

**IALA COUNCIL**  
**3<sup>rd</sup> session**



**8-12 December 2025**  
**Mumbai, India**

## 6.1 - REPORT BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

### 1. GENERAL

This document provides a general update on various matters related to the governance and operations of IALA as of 29 October 2025. Some topics will be addressed in more detail under other agenda items.

The committee and panel meetings held in September and October were highly successful and conducted in a hybrid format. Participation was substantial, underscoring that the current headquarters is too small to comfortably accommodate the Committees.

The two workshops on International Mobile Telecommunication held in Karlsruhe and on Sustainability for Marine AtoNs held in Dublin were very successful with good participation.

The Convention on the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation has now been ratified, approved, accepted, or acceded to by 42 States. It is expected that additional States will follow shortly.

Assets and liabilities have been successfully transferred from the Association to the Organization and the Association will formally cease to exist as soon as possible after the meeting of the Association Council on 20 November 2025.

The recruitment process for a Documents Controller and Legal Advisor has been successfully completed.

### 2. MEMBERSHIP

The transfer of memberships to the IGO has been successfully completed.

As of today, the membership of IALA consists of 347 from 101 countries and territories categorized as follows:

42 Member States  
50 Associate Members  
176 Affiliate Industrial Members  
79 Affiliate Members



This represents a net decrease of four members compared with the same period last year. However, this figure does not fully capture the increasing number of applications, as the organization has welcomed 22 new members since 1 January 2025, but some memberships have consolidated into Member States, as well as terminations and resignations that took effect on 1 January 2025.

The Secretariat continues to actively pursue the collection of contributions and fees. As in previous years, calls for contributions and fees were issued in September, with a payment deadline of 31 January. A reminder regarding outstanding contributions and fees was sent during the first week of October. A detailed list of outstanding debts is provided under agenda item 9.3, and a proposed list of terminations appears under agenda item 15.3. Further details on membership will be presented under the relevant agenda items.

### 3. WORK OF THE COMMITTEES AND SUSIDIARY BODIES

The ARM, DTEC, and VTS Committees convened between September and October 2025 in a hybrid format, combining physical participation at IALA Headquarters with online attendance. This ensured broad accessibility and maintained a high level of engagement, with participation figures comparable to previous sessions.

The ENG Committee met in Dublin, Ireland, back-to-back with the IALA Sustainability Workshop in October 2025.

Each committee achieved significant progress during its session.

VTS Committee: Finalised the draft Guideline on VTS English communication competency testing and the Guideline on the recruitment, training and certification of VTS Personnel. A circular letter was issued to all Members and Associate Members requesting the designation of national coordinators for the VTS questionnaire 2025, and the secretariat is developing a new online system for its delivery.

DTEC Committee: Made substantial progress on joint tasks with international organisations such as IMO, IEC, 3GPP, and ITU, particularly on IMT-2030 and IP-based communications. The Committee also revised two important documents: the specification on the Maritime Service Registry (MSR) and the Guideline on Application-Specific Messages (ASM), supporting harmonised data exchange and service management within the maritime domain.

ENG Committee: Finalised two recommendations — one on the strategy for maintaining Marine Radar Beacon (Racon) service capability and another on the technical parameters on Racon. The Committee also continued work on branding and marketing of heritage lighthouses and on the revision of the selection process for heritage lighthouse designation.

ARM Committee: Finalised the Recommendation on MASS, which will serve as the foundation for the upcoming MASS Guidelines in 2026. The Committee also completed the draft Guideline on drone operation for Marine Aids to Navigation and VTS Infrastructure management for Council approval, and advanced work on the S-200 series Product



Specifications and related documents, including a revision of G1087. It also reviewed risk management documentation and surveyed global risk analysis tools for inclusion in the IALA Risk Management Toolbox.

The results of each committee's work will be presented in more details under their respective agenda items.

A Workshop on International Mobile Telecommunication (IMT) for Marine Aids to Navigation was held from 1 to 5 September 2025 at the Federal Waterways and Shipping Agency in Karlsruhe, Germany.

The workshop provided an essential platform for discussing the integration of next-generation communication technologies—specifically IMT-2030 (6G)—into the maritime domain.

A IALA Workshop on Sustainability and Aids to Navigation hosted by Irish Lights in Dublin brought together experts to review environmental, technological, operational, and training aspects across the sector.

The relevance of UN Sustainable Development Goals, the urgent need to address climate change, and the importance of promoting sustainability through IALA publications, training, and collaboration was emphasised. Participants acknowledged the value of shared experiences and practical application, linking outcomes to IALA's Strategic Vision.

It was decided that IALA should develop and promote a sustainability public document based on the discussions and output of this workshop.

#### 4. ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

In April 2025 all staff members were successfully transferred from the Association to the International Organization. In order to become permanent staff members of the Organization, the Association's staff members had to sign new employment contracts with the Organization. The new contracts are now governed by the Staff Rules approved by the Council.

All other administrative contracts (suppliers, insurance, etc.) were also transferred to the new entity. The transfer of the building owned by IALA was formalized by the signing of a notarial act at the end of July 2025.

The IALA and WWA staff currently consist of 16 full-time employees and eight consultants—seven in the Academy section and one in the Communications section.

On 1 October 2025, Mrs. Christina Schneider has been appointed as 'Document Controller and Legal Advisor', a key position in the quality control process and legal advice to the Secretary-General and the Secretariat.

