

IALA COUNCIL 73rd session



8-10 June 2021
Video Conference

8 – NATIONAL MATTERS

National Matters Update by Australia

Australia presents an update on national matters of relevance to the work of IALA.

Impact of COVID-19 on AtoN Maintenance

Over the last 6 months Australia has undertaken major maintenance at our heritage lighthouse at Rottnest Island. The property, built in 1896, stands at the highest point on an island off the west coast of Australia, with a view of Perth city on the distant mainland. At 38 metres tall, this is the fourth tallest lighthouse in Australia. The project removed asbestos and lead paint, and repaired areas that had corroded and generally suffered from the ravages of time. In addition to its primary role as a Category 1 AtoN, the lighthouse is also open to tourists.

We are also embarking on a major project to replace the above-water components of 13 steel piles, in Port Hedland, also in Western Australia. The structures were temporarily repaired following extensive damage by Cyclone Veronica in 2019. The project will raise the height of the structures to protect the Category 1 & 2 AtoN they host from wave action during the next storm. Port Hedland is the world's largest bulk export port and extended closure of the channel would have a significant impact on Australia's economy. The project is currently in the procurement stage, and we anticipate completion of the works no later than June 2023.

Compared to many countries, Australia has been very fortunate during the COVID pandemic. However, undertaking our capital works programme has been challenging. In response to COVID cases, states within Australia have been restricting travel and closing borders – often with no notice. Domestic travel for project staff and contractors has been difficult, and we have experienced delays with importing materials and specialist equipment. Our thoughts are with those who have been impacted both personally and professionally by COVID-19.

Climate Change

Australia, like many countries, is closely considering and addressing the impacts of climate change on our AtoN network. The specific impacts on the maritime industry through more extreme weather events that can threaten port infrastructure and AtoN's are being monitored.

Australia's priority climate change concerns at present are:

- Addressing the costs of repairs to damaged AtoNs. In the last two years, AtoN repairs due to cyclone damage have cost Australia more than AUD\$1 million.
- Tropical cyclones predicted to become more intense, requiring structures to be designed to be more resilient, which inevitably increases construction cost;
- Sea level rises and the obvious implications for low lying areas where many AtoN's are located, and
- As we come into the southern hemisphere's summer period, there is potential for bushfires to cause physical damage to AtoN's and for smoke to reduce visibility in coastal areas.



These are serious problems that are increasing in their intensity and consequences, requiring all IALA members to work together to closely monitor developments and be ready to implement the necessary changes. Australia looks forward to working on these issues with technical committee members and Counsellors.

Discontinuation of Differential Global Positioning Systems (DGPS)

After widespread industry consultation and an extensive information campaign, AMSA has discontinued its radio-beacon DGPS service from 1 July 2020. AMSA was satisfied the service offered little ongoing benefit to mariners given: the advances in performance of GPS and recognising there are now multiple global satellite navigation constellations and emerging augmentation systems.

Marine Notice 03/2020 and an Australian Notice to Mariners 363/2020 have been issued. AMSA's website has further information for alternate options for high accuracy positioning - Shutdown of AMSA's DGPS (www.amsa.gov.au).

Australia / New Zealand Satellite Based Augmentation System (SBAS) Project

The Governments of Australia and New Zealand have initiated a SBAS project for the Australia and New Zealand region. The project will augment multi-constellation Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) signals across all of mainland Australia, New Zealand and our maritime zones. It will also support the aviation, road transport and other sectors, who all have a requirement for high accuracy and integrity-assured positioning.

The project is now open for tender and is planned to be approved for aviation use by late 2023/24.

Australia is currently liaising with the European GNSS Agency (GSA) to support their submission to the International Electrotechnical Commission (IEC) for the development of a test standard for marine SBAS receivers.

GSA recently submitted a proposal for a new work item to the 80th session of the IEC's Technical Committee. The test standard will be based on existing IMO performance standards as IMO is yet to develop a performance standard for SBAS. Australia supports the proposal.

Australia and New Zealand also submitted a paper to 8th session of the IMO Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR) outlining reasons why IMO should develop a performance standard.

More information on the SBAS project can be found on the Geoscience Australia website (www.ga.gov.au).

Vessel Traffic Services (VTS)

AMSA is the national competent authority for VTS in Australia. There are presently 15 authorised VTS in Australia and a further 10 VTS are preparing to apply for authorisation.