

**IALA COUNCIL
74th session**



**13-17 December 2021
IALA Headquarters**

6.1 - REPORT BY THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

1. GENERAL

This document provides a general update on several matters related to the governance and operation of IALA. Some matters will be dealt with in greater detail under other agenda items.

Notwithstanding the COVID-19 pandemic restrictions IALA and the World-Wide Academy are on track with their respective work programmes and planned activities. Since the COVID outbreak, all meetings have been virtual, and this meeting of the Council is the first physical meeting in the HQ conducted as a hybrid event.

Each of the four Committees have met remotely once again, during September and October, in accordance with established procedures. These innovative working arrangements has proved to be remarkably effective and in total, 481 attendees logged on during this session and they had approximately 210 meetings.

This success is a great tribute to the flexibility of the committee leadership and participants, who all made tremendous efforts and worked in the well-known spirit of IALA.

Pending the health situation, it is planned to revert to the normal meetings in the new year 2022, because face-to-face meetings remain IALA's preferred mode of operation. However, the Secretariat is planning for the committee and panel meetings to take place in a new hybrid version with a combination of virtual and physical meetings and for that purpose the headquarters has been updated with new Wi-Fi and fixed cameras for a more hybrid and virtual post pandemic method of working.

The Secretariat together with the members have executed many virtual events since C73 in June. These events have all been well attended and very successful and prove that the on-line meetings will remain as an effective supplement to face-to-face meetings.

The membership of IALA is growing even after termination by Council of several members for non-payment and the interest in the committee work is very satisfying.

The Convention on the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation is open for signatures at the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs in Paris until 26 January 2022. So far (15 November 2021) seventeen States have signed, and three States have ratified or accepted the Convention.

2. MEMBERSHIP

The membership of IALA consists of 319 members: 90 National, 156 Industrial and 73 Associate, which is three members more than at the same time last year, and after the termination or resignation of some



members which took effect from 1 January 2021. The movements in membership in the different categories since C73 are the following:

Applications

- One application was received for National membership and provisionally accepted. It is now awaiting the Council confirmation.
- Ten new applications were received for Industrial membership; Seven were provisionally accepted and are to be confirmed by the Council; three are awaiting approval by the Council in addition to the one which was put in hold at the last Council (Alltek Marine, Taiwan, China).

Resignation

- One resignation was received from Industrial membership and one from Associate membership.

Members in arrear

Two National members remain suspended for non-payment of their contributions (Algeria and Rep of Congo). To help them solve their debts, the previous years were waived for Algeria and Rep of Congo and only the 2019 remained due in addition to the 2020 contribution. In November 2020, a letter was received from Algeria explaining that this was due to a very long administrative process to pay non-governmental contributions, but that all the steps were taken to solve this matter. They also expressed their will to remain a member. Therefore, with the recommendations of the auditors, these members are not issued their calls for contributions anymore to prevent the increase of their debts.

In addition to that, the number of members in arrears has considerably come down due to a successful collection of debt by the Secretariat after restructuring of the staff.

The following organizations are now in the position to be removed from IALA membership for non-payment of their contributions: Northwest Plastics Ltd in Canada, Zhejiang Space-Iching Science & Technology and BoLoomo Beijing Technology Co. Ltd in the People's Republic of China and Qatar Port Management Company.

More details on membership are in the agenda items 9 and 15.

3. DIGITAL DEVELOPMENTS – WORKING ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE COMMITTEES AND SUBSIDIARY BODIES

The arrangements for the virtual committees in 2020 and 2021 have been very successful using the online facilities offered to the membership and the committee's dashboard hosted on the IALA website.

These successes could not have been achieved without the assistance of the Chairs, Vice-Chairs and participants as a whole to engage so wholeheartedly in the work.

The virtual meetings have been arranged with an opening plenary and three to four weeks of intersessional meetings and presentations, a period of silent approval of output document and a closing plenary. Even if these virtual meetings have been very successful face-to-face meetings are still the preferred option for IALA and many members have expressed their wish to resume the physical meetings in St. Germain-en-Laye. It is of course difficult to predict the health situation, but it is envisaged that in-person meetings could potentially resume in 2022. The first meeting currently scheduled is the session of the Policy Advisory Panel, to begin on 1 February 2022.

The Committee meetings will be conducted in a hybrid version with a physical week, including the possibility of on-line participation, in the headquarters and virtual meetings between the opening plenary and the closing plenary. There will also be a period for silent approval of the output documents. A more



detailed plan will be presented to the Council following a meeting of the Policy Advisory Panel in late November 2021.

4. ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

With the latest reorganization the IALA and WWA staff now consist of 13 full time employed members and four consultants (three in the WWA section and one for Communication). Ms. Virginia Marshall will retire in April 2022 and has numerical been replaced by Ms. Julie Navarre.

The Secretariat has mainly been working from home since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic but has taken up physical work at the HQ in Saint-Germain-en-Laye from 1 September 2021. The Staff regulation has been updated to accommodate the newly implemented system of working from home (télétravail) which prove to be very efficient and save a lot of time and travel costs for the staff.

Often it is preferable to travel for certain meetings and work and whilst we have shown it is possible to meet virtually, virtual meetings are not the preferred scenario for relations to members, many of the WWA missions and other meetings etc. where it is considered essential to meet physical when situation again permits.

Since October the staff has conducted several missions abroad both in Europe, Americas and Africa.

5. THE CHANGE OF STATUS PROJECT

The signing ceremony of the Convention on the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation was held on 27 January 2021 in Paris and as depositary State of the Convention, France, represented by Mrs. Annick Girardin, Minister for Marine Affairs, was the first State to sign the Convention.

This ceremony marked the opening for signature of the Convention for a period of one year. All Member States of the United Nations, and in particular the other signatories of the Final Act of the Kuala Lumpur Conference, are invited to sign the Convention at the Protocol of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs.

States that have signed the Convention are then invited to transmit the instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval to France, the depositary State. Once the period for signature is closed on 26 January 2022, all Member States of the United Nations that have not signed, may accede to the Convention, which will enter into force "on the ninetieth day after the date of deposit of the thirtieth instrument of ratification, acceptance, approval or accession".

The certified versions of the Convention in Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish can be found on the IALA web site <https://www.iala-aism.org/the-igo-project/>

To achieve the 30 signatures before the end of the signature period the French government will host a ceremony in Paris by invitation from the Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs. This ceremony is likely to take place in January 2022.

The General Regulations are prepared in a draft based on the adopted Convention and will be approved at the first General Assembly of the organization. The draft General regulation and its Financial Regulations were made available as an information paper at the Conference in Kuala Lumpur. IALA will host a meeting for all members, who have signed or acceded to the Convention during 2022 I order to have a mature version of the General Regulations ready for the first General Assembly of the new organization.

A draft HQ Agreement is prepared by the French Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs. This will be discussed in the Legal Advisory Panel and finalized in due time before the entry into force of the Convention.



6. PREPARATION FOR THE 20TH CONFERENCE

Unfortunately, the 20th Conference in Rio de Janeiro had to be postponed to May 2023 due to the COVID-19 pandemic and with the uncertainty of the future situation. (See Intersessional Decision of the Council of April 2021).

The preparations for the Conference at the Windsor Convention Centre are progressing well and decision on the theme and topics has been taken. Call for abstracts has been issued but postponed one year.

The General Assembly will convene during the conference and for the first time the seven standards will be updated. The preparation for the General Assembly is a separate point on the agenda.

The first meetings of the Steering Group for the preparation of the conference have been held and the Industrial Members Committee has held several meetings and visited Rio de Janeiro and inspected the possible facilities to ensure a successful exhibition and industrial members evening.

The Council members from Brazil and the IMC will give more details during the relevant agenda point.

Following the conference and General Assembly in 2023, it is foreseen that the regular interval of two years between the conference and symposium will be re-established. Therefore, Singapore will host the symposium in 2025 with India hosting the conference and General Assembly in 2027.

7. DEVELOPMENTS OF THE WORLD-WIDE ACADEMY

The World-Wide Academy continues to develop under the leadership of the Dean Omar Frits Eriksson and the Academy Board, chaired by Professor Gug.

The Academy has adapted well to the pandemic situation and is now slowly resuming its physical travel activity. Over the last four months of 2021, the Academy has conducted physical missions to Lebanon, El Salvador and Guatemala, and has also attended a few important events physically. Given that the Pandemic continues to loosen its grip world-wide, the Academy expects to return to its normal modus operandi in 2022. Pursuing its strategic goals through its “Enlighten, Educate and Engage” strategy, the Academy has continued to develop and consolidate its distance learning resources and methods and is now able to deliver all its training activities as distance learning.

The many Accredited Training Organisations (ATO's) around the world have been forced to cancel their planned AtoN manager courses during the Pandemic, but it is expected that all active ATO's will try to deliver the AtoN Manager courses in 2022.

The Academy would not exist were it not for generous sponsorship both in direct and indirect funding from several nations and organizations and the superb and unstinting support from the four IALA Committees. Again in 2021 the primary sponsors of the Academy have stood by the Academy, and we thank them all for that. The never-ending work on seeking further funding for the Academy continues and members are urged to keep an eye on all sponsoring opportunities in their country or region.

The Dean will brief in more detail under the relevant agenda item.

8. THE COUNCIL IS INVITED TO

Note the information provided in the report.