From April to September, IALA welcomed an intern who worked on AIS data analysis and optimization.



The recruitment of a permanent Executive Assistant in the administrative team is postponed to next year.

## 5. COMMUNICATION

The Secretariat Communication Group has continued to coordinate and manage communication activities effectively. The Group has overseen regular updates to both social media platforms and the official website.

Since attaining IGO status, IALA has received invitations to speak at several high-level international events, demonstrating the positive impact and enhanced recognition resulting from its new status.

The IALA Communication Team has also explored concepts for new memorabilia and identified additional media channels suitable for promoting the Organisation in its capacity as an IGO.

Furthermore, the IALA website has undergone a series of visual and structural enhancements to ensure that members benefit from an improved user experience and have access to the most up-to-date information and news.

## 6. THE CHANGE OF STATUS PROJECT- TRANSITION PERIOD

The Convention on the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation entered into force on 22 August 2024 and has been ratified, approved, accepted, or acceded to by 42 States.

The Headquarters Agreement was adopted by the General Assembly on 18 February 2025 and signed by the French Government on 4 March 2025. Its provisions, including those relating to privileges and immunities, entered into force through Decree No. 2025-196 on 28 February 2025.

The complex transition from the former IALA (the Association) to the new IALA (the Organization) has been completed with the assistance of a French Law firm and KPMG. All assets and liabilities have been transferred. The Constitution of the Association will be terminated automatically once all legal formalities required under French law—initiated by the Association Council—are completed. This will be confirmed by the Association Council at an extraordinary meeting 20 November.

As an intergovernmental organization, IALA will no longer hold consultative status with the IMO. Instead, their relationship will be governed by a formal agreement. The IALA General Assembly approved the draft agreement in February 2025, and the IMO Assembly is scheduled to approve it on their side in November 2025.

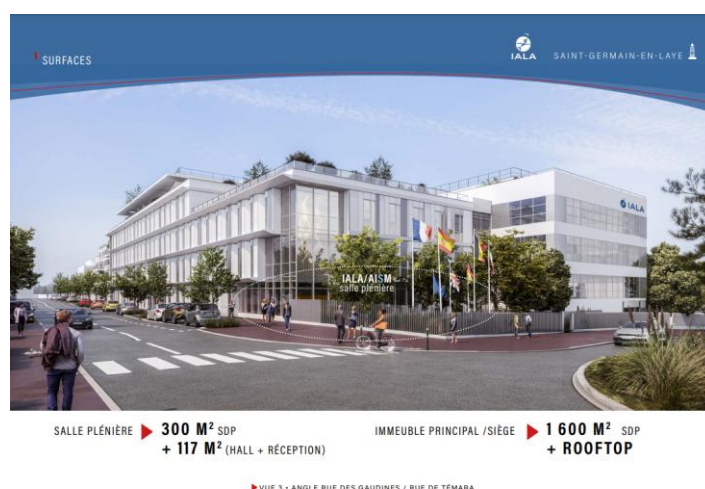
A meeting between the IMO and IALA Secretaries-General to discuss the agreement is scheduled for 27 November 2025.



## 7. NEW HEADQUARTER

As reported at the General Assembly, the French Government has offered its assistance in securing a suitable location for the new IGO headquarters. This matter is urgent, as the current premises are too small to accommodate the growing number of new members joining the Organization. During the September/October Committee meetings, attendance exceeded the capacity of the plenary room, meeting facilities, and lounge areas.

The French Government has confirmed its decision by email. Unfortunately, it has not yet been possible to sign the contract with the developer, as a formal written decision from the French authorities is still pending. There remains a possibility that the new facilities will be ready for the Committee season in the second half of 2026, although completion is more likely in the spring of 2027.



## 8. DEVELOPMENTS OF THE WORLD-WIDE ACADEMY

The World-Wide Academy continues to thrive under the leadership of the Dean and the Academy Board, chaired by Admiral Tsuguo Awai of the Japan Aids to Navigation Association.

The Academy's activities are expanding steadily, with an increasing number of initiatives and growing recognition from coastal States and partner organizations. In addition to the S-100/S-200 standards training mentioned at our previous meeting, this year has been marked by numerous Level 1.1 "Manager of AtoN" training sessions, as well as the first Level 1.2 "Master of AtoN" course held in the Americas — specifically in Chile.

The strong engagement of China and India, each of which successfully hosted two significant sessions for the benefit of the international community should be highlighted. Furthermore, an unprecedented number of participants attended our five sessions dedicated to risk management using the IALA Toolbox.

In terms of capacity building and technical missions, the Academy is proud to have completed its first mission in Iraq, supporting the country's recovery efforts. In addition, the Academy hosted and chaired the annual meeting of the Joint Capacity Building Cooperation Group last September. This forum brings together representatives from seven international



organizations — including IMO, IHO, UNESCO/IOC, and IMPA — to share experiences and develop a new methodology for joint operations under the United Nations “Deliver as One” concept.

As an independently funded body, the Academy owes its continued success to the generous support of its sponsors, who provide both direct and indirect funding, as well as to the invaluable contributions of the four IALA Committees. I am also pleased to note our high expectations for the years ahead, and I wish to extend my sincere gratitude to the United Kingdom for not only renewing but also increasing its financial sponsorship for the next three years.

The Dean will provide a more detailed briefing under the relevant agenda item.

#### **9. THE COUNCIL IS INVITED TO**

Note the information provided in the report.