

IALA COUNCIL
75th session



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Denmark

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. The meeting of the PAP in May 2022 was the first physical meeting after the pandemic.

Each of the four Committees have met remotely, during February and March, in accordance with established procedures. 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.

It is planned to revert to the normal meetings, 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 hybrid/blended version with a combination of virtual and physical meetings.

The Secretariat together with the members have executed many virtual events since C74 in December. 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 still growing and the interest in the committee work is very satisfying.

The Convention on the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation is now closed for signatures and has been signed by 51 States. It is expected that many States will ratify or accept the Convention soon and that non-signature States will accede to the Convention.

2. MEMBERSHIP

The membership of IALA consists of 324 members: 92 National, 156 Industrial and 76 Associate, which is 12 members more than at the same time last year, and after the termination or resignation of some members which took effect from 1 January 2022. The movements in membership in the different categories since C74 are the following:

Applications:

- One application was received for National membership and provisionally accepted. It is now awaiting the Council confirmation.



- Three new applications were received for Industrial membership and provisionally accepted. They are to be confirmed by the Council. One application was put in hold at the last Council (Yangzhou Bohang Navigation Ltd., China) and is still awaiting China MSA support.
- Three new applications were received for Associate membership and provisionally accepted. They are to be confirmed by the Council.

Resignations:

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

Members in arrear:

Two National members remain suspended for non-payment of their contributions (Algeria and Rep of Congo). A compromise could be found in the coming months. The Council may note that the Republic of Congo has signed the Convention on the new IALA.

In addition to that, the number of members in arrears has 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: Qingdao Hotech Automated in the People's Republic of China, Pesona Global Teknologi, Pt in Indonesia, Harmoz Berkeh, Ertebat Electronic Gil in Iran, Navalec SA de C.V in Mexico, Navico Norway AS in Norway, AD Engineering Ltd in Papua New Guinea, Maximum Protective Service Intl N.V in Suriname and the Electronic and Telecommunication Research Institute in the Republic of Korea.

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 two 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.

The Committee meetings will be conducted in a hybrid/blended 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.

4. ADMINISTRATION AND STAFF

With the latest reorganization the IALA and WWA staff now consist of 12 full time employed members and eight consultants (seven in the Academy section and one for Communication). Ms. Virginia Marshall has retired in April 2022 and has been replaced by Ms. Julie Navarre.

The Secretariat 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.



5. LANGUAGES

Communication in other languages, as well as English, is an important factor in helping IALA achieve its goals of global harmonization of AtoN and capacity building. This includes the provision of publications, educational services, webinars etc. for coastal States in languages such as French and Spanish.

IALA and its members continuously encourage the delivery of technical content education etc. relating to Marine Aids to Navigation in the French and Spanish languages.

A group of members, named the Spanish support group, from Argentina, Chile, Cuba, Columbia, Ecuador, Spain, Venezuela and Uruguay is giving invaluable assistance to the Secretariat.

DIRECTEMAR Chile actively supports such initiatives and routinely helps IALA arrange Spanish-speaking seminars to follow formal events conducted in English. The purpose of these initiatives is to enable a better understanding of the technical content to the Ibero-American Community.

Between 2021 and 2022, two seminars (Marine Aids to Navigation in the Autonomous World (MASS) and Cybersecurity) were arranged and delivered in Spanish.

In addition, the Spanish Safety Agency (Salvamento Marítimo), supported the Secretariat, presented the IMO Resolution A.1158(32) Guidelines for Vessel Traffic Services webinar in Spanish.

It is expected that a seminar on resilient PNT in Spanish will also be provided to cover the topic of alternative ways to provide PNT services and integrity to GNSS.

Finally, the Spanish support group is leading the task in translating the IALA publications into the Spanish language.

Several webinars and education initiatives have also been conducted in French with the help of France and other French speaking members, and the Secretariat is in the process of establishing a formal structure for French support to IALA. The group is presently supported by Cameroun, Canada, France, Gambia, Morocco and Senegal.

The present Convention is silent on official languages, but when the Convention enters into force IALA will have Arabic, Chinese, English, French, Russian and Spanish as official languages.

6. THE CHANGE OF STATUS PROJECT

The first 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, were invited to sign the Convention at the Protocol of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs.

A final signing ceremony was held at the last day of the signature period on 26 January 2022 in the IALA HQ in St. Germain en Laye. During the year 51 States have signed the Convention and five States have ratified or accepted the Convention.

States that have signed the Convention are then invited to transmit the instruments of ratification, acceptance or approval to France, the depositary State. All Member States of the United Nations that have not signed during the signature period, 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/>

The Secretariat has started the detailed preparation for the transition period between the start of the new organization and the termination of the present association. For this purpose and after advice from the LAP, the Secretariat has appointed a French law firm, Carlara Avocats, to provide legal assistance throughout the transition period and until the winding up of the Association is complete. Carlara Avocats will provide assistance with respect to the administrative formalities required by French law for the transfer of the rights, interests, assets and liabilities in favour of the new IGO.

7. 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 highly successful with almost 200 proposals received.

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

The Steering Group is meeting at regular intervals for the preparation of the conference 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.

8. 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.

As reported several times before, the Academy did adapt well to the pandemic situation, continuing its work by electronic means, and is now rapidly resuming its physical travel activity in pursue of our strategic goals through its “Enlighten, Educate and Engage” strategy.

The distance learning resources and methods that were developed during the pandemic are here to stay and will enable the Academy and the accredited training organizations to deliver IALA model courses both electronically, and face to face, as well as in a blended mode.

The many accredited training organisations around the world were forced to cancel their planned AtoN manager courses during the Pandemic, but now everything is returning to a more normal situation. The United Kingdom has already delivered a blended course this year, and France, Suriname, Morocco and perhaps India are contemplating delivery before the end of the year.

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. The primary sponsors of the Academy have stood by the Academy, and we thank them all for that.



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

9. THE COUNCIL IS INVITED TO

Note the information provided in the report.