

Input paper: CoS 6.2.2

Agenda item 6

Task area Diplomacy

Author(s) / Submitter(s) Secretariat

Points of Contact in Government Administration

Background

In accordance with the decision of the IALA Council concerning the Change of Status Project (action plan), the SG has send a letter to National Members asking them to provide the IALA Secretariat with two “Points of Contact (PoC)”; one from within its Administration and the other from the Government Administration responsible for the Diplomatic Action, for example the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

As of today 18 out of 77 National Members have replied.

The CoS AG will be updated on this point at the meeting.

Action requested from the Advisory Group

The Secretariat asks the Advisory Group to note the information.

Supporting documents

* Letter from SG to National Members

**IALA – AISM**(International Association of Marine

Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities

*Association Internationale de Signalisation Maritime*)

**IALA National Members**

Saint Germain en Laye, 25 June 2015

Our ref: A/CoS/15-167

**Achieving International Governmental status for IALA.**

Dear Sir/Madam

In accordance with the decision of the IALA Council concerning the Change of Status Project, I am writing to ask you to provide the IALA Secretariat with two “Points of Contact (PoC)”; one from within your Administration and the other from your Government Administration responsible for the Diplomatic Action, for example the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Details are in the Action Requested paragraph at the end of this letter.

**Background.**

One main goal of the IALA vision is to ensure that AtoN systems and related services, including e-navigation, VTS, and emerging technologies, are harmonized through international cooperation and the provision of standards. It is believed that this goal of harmonization is best achieved if IALA changes status from a Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) to an Intergovernmental Organization (IGO). IGO status will enhance significantly the international endorsement of IALA’s activities and the standards it seeks to achieve.

The Change of Status project was launched in August 2013 to benefit both IALA and its Members. Whilst our core activity will not change, the international status of the organization will increase and its administration for membership will be simplified.

**Progress of the project.**

In August 2013, an information brochure on the project was circulated and a dedicated page in the “Latest news” of the IALA Website was established ([www.iala-aism.org](http://www.iala-aism.org) ). This dedicated page

is updated regularly. A first draft international convention that met the requirements of the Vienna Convention for International Treaties was developed at an informal meeting held in Copenhagen in October 2013. The purpose of this convention was to enable IALA to be granted the status of an IGO by ratification of a minimum number of Governments; a number that is decided by the interested parties.

The draft Convention text had been re-circulated for comment before a further meeting was convened in March 2014 at IALA Headquarters. This was attended by many of IALA’s National Members and some Government representatives of those Member countries. In preparation for the forthcoming General Assembly, the meeting agreed on an explanatory note to Members entitled “A Case for Change” together with a risk analysis and a draft General Assembly Resolution. This would enable the IALA Council to amend the IALA Constitution to provide for the termination of IALA as a French association when the “new” IALA became a reality.

**Current status of the project.**

At the 12th IALA General Assembly at A Coruña, Spain, in May 2014 the Resolution was adopted with more than the required three-quarters majority. The Resolution, *inter alia*, “Encourages the IALA Host and other Governments to conduct the necessary diplomatic activities” and “Directs the IALA Council […] to further consider the preparation of IALA for a change of status […]”. The General Assembly Resolution is attached at Annex A.

The IALA Council then established a Change of Status Advisory Group. Its aims included undertaking the necessary planning to bring the Resolution into effect; risk management; preparation of a draft road map for the transition; recommending the draft text of a Convention for IALA as an IGO for delivery to National Members and other Governments via diplomatic processes; facilitating liaison with National Member Governments about IGO status and providing advice to Council in regard to diplomatic activities.

The first meeting of the Advisory Group took place in March 2015 in Madrid. The draft Convention text was reviewed and will be submitted for Council’s comments after consideration by the IALA Legal Advisory Panel. Working Groups were established to look into specific aspects of the project and coordinate action. They have now prepared an action plan that defines the necessary steps and actions, taking account of the impact of the project on IALA’s current and future operations.

**Next steps**.

The French Foreign Ministry started the diplomatic process by writing – through its embassies – to the Governments of those countries in which IALA has National Members. This initial contact was intended simply to raise awareness about the project and does not require any commitment from those countries at this stage.

One of the next steps will be to finalize the draft Convention text, after it has been accepted by Council. This means achieving a consensus among the countries concerned, in order to call a Diplomatic Conference where duly empowered Government representatives can sign the Convention. Further steps will be needed before all instruments are ratified and IALA can start as an IGO. The date when this can happen is dependent upon the number of ratifying countries.

Another important step will be the development of the other documents that are necessary to finalise the project. These will include the “General Regulations” - the rules by which IALA will be governed. These will list the rights and duties of IALA’s components and document the procedures by which it is operated. They will be complemented by updated Finance Regulations.

When everything is agreed by the IALA Members and their Governments, the Diplomatic Conference can be convened.

**Action Requested.**

Following on from France’s initial diplomatic action, and to make the second diplomatic action as effective as possible, all National Members are asked to provide the secretariat with two “Points of Contact” for future communications. You can give your information by email to [secgen@iala-aism.org](mailto:secgen@iala-aism.org) or by using the form attached at Annex B. Please make sure that the information is updated if the nominated PoC change job.

It is important that IALA Members are aware that a change of Status, which is beneficial to both IALA and its Membership, will not affect IALA’s spirit of mutual cooperation between members of all categories. IALA will remain a technical organisation, and efforts will be devoted to keep, as far as practicable, representatives of governmental AtoN authorities on its governing body. It is true that its administration may become more complex but with the savings that can result from a revised Headquarters Agreement, our Members can expect a significantly enhanced service.

Thank you for your assistance.

Yours sincerely,



Francis ZACHARIAE

IALA Secretary-General