the context of e-navigation – including services designated by the International Maritime Organization (such as those covered by the SOLAS Convention) and other valuable services for all ships.

New guidance for modern VTS

As regards the work of the VTS Committee, it has played a leading, international role in the comprehensive revision of the International Maritime Organization's (IMO's) *Resolution A.857(20) – Guidelines for Vessel Traffic Services*, which is referenced in the International Convention for the Safety Of Life At Sea (SOLAS Regulation V/12). Seafarers depend increasingly on VTS for safety of navigation in busy waterways and port approaches and the guidelines, having been adopted in 1997, do not reflect new operational developments and advances in technology.

The intensive revision work conducted by the VTS Committee over several years was presented for peer review to an international seminar held with participation of stakeholders from the wider maritime community at IALA headquarters in June 2019. This initiative was instrumental in ensuring unanimous agreement on a draft revised text at the IMO in January 2020 (7th session of the NCSR Sub-Committee), when a joint submission on draft revised guidelines was presented by eight countries (Australia, Brazil, China, India, Norway, Republic of Korea, Singapore and Turkey) and co-sponsored by IALA and seven other international organizations.

Members may recall that one of the Incheon Conference's conclusions was that effective and unambiguous VTS communications will require common phraseology, procedures and technology for voice communications, as well as harmonized data models and communications channels for digital information exchange. The revision of Resolution A.857(20) was necessary to enable this harmonization and in order to encourage a common, global understanding of the role, nature and scope of modern VTS systems and the responsibilities of VTS authorities. Recognition of IALA's work by the IMO is, therefore, highly significant.

Given the increase in the number and sophistication of VTS systems around the world there is a need for greater awareness on the part of seafarers and for improved training. At its 69th session held in Rotterdam in June 2019, the Council approved *Guideline G1144 – Promulgating the Requirements of a VTS to Mariners – A VTS Users Guide Template*. At its 70th session held in Noumea in December 2019, it approved *Guideline G1149 – VTS Training for Deck Officers (Ed. 1.0)*. Also at the latter session it approved *Recommendation R0119 – The Implementation of Vessel Traffic Services (Ed. 3.0)* and *Guideline G1150 – Establishment of Vessel Traffic Services (Ed. 1.0)*.

4 - IALA TECHNICAL EVENTS

2020 IALA Symposium

The postponed 14th IALA Symposium marks a new approach by combining VTS and e-Navigation for the first time, under the theme of "Enhanced Maritime Safety and Connectivity". The programme of technical sessions can be viewed on the official website (<https://iala-rotterdam2020.nl/programme/>). The Dutch Ministry of Infrastructure and Water Management, in consultation with IALA, is working on hosting the Symposium, together with the Industrial members' popular exhibition and technical visits to Dutch maritime centres, in the first half of 2021.



The Symposium will serve as an important international platform to discuss among experts the shore-based elements of maritime digital connectivity and the harmonization of information services including standardised data models and communication channels. It will also provide a welcome opportunity to broaden maritime industry awareness of the revised *resolution A.857(20) – Guidelines for VTS*.

ENUW Conference series

The e-Navigation Underway (ENUW) Conferences have become an established series since the first ENUW International Conference was organized by the Danish Maritime Authority in 2011, on board a Danish ferry, in close cooperation with IALA and with the support of partner international organizations. The International Conference takes place annually, usually in January or February. The ENUW Conference-North America has been an annual event since 2014, usually held in October or November. Since 2017, the ENUW Conference-Asia Pacific has taken place annually, either in June or September, under the auspices of the Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries of the Republic of Korea and with the support of the Asia Pacific Heads of Maritime Safety Agencies (APHoMSA).

An important outcome of the 2019 ENUW International Conference was the launch of the Maritime Connectivity Platform (MCP) Consortium (<https://www.iala-aism.org/news-events/news/?npg=2>). The – open and vendor-neutral – MCP is an important step for efficient, reliable and secure information exchange among maritime stakeholders in an e-navigation context, using available communication systems, and indeed for digitalisation in the maritime domain at large. It relies on the Internet concept of the World Wide Web and nearly 100 organizations have signed up to it.

The MCP Consortium is independent and has a core of so-called host members, who sign the Consortium’s arrangement, and who are all non-profit organisations. Every other relevant organisation is invited to join as a regular member. IALA is part of the Consortium’s advisory board, which is intended to have representatives from international organisations. Further information is available from the website (<https://www.iala-aism.org/content/uploads/2019/02/Press-release-v4.pdf>)

The 2020 ENUW International Conference did not take place in view of the 14th IALA Symposium, for the first time covering both VTS and ENAV, which was scheduled to take place in Rotterdam in May of this year, but is now postponed to next year due to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The Korean Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries hosted the ENUW Conference-Asia Pacific in Seoul in June 2018 and September 2019.

The 2018 ENUW Conference-North America focused on the theme of “e-Navigation: Opening the door to the future – Emerging technologies and their impact in the maritime industry”. It was hosted by the California State University Maritime Academy at its campus in Vallejo, California. The overall theme of the 2019 Conference, held in Tampa, Florida was “e-Navigation: Today and tomorrow – Building the infrastructure and reaping benefits.”

