



DECLARATION OF COUNCIL CANDIDACY BY MEMBER STATE

Dear Secretary-General,

In accordance with Article 7.7 (d) of the Convention and Article 3.5 of the General Regulations of the association mutatis mutandis, I have the honour to inform you that I have been authorized to present **Ireland**, as a candidate for election to the Council of the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation in February 2025.

The attached statement sets out **Ireland's** credentials for a position on the Council. Should Ireland be elected it will be represented at Council meetings by:

Yvonne Shields O'Connor

Chief Executive of the Commissioners of Irish Lights
Harbour Road, Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, Ireland
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yvonne.shields@irishlights.ie

A statement setting out her suitability to represent Ireland is attached.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'William Priestley'.

William Priestley

Principal Officer, Maritime Transport Division, Department of Transport
13 December 2024



IRELAND 

Safe navigation is a prerequisite for maritime safety, trade, security, and the protection of the environment.

The Department of Transport in Ireland is responsible for Ireland's Maritime Transport Strategy, and which is underpinned by active participation in international maritime organisations, including International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA), International Maritime Organisation (IMO), International Telecommunication Union (ITU), International Labour Organisation (ILO), International Hydrographic Organisation (IHO), Paris MoU and others. etc.

Ireland through the Commissioners of Irish Lights has been an active National Member of IALA since its foundation in 1957 and will continue its active participation in the new IALA IGO.

Ireland has ratified the Convention on the International Organisation for Marine Aids to Navigation, which supports safe and efficient navigation around its coasts. Ireland already works closely with many international bodies and the need for international cooperation will increase.



Rialtas na hÉireann
Government of Ireland



An Roinn Iompair
Department of Transport



Commissioners of
IRISH LIGHTS | Navigation
and Maritime
Services

Ireland's maritime sector is responsible for transporting 90% of Ireland's imports and exports. Ireland has an efficient, well-connected and modern port sector and a coastline of 7,524km supported by an Aids to Navigation Network of 65 lighthouses, 20 beacons, 160 buoys, 155 electronic and 3,500 local aids.

- Ireland has been represented by Irish Lights at IALA since 1957. We currently participate in the ARM Committee – WG1 Navigation Requirements (Joe Daly), WG2 Information Services & Portrayal (Elaine Fitzgerald), the ENG Committee, WG1 Physical Aids to Navigation (Chris Scully) and the DTEC Committee WG2 – Emerging Digital Technologies (Ronan Boyle).
- Former colleagues have chaired the Radio Navigation Committee (Stuart Ruttle) and the ENG Committee (Seamus Doyle). Irish Lights was also a major contributor to the development of AIS (Steve Burrows) and we have contributed to the development of IALA Training Courses and Manuals and revision of the Navguide (Colin Day and Robert McCabe).
- Ireland is hosting the **ENG Committee** in Dublin from the 13th – 17th October in 2025 and Ireland is also hosting a **Sustainability in AtoN Provision Workshop** in Dublin 6th – 10th October.
- As a maritime safety organisation, Irish Lights recognises the significance of **climate change**. In this context, we have advanced the use of renewable energy technology on our buoy network with the use of solar, battery and LED technology.
- [Our Climate Action Roadmap 2030](#) sets out our ambitious plans for meeting our energy efficiency and emissions targets.
- Recent **engineering innovations** to support more sustainable operations at Irish lights has seen the successful implementation of a mechanical bearing solution allowing for the removal of mercury from a number of lighthouse structures whilst still allowing the retention of the historic Fresnel lens. Our Director of Coastal Operations, Clodagh Hanratty, gave a presentation on this at the IALA Conference in Brazil in 2023.
- Irish Lights has been at the forefront of using lighthouse and buoys as platforms to gather and transmit **METOcean information** to the mariner. In recent years Irish Lights has expanded this capacity by working with the Irish Meteorological service to provide near real-time meteorological data our navigation buoy network to enable impact-based decisions that protect against the loss of life and to mitigate against the effects of coastal flooding and erosion. Our Director of Navigation, Ronan Boyle, gave a presentation on this work at the IALA Conference in Brazil in 2023.
- Irish Lights operates a **lighthouse tourism brand** Great Lighthouses of Ireland (www.greatlighthouses.com) with 17 sites are accessible to the public in an initiative that aligns with IALAs Incheon Declaration agreed at the 19th IALA Conference in 2018. An independent socio-economic review confirmed that Great Lighthouses of Ireland has generated economic impacts of €16.86m and supported 409 jobs in coastal communities protecting Ireland's lighthouse and maritime heritage for the benefit of future generations.
- Ireland will host an **International Conference on Lighthouse Tourism and Maritime Heritage** on the 7th and 8th October, open to all members of IALA.

