International Association of Lighthouse Authorities (IALA)

Address 13 rue Yvon Villarceau, 75116 Paris, France.

Creation and aims

IALA is a non-governmental association bringing together Services or Organizations responsible for the provision or maintenance of lighthouses and other aids to marine navigation. The aim of the Association is to encourage the continued improvement of aids to navigation through any appropriate technical means, for the safe and expeditious movement of vessels.

Questions related to the fitting of coasts with aids to navigation were considered for the first time in 1889 in Washington, USA at the conference of representatives of lighthouse authorities from various countries. In 1912 in St.Petersburg, upon the initiative of Russia, the International Marine Conference was held with the participation of representatives from 16 countries, where recommendations on the unification and improvement of aids to navigation were worked out.

Similar conferences have been called many times (1929 in London, 1930 in Lisbon, 1933 in Paris, 1937 in Berlin, 1950 in Paris, etc.).

Since 1929, in connection with the possibility of the wide use of electronics for securing safe navigation, special conferences on radio beacons and radio-navigation have been held (1929 in London, 1932 in Stockholm, 1946 in London, 1947 in New York, 1951 in Paris). During these conferences, exchange of information on aids to navigation took place and questions on their further enhancement and unification were considered.

In addition, the Consultative Commission on Communication Technology and Transit of the League of Nations addressed questions related to aids to navigation. Its work was crowned in 1937 by the signing of the Agreement on unification of aids to navigation against dangers at sea. The implementation of the Agreement, proposed to be completed within 10 years, was interrupted by World War II.

After World War II, because of growing merchant marine, war and fishery fleets, and the extension of marine international and trade relations, the necessity for further development and unification of aids to navigation has arisen.
In the Netherlands in 1955, the Fifth International Conference of the representatives of the lighthouse authorities decided to create a permanent organization for the implementation of international cooperation of the lighthouse authorities and after the approval of the Constitution worked out by the 20 countries, on the 1st of July 1957 the International Association of Lighthouse Authorities was founded. The contemporary acting Constitution of the Association was approved at the First General Assembly of IALA in Rome 17 May 1965. Amendments to the Constitution were made at the Second General Assembly in Stockholm in 1970, the Third General Assembly in Ottawa in 1975 and the Fourth General Assembly in 1980 in Tokyo.

In accordance with the Constitution the special tasks of IALA are as follows:

—discussing matters relevant to the field of activity of the Association and more particularly technical questions of general interest;
—collecting and circulating information about the activities of Lighthouse Authorities as well as encouraging, supporting and making known recent developments in the field of aids to navigation;
—organizing Technical Conferences on Lighthouse and other Aids to Navigation, hereinafter referred to as to as ‘Conferences’, in cooperation with the Principal Lighthouse Authority of the country where the Conference is to be held;
—establishing Technical Committees or Working Groups to study special problems and formulate appropriate recommendations;
—promoting assistance to Services or Organizations requesting help in connection with their aids to navigation problems whether technical or organizational;
—maintaining liaison with inter-governmental, international and other organizations relevant to maritime safety—especially hydrography, oceanography, communications, and meteorology;
—publishing a periodical Bulletin, a Dictionary and documents of general interest and collecting statistics concerning aids to navigation;
—keeping records of Conferences and Committees and maintaining a library of publications and films relevant to aids to navigation.

Membership

The Association comprises A members, B members, associate members and industrial members.

A membership or B membership can be applied for by the Principal Lighthouse Authority of any country.

Associate membership can be applied for by any other Service or Organi-