Input paper for the following Committee(s): Purpose of paper:

ARM  ENG  PAP  Input

ENAV VTS  Information

Agenda item 5.2

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Proposal to joint IMO/ITU Expert Group on Maritime Radiocommunication Matters (IMO/ITU EG)   
regarding IMO position for WRC-23 agenda item 10

# Background

At its seventeenth meeting, the Joint IMO/ITU Expert Group on Maritime Radiocommunication Matters (IMO/ITU EG) invited interested Member States and organizations to submit proposals to NCSR 9 for inclusion in the draft IMO position for WRC-23 agenda item 10. (NCSR 9/12, annex, paragraph 4.25). Thus, IALA submitted an input paper on “Response to matters related to the ITU-R study groups and ITU world radiocommunication conference (Proposal on WRC-23 agenda item 10)

to NCSR:

* providing a means to accommodate digital systems in the VHF maritime mobile band, which would include digital voice;
* providing a radionavigation allocation for VDES R-Mode to support resilient positioning, navigation and timing.

NCSR 9 considered the proposals in documents NCSR 9/12/6 and NCSR 9/12/9 with respect to the introduction of digital voice radiotelephony in the VHF maritime mobile band and VDES R-Mode, as appropriated. It was further noted that:

* that the VHF frequencies under discussion are already allocated to radiocommunication services, the required regulatory action by WRC-27 would include development of a new allocation to radionavigation, i.e. the amendment of Article 5 and Appendix 18 of the ITU-R Radio Regulations;
* R-Mode, as an integrated part of VDES, would use the existing frequencies of VDES, therefore it would not cause interference to other systems, but it would reduce the VDES data transfer capacity to a certain degree; and
* ITU would need to develop relevant studies to support VDES R-Mode.

The Sub Committee NCSR 9 further reported that:

* it was important to have a reliable backup for satellite-based position, navigation and timing systems.
* That EG 18 shall develop the draft IMO position on WRC-23 agenda item 10, taking into account comments and documents submitted at NCSR 9, and advise NCSR 10 as appropriate.

Further, an information paper on R-Mode (Ranging-Mode), terrestrial positioning for resilient navigation was submitted by Germany, Finland and Poland to the 105th session of the IMO Maritime Safety Committee. This paper informs about the technical use of R-Mode and about first results gained in a large test bed in the Baltic Sea.

# discussion

VDES R-Mode are important to the safety of navigation, especially PNT services that are under the IALA remit and the ENG and ENAV Committee have worked for the development of both technologies. As the result, the IALA Guideline G1158 “VDES R-Mode” was published and the discussion on the digitalization of VHF voice communication was deepened. Therefore, both technologies become mature enough to the agenda items for WRC-27 that allow the change of the Radio Regulations accordingly for the practical implementation of the technologies.

If IMO does not support the inclusion of the both technologies into the IMO position for WRC-23 agenda item 10, there could be the possibility that WRC-23 will not decide the VDES R-Mode technology as an agenda item of WRC-27 and the introduction and implementation of VDES R-Mode will be significantly delayed. The draft input paper for the submission to the 18th Joint IMO/ITU Expert Group on Maritime Radiocommunication Matters (IMO/ITU EG) is provided as an additional input paper to the session.

The deadlines of the submission to EG is the 4th November 2022.

Accordingly, ENAV 30, planned to 26th – 30st September 2022, is first to consider the draft input and send the liaison to ENG16 planned to 17th – 21st October 2022, that finalizes the draft input for the online approval from the Council and send the input to IMO by 4th November.

# Action requested

The ENAV and ENG are invited to consider the draft input and take action as appropriate.