**Communications in Polar Areas – IALA statement**

According to the report from the e-Navigation Correspondence Group to MSC (COMSAR 15/11 – paragraph 9) efficient and reliable communication is crucial to ensure safe operations and interoperability on board and ashore and that an improved robust communication system for ships operating in polar and remote areas will be necessary for a future e-navigation concept.

IALA supports the opinion expressed by the e-Navigation Correspondence Group. It is IALA’s opinion that - for the foreseeable future - that HF is the only available system that can provide for robust communication and reliable MSI service to ships operating in areas beyond the coverage of satellite systems recognized for the purpose.

Steps should therefore be taken to establish digital communication to and from ships operating in areas beyond the coverage of recognized satellite systems.

Looking further ahead, AIS through satellites (satellite AIS) may prove to be reliable and capable of providing MSI to the areas as mentioned.