All ENUW Conferences attract participation from around the world and a wide cross-section of stakeholders. They allow for fruitful exchange of views and experiences between equipment manufacturers and end users. Furthermore, in recent years, they have successfully promoted international cooperation in field tests, building on results obtained by test beds conducted in different countries. Other benefits concern verification of emerging e-navigation concepts and technologies, and discussions on the implementation of e-navigation solutions, global standardisation, and future e-navigation policy. The conference reports, which provide summaries of all presentations and main conclusions, can be downloaded, free of charge, from the website (<https://www.iala-aism.org/news-events/e-nav-underway/>).



Shipping is truly global and, therefore, global harmonization of standards is absolutely necessary for a successful implementation of the ambitious digital maritime agenda. Individual companies' solutions for e-navigation and the results of local, national and regional testbeds must be harmonized through international cooperation within and between the relevant international organizations, such as the IMO, the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO), the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the ITU, IALA and others.

It has been decided to broaden the scope of the ENUW Conferences to encompass all digital challenges and solutions in general for the maritime sector. The conferences will change name to Digital@Sea in 2020/21.

Workshops and seminars

Various workshops and seminars on topical issues calling for more in-depth technical discussion to support the Committees' work continue to be held regularly and are announced in the news section of the website (<https://www.iala-aism.org/news-events/news/>).

Due to the Covid-19 pandemic, the 4th Heritage Seminar that had been scheduled to take place in Salvador, Brazil in April 2020 has been postponed, as has the planned June 2020 workshop on S-100/S-200 development and portrayal in Aalesund, Norway (new dates to be confirmed on the website).

5 - WORLD MARINE AIDS TO NAVIGATION (WAtON) DAY

Members will recall that the 13th General Assembly in Incheon agreed to the establishment of an annual "World Marine Aids to Navigation Day" on 1st July, the date when IALA came into being in 1957, and adopted an Assembly Resolution to that effect (Resolution A13-04 of 29 May 2018).

The inaugural WAtON DAY event was hosted in Palma de Mallorca, Spain under the auspices of Puertos del Estado, with excellent organizational support from the Balearic Port Authority. It proved a great success also thanks to the unbridled enthusiasm of former IALA President Juan Francisco Rebollo.

Celebrations by the wider membership also exceeded all expectations. Many events took place around the world and hundreds of personal messages of support were posted via IALA LinkedIn from as far afield as Fiji and Vanuatu, South Africa and Vietnam. Also much in evidence was the potential to enthuse the younger generation, in particular, by showcasing technological innovations and digital applications for improved maritime connectivity.

The Council, at its 68th session in December 2018, approved "Marine Aids to Navigation – Successful Voyages, Sustainable Planet" as the theme for the inaugural WAtON Day on 1 July 2019. The same theme will be promoted for the 2020 celebration, for which Bulgaria will host the main event in Burgas on its Black Sea coast. A parallel event will be hosted by Japan in Tokyo later this year (date to be confirmed).

The chosen theme serves two principal objectives:

- To promote greater awareness of IALA by bringing to the attention of the wider public its role and the significance of its technical work in enhancing the safety of navigation worldwide.
- To improve civic society's perception of aids to navigation as modern and technologically advanced aids, which, alongside traditional lighthouses, embrace the latest digital developments and support new developments in all fields, including VTS.



Heritage Lighthouse of the Year

On the occasion of the 2019 WAtON Day celebration in Spain, Secretary-General Francis Zachariae presented the first Heritage Lighthouse of the Year award, kindly offered by the Korean Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries as a follow-up to the 2018 Incheon Declaration on Lighthouses as Cultural Heritage. The Lighthouse of the Year 2019 was the Corduan Lighthouse in France, and proud recipient was Ms Solange Majoureau who has done a tremendous work together with her team to make the case for UNESCO World Heritage Site recognition of the Corduan Lighthouse. Located off the Atlantic coast of France, this late 16th century, architecturally rich and exquisite lighthouse has continued to be active and fully functioning, without interruption, for over four centuries. (UNESCO's decision is expected this year.)

It will be the task of the ENG Committee to consider all nominations received for the selection of the 2020 Heritage Lighthouse of the Year. The deadline for submissions to the Secretary-General was 28 February 2020. The ENG Committee will decide on nominations and forward them, together with its chosen recommendation, to the Council, which is expected to make the final decision at its next session in June (C71).

6 - IALA CONFERENCES

The 20th IALA Conference will be hosted by Brazil in Rio de Janeiro in 2022 and the 21st IALA Conference by India in 2026.

7 - FUTURE GOVERNANCE: CHANGE OF IALA STATUS TO IGO

The adoption of the Convention on the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation (IALA Convention) by the Diplomatic Conference, convened in Kuala Lumpur last month (25 to 28 February), paves the way for Governments of United Nations (UN) member States to sign the Convention in authentic texts (English, French and Spanish). An inaugural signature ceremony will take place in Paris in November 2020.

