

IALA COUNCIL 79th session



11-15 December 2023
Saint Germain en Laye
France

17 – Any other business

17.3 – IALA Regional Presence

IALA REGIONAL PRESENCE

Note by the Secretariat

BACKGROUND

Traditionally, IALA has applied the principle of hosting nearly all meetings of subsidiary bodies, such as the committees, LAP and PAP at headquarters in Paris. This has been a practical and cost-effective way for the Secretariat to provide support to these meetings while ensuring that the policies and strategies of the association are being followed.

During the diplomatic process of establishing the Intergovernmental Organization it was raised, that IALA should consider a regional structure similar to the structure of the IHO, which has a regime of regional hydrographic commissions where regional matters can be discussed. It should be noted that the IHO funds the participation cost for many of the participants in these regional meetings.

Lately, some national members have expressed their willingness to provide facilities and staff resources to IALA and/or the World-Wide Academy, enabling regional presence.

At the last IALA Conference, an MoU was signed with both Türkiye and Singapore encompassing the possibility of making use of facilities and staff resources when organizing local IALA activities. Spain has also raised the possibility of hosting World-Wide Academy activities in Madrid.

These initiatives are an important asset for IALA and especially for the World-Wide Academy which has always used the facilities and support of our members to host and convene meetings, education and capacity building efforts around the world, but on a case-by-case basis and without a permanent structure.

REGIONAL SEMINARS

In 2022, Argentina raised the matter of lack of participation from Latin America in the work of IALA, as well as insufficient understanding of the importance of the work of IALA in the region.

It was decided that the World-Wide Academy would arrange a regional seminar, informing both members and non-members on recent developments in the work of IALA, with a view of attracting more committee participation from Latin American countries.

The seminar took place in Buenos Aires in November 2023 with 35 participants physically present, from Chile, Venezuela, Mexico, Argentina, Uruguay, Ecuador, and Colombia, as well as online participation from the Dominican Republic.

The participants were self-funded, and the cost to the Academy was limited to sending two Spanish speaking Secretariat staff members to facilitate the meeting.

The feedback from this seminar indicates a clear need for such informative seminars, at least in Latin America.



The same can be said for Africa and the Pacific, however, in these regions participants are more used to having their travel expenses paid by the organisers, which is the case with the IHO regional hydrographic commissions. This is also the case when the IMO arranges regional gatherings in relation to capacity building.

There is clearly a cost element to such regional seminars, and therefore they can only be delivered if and when sufficient funds are available.

SECONDED OFFICERS AS IALA REPRESENTATIVES

Several members have successfully seconded officers to IALA over the years. These officers have been stationed at IALA HQ in France and represent a valuable and highly qualified workforce for the association.

It would also be possible for some of these seconded officers to be stationed in their own organisation, while doing valuable regional work for IALA.

This could include assistance with:

- Report on regional developments to the Secretariat;
- disseminating information from the Secretariat;
- assist with arranging IALA meetings, workshops and seminars in the region; and
- assist with World-Wide Academy activities in the region.

There would be a need to define a world-wide regional structure and enter an MoU with a few hosting national members detailing the conditions of such cooperation.

These seconded “regional officers” would work closely with the Secretariat and have an IALA email address. Occasional coordinating and knowledge sharing meetings of all such officers could be arranged at regular intervals.

THE COUNCIL IS INVITED TO

Note the information provided and discuss the feasibility of an arrangement with seconded regional officers assisting the Secretariat.

Invite the Secretariat to provide a more detailed plan for IALA Regional Presence at a future Council meeting.