

From: IALA
To: IEC

C02-12.3.2
(DTEC4-15.2.3)

LIAISON NOTE

Request regarding redistribution of the S-421 schema

(Annex D of IEC 63173-1)

1 INTRODUCTION

Many IALA member states and organisation have started to implement digital maritime services based on international technical specifications, conduct tests of these services, and provide feedback to the relevant international organisations. One of IALA's key activities is to support international efforts to advance digital solutions in the maritime domain.

2 DISCUSSION

IALA members are contributing to the development and testing of software and systems that implement maritime digital services based on international standards. These efforts rely on the availability of machine-readable standardised data schemas, such as the S-421 schema defined in Annex D of IEC 63173-1, which provide the technical structure needed for systems to read and process route data accurately and consistently.

These schemas are essential for ensuring interoperability and harmonisation across different implementations and services. To support collaborative and open development, it is important that such schemas are accessible and clearly licensed for redistribution – particularly when used in open-source software projects. It is also expected that open-source implementation will increase adoption and visibility of the IEC standard.

It is noted that most other S-100 product specification schemas are already publicly available¹, reflecting the broader trend towards openness in the maritime digital standards community. In this context, IEC has previously published the S-421 schema through the CIRM website², which has supported ongoing development activities. However, to ensure legal clarity and broader adoption, formal confirmation from IEC is needed regarding the terms under which the S-421 schema may be redistributed.

3 ACTION REQUESTED

IEC is requested to:

1. Clarify that it does not assert legal ownership over the S-421 schema (Annex D of IEC 63173-1) in a way that would restrict its redistribution as part of open-source projects (e.g. via GitHub); or
2. Explicitly permits the redistribution of the schema under a recognised permissive open-source licence such as the Apache License 2.0, which would allow IALA members and others to use the schema in support of harmonisation and interoperability.

¹ See [IHO Geospatial Information Registry](#) and [IALA S-200 Product Specification and Development Status - IALA AISM](#)

² See <https://cirm.org/route-exchange>