

INTERSESSIONAL WORKING GROUP ON  
THE COMPREHENSIVE REVIEW OF THE  
STCW CONVENTION AND CODE

1st meeting  
Agenda item 2

ISWG-STCW 1/2/31  
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ENGLISH ONLY

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## CONSIDERATION OF IDENTIFIED GAPS AND PROVISIONS TO BE ADDRESSED

**Identification of gaps identified during a review of the STCW Convention and Code:  
Training for deck officers in the IALA Maritime Buoyage System**

**Submitted by IALA**

### SUMMARY

*Executive summary:* Based on the methodology established by HTW10, this document provides gaps identified by IALA while conducting a review of the STCW Convention and Code.

*Strategic direction,  
if applicable:* 6

*Output:* 6.17

*Action to be taken:* Paragraph 5

*Related document:* HTW 10/INF.6

## Background

1 The ongoing evolution of the Maritime Buoyage System (MBS) and the increasing adoption of digital Marine Aids to Navigation (AtoN) technologies highlight the need to revisit training practices. This review is critical to ensure that deck officers acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively leverage these technologies, thereby enhancing the safety and efficiency of navigation.

## Discussion

2 In line with the structured approach outlined by HTW 10 and approved by MSC 108 for a comprehensive review of the STCW Convention and Code, IALA has collaborated with key stakeholders to conduct a thorough assessment. The goal is to identify existing gaps and outdated provisions that require updating or revision.

3 The findings from this review are detailed in the annex, which outlines the key issues identified.

4 IALA has identified gaps in part A of the STCW Code, as set out in the annex, for consideration by the ISWG.

**Action requested of the ISWG**

5 The ISWG is invited to consider the information provided in the document and the annex, and take action, as appropriate.

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**ANNEX****TRAINING FOR DECK OFFICERS IN THE IALA MARITIME BUOYAGE SYSTEM**

<p>Identified gap, with references to the existing provision, if applicable</p>	<p>STCW Code: Part A, chapter II – Standards regarding the master and deck department</p>
	<p>The STCW Code (Model Course) currently mandates only two hours of training on the IALA Maritime Buoyage System (MBS), which is widely regarded as insufficient for comprehending the complexities of modern Marine Aids to Navigation (AtoN). The existing provisions primarily focus on traditional AtoN, such as buoyage, and fail to adequately cover recent developments like electronic marks, Mobile AtoN, and Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS).</p> <p>Mariners responsible for the safe navigation of various vessels should be equipped to determine their vessel's position using a range of AtoN, including visible aids like lighthouses, beacons, and buoys, as well as radio and satellite systems, and Automatic Identification System (AIS) AtoN. Regular use of these aids is essential for enhancing the safety and efficiency of voyages.</p> <p>However, it is recognized that not all mariners possess the same level of knowledge regarding AtoN, due to various factors. A deeper understanding of AtoN will enable mariners to utilize them more effectively, thereby improving situational awareness. Currently, there is a notable lack of practical training, and challenges persist in providing adequate AtoN training.</p> <p>To address these deficiencies, it is essential to extend training hours, update curricula to incorporate technological advancements, and include practical exercises to ensure that deck officers are proficient in modern AtoN and aware of their potential limitations.</p> <p>In response to these needs, IALA has published Guideline G1173, "Guidance on Marine Aids to Navigation (AtoN) Awareness and Training for Mariners."</p>
	<p>To enhance the knowledge, understanding and proficiency in the STCW Code, tables A-II/1 and A-II/3, the following reference sentence should be added to column 2 of the tables: "Refer to the appropriate recommendations and guidelines of IALA and SN/Circ.NNN – Maritime Buoyage System." (Note: The new SN/Circ. on MBS has not been assigned yet).</p>
	<p>2. Not to downscale existing minimum standards of training, certification and watchkeeping</p>

	<p>This addition will ensure that deck officers are directed to the latest guidelines and recommendations, keeping their training aligned with current standards and practices in the area of Marine Aids to Navigation.</p> <p>By incorporating updated guidelines and recommendations from IALA, including electronic marks, and mobile AtoN, the training of deck officers will remain relevant and comprehensive. This ensures that the knowledge, understanding and proficiency of deck officers keep pace with technological advancements and modern navigational practices, thereby enhancing maritime safety and operational efficiency.</p>
Criterion	Issues emanating/resulting from both external factors and existing provisions
	<p>Technological Advancements: The rapid development of new technologies in the Marine Aids to Navigation necessitates an update in the training curriculum to ensure deck officers are equipped with the latest knowledge and skills. The specific competencies required are outlined in IALA Guideline G1173.</p>
Specific area(s)	1. Emerging technologies on ships and ship operations