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EXTERNAL RELATIONS

(b) Relations with intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations

Proposed new arrangement of cooperation with the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation (IALA)

Submitted by France on behalf of IALA

SUMMARY

Executive summary: This document is intended to update the IMO Council on the transition of the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA) from a non-governmental international organization to an intergovernmental organization called the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation (IALA), and propose an arrangement of cooperation with the latter.

*Strategic direction,
if applicable:* Not applicable

Output: OW 9

Action to be taken: Paragraph 13

Related documents: A 29/INF.8; A 31/INF.7 and A 33/INF.8

Background

1 This document is submitted by the French Government as a depositary of the newly established Convention on behalf of the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation (IALA), and provides a request in the annex from the Secretary-General of IALA. It serves as an update on the transformation of IALA from a non-governmental international organization to an intergovernmental organization on 22 August 2024, when the Convention on the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation entered into force.

2 This transformation has been a long-term objective of IALA, aimed at augmenting its capacity to act as an international technical organization assisting coastal States. Specifically, this Organization supports its Member States in fulfilling their international legal obligations related to the provision of Marine Aids to Navigation including Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) under SOLAS and other relevant conventions.

3 Though this transformation signifies a milestone event in IALA's history, it will not alter its nature and principal aim. The Organization will remain a consultative, technical and not-for-profit organization.

Objective of the transformation

4 The underlying aim of IALA's transformation remains consistent with its original mission: to work collaboratively in facilitating the safe, efficient movement of vessels by standardizing and improving Marine Aids to Navigation on a global scale.

5 This endeavour serves the dual purpose of benefitting the maritime community and safeguarding the marine environment. The objectives of IALA's transformation into an intergovernmental organization are as follows:

- .1 fostering the safe and efficient movement of vessels through the improvement and harmonization of Marine Aids to Navigation worldwide for the benefit of the maritime community and the protection of the marine environment;
- .2 promoting access to technical cooperation and capacity-building on all matters related to the development and transfer of expertise, science and technology in relation to Marine Aids to Navigation;
- .3 encouraging and facilitating the general adoption of the highest practicable standards in matters concerning Marine Aids to Navigation; and
- .4 providing for the exchange of information on matters under consideration by the Organization.

Current status

6 After more than a decade of preparation, coastal States gathered at a diplomatic conference held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in February 2020. At this event, 50 States came to a consensus on the text of a Convention that would facilitate IALA's transformation into an intergovernmental organization.

7 The French Government assumed the role of the depositary of this newly established Convention. The Convention opened for signatures in January 2021 and a signing ceremony was subsequently held at IALA's headquarters in January 2022, thereby commencing the ratification process. As of now, 50 States have signed, and 35 States have ratified, approved or acceded to the Convention, which entered into force on 22 August 2024.

8 Member States which have not yet ratified or acceded to the Convention are recommended to formalize their commitment to standardizing and enhancing Marine Aids to Navigation, including VTS, globally, thereby contributing to safer and more efficient maritime activities while fulfilling their international legal obligations.

9 The first General Assembly of IALA as an intergovernmental organization will convene from 18 to 21 February 2025 in Singapore. All IALA Member States, Associate Members and Affiliate Members are invited to participate in the event.

10 More information on the transformation of IALA to an intergovernmental organization can be found at <https://www.iala-aism.org/the-igo-project/>.

IALA's relationship with IMO

11 IALA has held consultative status with IMO as a non-governmental organization since 1961. However, this Organization will cease to exist when the formalities for termination required by French law commenced by IALA's Council are complete.

12 As the host nation of the newly established intergovernmental organization IALA and the depository of its Convention, and to ensure the continuation of the excellent relationship between IALA and IMO, France submits this proposal to formalize a cooperation arrangement between IMO and IALA as an intergovernmental organization, in accordance with Assembly resolution A.1168(32) on *Relations with intergovernmental organizations*.

Action requested of the Council

13 The Council is invited to note the information provided in this document and approve IALA's request for an arrangement of cooperation with IMO.

ANNEX



24-215 /IALA/IMO

Saint Germain En Laye, 17 October 2024

To the International Maritime Organization

Subject: Update to IMO Council on IALA's change of status and proposal for new cooperation agreements

In accordance with the International Maritime Organization (IMO) Assembly Resolution A.1168(32) on relations with intergovernmental organizations, the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation (IALA) kindly requests the IMO Council to consider establishing a new agreement between IMO and IALA.

IALA was established in 1957 as a consultative technical organization. It is recognized worldwide as the peak organization responsible for coordinating the continuous improvement and harmonization of Marine Aids to Navigation and related services to the benefit of safety of navigation, efficiency of shipping traffic and protection of the environment. It aims to fulfil its responsibilities by encouraging and facilitating the adoption of the highest practicable standards in matters concerning Marine Aids to Navigation and through international cooperation and the exchange of information among its members, governments and international organizations. Since 1961, IALA has enjoyed consultative status at the IMO.

At its XIIth session held in La Coruna, Spain in May 2014, the IALA General Assembly adopted a resolution stating its firm belief that intergovernmental organization (IGO) status will best facilitate IALA's aims in the 21st century and determining that the new status should be achieved, as soon as possible, through the development of an international treaty instrument (GA Resolution A.01 of 27 May 2014).

After more than a decade of preparation, coastal States gathered at a diplomatic conference held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, in February 2020. At this event, 50 states came to a consensus on the text of a Convention that would facilitate IALA's transformation into an IGO.

The French government assumed the role of the depositary of this newly established Convention. The Convention opened for signatures in January 2021 and a signing ceremony was subsequently held in IALA HQ in January 2022, thereby commencing the ratification process. As of now, 50 States have signed, and 35 States have ratified, approved or acceded to the Convention which entered into force on 22 August 2024.

IALA firmly believes that IGO status best supports IALA's aims and activities in the future. It will benefit the Member States and Members, other International Organizations and their Member States, as well as the shipping industry by continuous improvement and enhanced harmonization of Marine Aids to Navigation. The Convention provides a fit-for-purpose international legal framework that ensures transparency and good governance, strengthens IALA's

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positions to work in close collaboration with Governments and other IGOs, and fosters its technical and consultative work as the leading international expert body concerned with Marine Aids to Navigation and related services.

With this in mind, IALA kindly requests the IMO Council to consider this proposal for a new agreement, in line with Assembly Resolution A.1168(32) on relations with intergovernmental organizations, to ensure the continued strong relationship with IALA as an IGO.

Yours sincerely,



Francis Zachariae
Secretary-General
International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation
