

**IALA COUNCIL**  
**79<sup>th</sup> session**



**11-14 December 2023**  
**IALA Headquarters**

## **14 – CONFERENCE, SYMPOSIA AND OTHER EVENTS**

### ***14.4 – Heritage lighthouse of the year***

#### 14.4.1 – Commendation for the IALA Heritage Lighthouse of the Year 2024

Note by ENG

#### **1. INTRODUCTION**

The Incheon Declaration, adopted at the 19th IALA Conference in 2018, has significantly enhanced IALA's focus on the cultural and historical aspects of Aids to Navigation maintained by its members.

The IALA Heritage Lighthouse of the Year (HLY) award spotlights the most representative lighthouses, celebrating their outstanding contributions to conservation, public accessibility, and education. A Heritage Lighthouse is defined as any lighthouse that possesses cultural significance beyond its operational role and historical era.

#### **2. NOMINATIONS AND MEANS OF ARRIVING AT A COMMENDATION**

In line with rule (C75-14.5.2), all participants of ENG were invited to complete a ranking sheet in respect to nominees. 10 Ranking sheets were received. These sheets were then collated to determine the three IALA Heritage Lighthouses that the Committee would commend.

The Final three Lighthouse were:

- Faro di Genova 'Lanterna', Italy
- Hook Head Lighthouse, Ireland
- Lizard Lighthouse, England

#### **3. COMMENDATIONS**

The ENG participants reached a consensus that each nominated lighthouse was deserving of the IALA HLY title. The task of comparing and contrasting these historic structures proved challenging.

After thorough deliberation, ENG resolved to recommend Faro di Genova 'Lanterna', Italy to the Council as the IALA Heritage Lighthouse of the Year 2024.

#### **4. THE COUNCIL IS REQUESTED TO**

**Consider** the commendations and **determine** IALA Heritage Lighthouse of the Year 2024.

## ANNEX A INFORMATION OF COMMENDED LIGHTHOUSES

### 1. FARO DI GENOVA 'LANTERNA', ITALY

The “Lanterna” is the world’s third oldest operational lighthouse. Rising 77m above its 40m high rock, it was for a long time the highest lighthouse in the world and remains the highest lighthouse in the Mediterranean Sea, and the second highest in Europe. By coincidence or design, there are precisely 365 steps to the top!

Built for the first time in 1128, the original tower Lanterna was partially destroyed during the Genoese rebellion against France and then rebuilt in its current form in 1543. As with any lighthouse of this age, a wide variety of technologies have had their time and space within Lanterna - and the tower and its museum continue to tell that story. Whilst accommodating change, the lighthouse remains exceptionally well conserved with a well developed program of maintenance. It retains its rotating system with Fresnel lenses dating all the way back to 1840.

The tower dominates the skyline and its height combined with its longevity has made it a truly iconic feature of Genoa and its ancient port. For hundreds of years it has been the first site greeting visitors to the city. Today, it is more than ever connected with the life and culture of the Genoa. A highly developed website offers all sorts of perspectives and a Virtual Tour of the lighthouse. The tower is lit up different colours to represent various celebrations or commemorations and a calendar is provided to show which colours represent which event – yet another way that this tower is so highly integrated into the wider culture of the city and beyond.

Adjacent to the tower and part of the same complex are elements of the city walls and defensive system which contain the “Museo della Lanterna’ This museum covers (amongst other things) the history of navigation and navigational aids in Genoa, and describing various signalling systems that have been used at sea. Part of a Fresnel lens, similar to that found in the lighthouse itself, is shown in such a manner as to display its inner workings.

An incredible history, great efforts in conservation, international significant, high local cultural value and innovation are what IALA heritage lighthouse of the year is all about. Lanterna has each an ample quantity.



## 2. HOOK HEAD LIGHTHOUSE, IRELAND



Many nations are blessed with historic lighthouses, but few can boast one as old as Hook Head Lighthouse in Ireland. Constructed some-time between the years 1210 and 1240, it is the second oldest operating lighthouse in the world existing largely in its original form - after the Tower of Hercules in Spain.

William Marshall, a Knights Templar, known as the greatest knight, built the lighthouse tower to protect and develop the shipping trade – a priority that is unchanged in 700 years. It was monks from a nearby monastery that likely undertook the construction work and became its lighthouse keepers for the next few centuries. The monks lived in the tower which served the additional function of monastery until 1641. Traces of their chapel which projected to the east of the building still survive. Architecturally, it is one of the most fascinating examples of medieval architecture in Ireland with its 4m thick walls, its stairway built within the walls and its rib-vaulted chambers.

Having been a lighthouse for so long, Hook Head Lighthouse has seen technologies come and go and is able to tell their story. Coal burning lanterns were replaced by whale oil, then gas (manufactured on-site), then Paraffin oil before giving way to electricity. Different optic and rotation systems similarly came and went as the tower remained constant through it all. Yet whilst accommodating this constant change, much has been conserved – testimony to the esteem in which the lighthouse is held and the care that has been taken of it.

Innovation extends to the way in which the lighthouse has been developed as a community asset and a tourist attraction. The Hook Heritage Community enterprise was established for this purpose and the lighthouse officially opened to the public in 2000 by the then President of Ireland Mary McAleese and is one of Irish Light's Great Lighthouses of Ireland – itself a commendable initiative by its operator the Commissioners of Irish Lights. Since 2019 it has attracted over 250,000 visitors from all over the world. Former keepers' houses now provide a retail gift shop, café and bakery offering local products and employment. Guided tours of the tower are offered where visitors get a fascinating insight into the

workings of the lighthouse combined with stories and facts of this unique building, past, present and future. Interestingly it has been observed that such tours improve ventilation and so building conditioning – a great example of symbiosis between the interests of managing AtoN and complementary use.

### 3. LIZARD LIGHTHOUSE, ENGLAND



Lizard Lighthouse's antiquity takes us back before the days of rotating optics when a distinctive character of a light could only be created either through the periodicity of the light – or by having more than one light. For this reason, Lizard Lighthouse acquired two towers in 1751. The two towers with their coal braziers necessitated more lighthouse keepers, and 7 cottages were built to accommodate them, making the site a hive of activity.

Once a rotating optic was introduced to the Eastern tower in 1903 (for a time making it the most powerful lighthouse in the world), the Western tower became redundant. In time, the fog signal and engine rooms also became redundant and on automation, the 7 cottages were no longer essential. With such a large but under-utilised compound, a comprehensive plan for the re-purposing of these parts of the site was put together. The engine room (still with much of its historic plant) was made into a heritage centre from which the public could tour the operational tower. The cottages were converted to holiday cottages. The expansive lawns were featured with buoys. Public toilets were created and the wider site is again the hive of activity that it used to be. This beautiful, ancient and fascinating lighthouse has become an essential stop for visitors at mainland Britain's most southerly point. In this site can be seen the story of lighthouse development over hundreds of years whilst in its exhibits the story is told of the continued importance of AtoN.