Delegates with credentials of 50 States signed the Final Act of the Diplomatic Conference. This document attests to the structure and the proceedings of the Conference and, most importantly, formally records the agreement reached on the adoption of the Convention and on two resolutions. These pertain, respectively, to the languages of the new international Organization (see also below) and to the preparation of authentic texts of the Convention and the signature ceremony.

The high number of States supporting the Final Act should bode well for IALA becoming an Intergovernmental Organization (IGO) in the foreseeable future. However, for this to materialize as a concrete reality there needs to be a genuine commitment on the part of governments first to sign the Convention itself – and this at the earliest possible time. Their signature is required to kick start the process of ratification at the national level.

It is the hope that eventually most if not all States with National members will, at the very least, sign the Convention. This would demonstrate the general acceptance of the Convention's principal aim – to establish IALA as an IGO with a clear international mandate in the technical field of Marine Aids to Navigation and related services.

Entry into force of the Convention

Having reached this new chapter in our history, the focus must now be on achieving the required 30 ratifications (i.e. 30 instruments of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession) in order to trigger the Convention's entry into force worldwide. This will require continued diplomatic effort on the part of the French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Secretariat, working closely together, while the members, too, have an important role to play in raising



awareness of the Convention among the relevant Government departments and members of parliament in their respective countries.

Upon its entry into force, the Convention will supersede the existing IALA Constitution. However, IGO status will not in any way change IALA's principal aim, which is, as stated in its present Constitution, "to foster the safe, economic and efficient movement of vessels". Nor will it change its fundamental nature. IALA will remain, as before, a consultative technical organization.

Role of coastal States as Contracting Parties

As Contracting Parties to the Convention, coastal States will participate directly, at government level, in furthering the goals and objectives of IALA. Thus, they will aim to ensure that providers of aids to navigation and related services in their respective countries follow IALA Recommendations and Guidelines and implement the normative elements of the seven IALA Standards, in proportion to the particular needs of the concerned country.

The more coastal States become directly involved with IALA, the greater the opportunities to improve and harmonize Marine Aids to Navigation and related services on a worldwide basis. Direct involvement will also encourage coastal States to meet the legal obligations they have for safety of navigation as Contracting Parties to the SOLAS Convention, and this will be to the benefit of seafarers worldwide.

The World-Wide Academy (WWA) will continue to be engaged firmly with growing demand from lesser developed countries seeking to develop a maritime economy and, in this context, wishing to improve their ability to provide aids to navigation that meet their needs and, where appropriate, establish VTS. The role of the Academy is indispensable in bringing States in need into the fold of accepted international standards resulting from IALA's technical work.

Further in this regard, the Academy, from the onset of the commencement of its operations in January 2012, has coordinated its capacity-building work, where appropriate, with both the IMO and the IHO, as part of the UN's "Delivering as One" initiative and the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda. More recently, it is engaged in accelerating its Distance Learning initiative, in an effort to spread training opportunities based on the IALA Model Courses faster around the world. This initiative comes in addition to its ongoing, successful drive to ensure consistency in the quality of training through the IALA accreditation scheme, with accredited training organizations in different countries also becoming regional 'hubs of excellence', where appropriate.

Role of Industrial members as Affiliate members

As regards the all-important position of Industrial member within IALA, the Convention follows the approach of the Convention of the World Tourism Organization. This designates companies involved in the business of promoting tourism as Affiliate Members to ensure their inclusion as both a valid and a valuable category of its membership. IALA's Industrial members will thus be Affiliate Members of IALA as an IGO. This will safeguard and promote the continued, strong cohesion between them, as the suppliers of equipment and systems, and aids to navigation authorities and providers. This cohesion has always been key to maintaining the relevance of the work of IALA to end users – and indeed its lasting, authoritative standing within the world maritime community.

Smooth transition

The Convention includes robust arrangements for a smooth transition. These will ensure that the activities of IALA's organs and its technical work will continue uninterrupted, and that its responsibilities towards the maritime community will be undiminished and maintained with the customary high level of commitment and expertise.



All present National members of IALA from States that will not immediately become member States shall, subject to their formal request, become Associate Members of the Organization for a period of up to 10 years from the date of entry into force of the Convention, unless the General Assembly of the IGO decides to extend that period.

Once the IGO is established, its first General Assembly will finalize and adopt a set of General Regulations, including Financial Regulations. Their development is already well advanced thanks to several years of intensive work by the Council's Legal Advisory Panel and the Secretariat. Meanwhile, the finalization of the draft Headquarters Agreement will be taken care of by the Secretariat in cooperation with France's Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Languages of the IGO

Last but not least, following much debate, the Diplomatic Conference resolved that the working language of the new Organization will be English, and that the work and meetings of the Council, Committees and subsidiary bodies will be conducted in the working language.

It further determined that the General Assembly shall be conducted in the six official languages of the UN (Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish). Accordingly, input papers in the form of draft resolutions and the report shall be translated into the official languages.

The main output documents from the Diplomatic Conference – the Final Act, the two resolutions, the Convention and the reports – are available on the IALA web site <https://www.iala-aism.org/meeting-docs/diplomatic-conference/>

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