

**IHO File No. S1/5007**

**CIRCULAR LETTER 03/2026**  
**15 January 2026**

**APPROVAL OF THE REVISED AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE  
INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC ORGANIZATION (IHO) AND THE  
INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR MARINE AIDS TO NAVIGATION (IALA)**

**References:**

- A. IHO CL38/2025 dated 28 October agreement between the International Hydrographic Organization and the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation (IALA).
- B. Summary Report of the 9<sup>th</sup> meeting of the IHO Council dated 14-16 October 2025, Decision C9/69.
- C. Convention of the IHO as amended by the Protocol dated 14 April 2005 that entered into force on 08 November 2016 – Article IX section f.

Dear Hydrographer,

1. The Circular Letter in Reference A called for the approval of the proposed revised agreement between the International Hydrographic Organization and the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation (IALA).
2. The IHO Secretariat thanks the thirty-five (35) Member States who responded and unanimously supported the approval of the revised Agreement: Algeria, Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, Cyprus, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Mauritius, Netherlands, Nigeria, Norway, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Romania, Russia, Slovenia, Solomon Islands, Spain, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America and Uruguay.
3. When the Circular Letter in reference A was issued, there were one hundred and three (103) Member States of the IHO with two (2) States suspended. In accordance with the provisions of the Convention on the IHO as amended (Reference C), the minimum number of affirmative votes required is one third. As a result, the proposed revised Agreement between the IHO and IALA has been approved. (see Annex).
4. Member States are reminded that the official signature procedure of the Agreement is planned to become part of the Opening Ceremony of the forthcoming 4<sup>th</sup> Session of the IHO Assembly in April 2026 in the presence of the IALA Secretary-General.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mathias Jonas', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Dr Mathias JONAS  
Secretary-General

Annex: Approved revised agreement between the International Hydrographic Organization and the International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation (IALA).

**Agreement between the International Hydrographic Organization and International  
Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation**

The International Hydrographic Organization (hereafter “IHO”); and

The International Organization for Marine Aids to Navigation (hereafter “IALA”);

Hereafter individually and collectively termed “the Party” and “the Parties”;

RECALLING the long standing and close cooperation between the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities and the IHO;

CONSIDERING the mutual interest between the Parties in developing and harmonizing international standards in the maritime domain;

MINDFUL of the rapid changes in the development of technical standards and the need for increased cooperation and coordination between international organizations;

DESIRING to coordinate their efforts within their respective mandates and in relation to the International Maritime Organization;

Have agreed as follows:

**Article 1**

**Object and areas of cooperation**

1.1 The object of this Agreement is to facilitate and reinforce the cooperation and coordination between the Parties and in relation to other international organizations, where appropriate, in the area of international standards that relate to the activities and commitments of the Parties.

1.2 Within the scope of their respective mandates, work programmes and budgets, the Parties agree to a general strengthening of their cooperation and coordination, notably in the development of international standards of mutual interest, training and capacity

building, and the development and support for joint proposals and initiatives to other international organizations in relation to international conventions and developments and any other area of common interest.

## Article 2

### Reciprocal representation

2.1 On the basis of reciprocity, IALA is invited to represent itself at sessions of IHO bodies as observer in accordance with the rules and decisions adopted by these bodies, and, as appropriate, any other meetings held under the auspices of IHO.

2.2 On the basis of reciprocity, IHO is invited to represent itself at sessions of IALA bodies as observer in accordance with the rules and decisions adopted by these bodies, and, as appropriate, any other meetings held under the auspices of IALA.

## Article 3

### Sharing of information and disclosure

3.1 The Parties agree to exchange, by whatever means, information concerning their activities of mutual interest and cooperate in the use, integration, promotion and the dissemination of publications and information.

3.2 Subject to their existing rules and policies related to the disclosure of classified information and other related obligations, each Party will protect classified information of the other Party.

## Article 4

### Name, emblem, marks and logos

Neither Party may use the emblem, marks, or logos of the other Party without the prior written consent of the other Party, nor use the name of the other Party in a way that implies endorsement or authorship without prior written consent of the other Party.

## Article 5

### Staff members and facilities

5.1 Each Party will be responsible for its activities and for its staff members, including for their acts and omissions. A Party will not be liable for any damage or injury caused by the other Party or that other Party's staff.

5.2 As far as practicable and subject to availability and their respective existing rules the Parties may agree to share their facilities for meetings held under the auspices of a Party.

## Article 6

### Regular annual meetings

The Parties agree to hold regular annual meetings between their respective Secretary-General and as deemed necessary other staff members.

## Article 7

### Privileges and immunities

No provision of this Agreement shall be interpreted or considered as a renunciation, limitation, waiver or modification of the privileges and immunities enjoyed by either Party.

## Article 8

### Entry into force, amendment and termination

8.1 This agreement enters into force from the date of its signature by the Secretary-General of IALA, subject to approval by the General Assembly of IALA, and the Secretary-General of IHO, subject to approval by the Assembly of IHO.

8.2 This agreement may be amended at any time by mutual written consent of the Parties.

8.3 Either Party may terminate this Agreement at any time by written notice to the other Party of its intent to do so six months in advance.

#### Article 9

##### Settlement of differences

Any difference or dispute arising from the interpretation or application of this Agreement shall be settled amicably through negotiation between the Parties.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, this Agreement is done and signed at ## on ###, in two copies in the English language.

For the International Organization  
Hydrographic  
for Marine Aids to Navigation

For the International  
  
Organization

Secretary-General  
Francis Zachariae

Secretary-General  
Mathias Jonas