



An update on IALA and its World-Wide Academy including the change of status to an Intergovernmental Organization

Paper sponsored by: IALA

Purpose

1. This paper briefly explains the status of the ratification, acceptance, approval or accession to the Convention on the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation which will, when it enters into force, change the status of the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA) from a non-governmental organization to an intergovernmental organization (IGO).

At the 5th Pacific Regional Energy and Transport Ministers' meeting in May 2023 in Vanuatu the ministers agreed to call on Pacific Island countries to consider becoming Contracting Parties by acceding to the Convention on the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation.

The paper also provides an update on IALA and the activities, including capacity building and training activity in the Asia-Pacific region.

Background

2. IALA is a non-profit, international technical association. Established in 1957, it gathers together Marine Aids to Navigation authorities, manufacturers, consultants and scientific and training institutes from all parts of the world and offers them the opportunity to exchange and compare their experiences and achievements.

The work of the IALA committees is aimed at fostering the safe, economic and efficient movement of vessels, through improvement and harmonization of Marine Aids to Navigation worldwide and other appropriate means, for the benefit of the maritime community and the protection of the environment. This is done through the publication of Standards, Recommendations, Guidelines and Model courses.

The independently funded World-Wide academy is an integral part of IALA with the mission that all coastal States can fulfil the obligations related to Marine Aids to Navigation placed upon them in SOLAS Chapter V, and that all coastal States can claim conformance with relevant IALA Standards. This is done through capacity building, education and training.

In 2014 the General Assembly decided, that IALA should strive to achieve Intergovernmental status as soon as possible by supporting the development of an international convention open for entry by all members of the United Nations.



Discussion

3. The text of the Convention was finalized at a diplomatic conference in Kuala Lumpur on 28 February 2020 and the first signing ceremony of the Convention on the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation was held on 27 January 2021 in Paris.

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 signatories of the Final Act in Kuala Lumpur, were invited to sign the Convention at the Protocol of the Ministry for Europe and Foreign Affairs.

At the last day of the signature period on 26 January 2022 51 States had signed 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/>

At the occasion of the 5th Pacific Regional Energy and Transport Ministers' Meeting, Solomon Islands reported significant progress in assuming its responsibilities as a coastal state and in delivering aids to navigation services benefiting from the support of IALA and the Pacific Community. In December 2023, the Cabinet of the Solomon Islands Government approved the accession to the IALA Convention which is currently finalized through the required procedures and protocols.

4. The IALA World-Wide Academy is the vehicle by which IALA delivers education, training, and capacity building. The Academy is dedicated to assist national authorities in sustainable development and improvement in the provision of marine aids to navigation to ensure:

- that all coastal States can fulfil the obligations related to Marine Aids to Navigation placed upon them in SOLAS Chapter V; and
- that all coastal States can claim conformance with relevant IALA Standards.

The Academy plans several training initiatives relevant to the region are planned for 2024, including L1.1 AtoN Manager Course in both China and India, L1.2 Master of AtoN Management course in China, as well as a L1.3 course on the Use of the IALA Risk Management Toolbox in Chile.

In addition to the usual delivery of IALA model courses and conducting technical needs assessment missions to countries in need, the Academy continues to support the Safety of navigation project managed by the SPC and has committed to further two substantial safety of navigation projects in the APHoMSA region, one in Papua New Guinea and one in Indonesia.

The Academy would not exist were it not for generous sponsorship both in direct and indirect funding from several nations and organizations, including Australia, China, Japan, Malaysia, Singapore and South Korea.