Ireland wants to play a leading role in the IALA Council over the coming years to ensure that the major strategic opportunities affecting the maritime sector internationally are addressed, including the following:

- Climate Change - In addition to the significant regulatory changes that must be negotiated in the coming years IALA must also work with others to address the maritime safety impacts of climate change.
- The 2027 World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-27) is already on the IALA agenda and that of all other maritime organisations. There are very significant opportunities for improved maritime communications, and we must work together to deliver the required standards and regulatory frameworks.
- The IMO GMDSS review highlighted the impact of modern communication systems such as Low Earth Orbit (LEO) Satellite Networks, and terrestrial technologies like VDES, LTE, 5G and 6G, can have on maritime safety. Safe delivery of these important advances will require extensive cooperation across the maritime sector.
- AtoN standardisation is important to the delivery of maritime safety, Marine Spatial Planning, and climate action. Standardisation requires cooperation on the audit of standards compliance whether through IMSAS audits or IALA. This is likely to require improved definition by IALA.
- Maritime security, Complementary Positioning, Navigation, and Timing (CPNT), cyber security, and mixed navigational environments where conventionally manned, remotely controlled, and unmanned vessels are interacting at the same sea area are also issues that will require cross organisational working to deliver safe navigation.
- Emergence of new technology is a key strategic driver for Irish Lights, for Ireland, and for IALA Member States, and the maritime IGO and NGO with whom we work. Successful, effective and safe delivery of appropriate new technology requires international cooperation at IALA.



IRELAND IS SEEKING ELECTION TO THE IALA COUNCIL

Ireland is seeking support for election to the IALA Council at the 1st General Assembly in Singapore in February 2025. If elected Ireland is honoured to nominate **Yvonne Shields O'Connor**, Chief Executive of The Commissioners of Irish Lights (Irish Lights), as its representative on the 1st Council based on her experience and track record of commitment to IALA and to international cooperation in maritime affairs. Her qualifying credentials are summarised below.

Yvonne Shields O'Connor – Ireland's Nominee for IALA Council

Qualifications and Experience

Yvonne's qualifications and experience are ideally suited to guiding the IALA IGO where business track record, governance experience, global vision, and technical awareness will all be required.



- Track record on the IALA Council (2011-2018 and 2023 to date).
- IALA AtoN Masters qualification, MSc. in Environmental Science, Master of Business Administration (MBA), Chartered Director, Associate Fellow of the Nautical Institute and Certified ESG Board Member.
- Chief Executive of the Commissioners of Irish Lights, since 2011.
- Appointed by the Minister of State for Transport, as Chairperson of Ireland's National Search and Rescue Committee (NSARC) in 2020.
- Previously Director of Strategic Planning and Development (2004 – 2011) and Director of Science and Technology (1999-2004) at Ireland's Marine Institute .
- Over 25 years' experience of policy, strategy, research, programme development and operational delivery in the marine sector in Ireland.
- Ministerial appointee to Harnessing Our Ocean Wealth Task Force, National Energy Research Council and National Research Council for Science, Technology and Engineering.
- Served on many EU (incl. Strategic Advisory Board for Healthy Oceans and Expert Panel on Marine Research Infrastructure) and international (incl. Policy Advisor National Science Foundation Washington, US.) committees.
- Record of successful innovation in AtoN use including, transition to Diesel and Mercury free AtoN network, AtoN Met / Hydro data network, and Great Lighthouses of Ireland Tourism and Maritime Heritage brand.



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