



IALA

“DELIVERING AS ONE” IN ACTION



Introduction

The United Nations Development Group (UNDG) is one of the three pillars of the UN System Chief Executives Board for Coordination (CEB). Enormous progress has been made to date towards achieving its Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). The post-2015 development agenda under the banner of “Delivering as One” aims to tackle many issues, including the protection of the world’s oceans. To achieve this, one of the UNDG’s strategic priorities for 2013-2016 is to strengthen capacity development as a core function of the UN development system¹. This noble goal has found a champion in the form of the Joint IHO/IMO/WMO/IOC/IALA/IAEA/FIG Capacity Building Group (Joint CB Group). By focussing on positive joint activity to improve the safety of navigation world-wide, the Group is committed to protecting both the world’s oceans and the mariners who navigate through them.

The Challenge

The majority of the IMO’s 170 member States are well aware of their international obligations, specifically those relating to maritime safety and the protection of the marine environment. However some of the least developed and developing nations face considerable challenges in meeting their obligations set out in the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) and the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) in particular. The task of the Joint CB Group is to develop strategies initially to raise awareness of such obligations within the national competent authorities responsible for safety of navigation and protection of the marine environment in these States and then subsequently to work with them through technical needs assessment missions to implement actions to achieve full compliance for the benefit of both themselves and the international community.

The Team and its Achievements

The Joint CB Group is led impressively by the IMO – its “mother ship” and first among equals represented by one or more staff from the Technical Cooperation Directorate. The International Hydrographic Organisation (IHO), focussing on compliance with SOLAS Chapter V Regulations 4 and 9, is represented by one its Directors, an Assistant Director and Chair of its capacity building subcommittee. The training and certification of hydrographic and cartographic specialists is covered by the International Federations of Surveyors (FIG). The International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA) is represented by the Dean or Vice Dean of the IALA World-Wide Academy. Its focus is compliance with SOLAS Chapter V Regulations 12 and 13.

Whilst pursuing their own series of capacity building events, the triumvirate of the IMO, IHO and IALA have since 2012² delivered a series of joint seminars on the safety of navigation. These seminars were attended by over 197 participants from 30 key developing nations. In addition, IALA continues to participate at IHO-sponsored Regional Hydrographic Commissions to emphasise the inextricable connection between adequate hydrographic and aids to navigation services in those regions.

The World Meteorological Organisation, represented at Director level, and the International Oceanographic Commission (IOC) represented by a Director and/or Training Coordinator of the International Oceanographic Data and Information Exchange (IODE) both had very active capacity building strategies focused on sea-level monitoring, coastal inundation management and the protection of the marine environment. The International Atomic Energy Agency, also represented at Director level, focused on building capacity within the scientific community including the use of nuclear technology to treat water and minimise diseases associated with poor water supplies.

¹ UNDG Strategic Priorities for 2013-2016 update December 2014

² The IALA WWA was formed on 1 January 2012 and is funded independently by generous sponsors



Working together, this powerhouse of expertise pursues both individually and cooperatively a range of capacity building activities designed specifically to meet the UN's Millennium Development Goal of protecting the world's oceans and those that live and work on or near them. The annual meeting of the Joint CB Group enables the effectiveness of such activity to be maximised.

The Status of International Safety of Navigation Services

Each participating organization prioritises its capacity building activity based on needs assessment principles. They generate lists of target States grouped in defined regions that best match their strategies. In some cases, these States and regions are published on their websites. The Joint CB group will continue to share information and circulate reports of its activities whilst also investigating how information held in country maritime profiles might be used to inform further its targeted capacity building activities.

Joint CB Initiatives

The Joint CB group have decided that it will increase the efficiency of the delivery of its activities by creating a common calendar of such events. This would enable, for example, joint "high level" visits by the IHO and IALA to be conducted to key target States so that a common message on the provision of safety of navigation services under SOLAS Chapter V could be delivered to senior opinion formers in such countries.

Training and capacity building are indivisible. The Joint CB Group has agreed therefore to create an information exchange of training facilities delivering courses aimed at improving the safety of navigation and the protection of the maritime environment.

Summary

The Joint IHO/IMO/WMO/IOC/IALA/IAEA/FIG Capacity Building Group is a world-class example of how individual Agencies and Organizations have come together to support the United Nation's goal of protecting both the world's oceans and the mariners who navigate through them. Its annual meeting continues to refine and pursue actively any activity that achieves that goal. It is a clear demonstration of "Delivering as One" in action. Without the leadership of its "mother ship", the International Maritime Organization, and the support of all its member States within the Technical Cooperation Committee, it could not have achieved such a demonstrably coordinated success. It is intended that its pro-active pursuit of joint capacity building will continue up to and beyond the 2016 Millennium Development Goals schedule.



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