REPORT ON ACTIVITY ON BEHALF OF IAIN AT THE
INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION

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Introduction
This report gives an update on the progress of the two IAIN co-sponsored documents that were submitted for consideration by the International Maritime Organization at its Maritime Safety Committee meeting (MSC95), which was held in London from 3 to 12 June 2015. Other items considered of interest to IAIN discussed at this meeting are covered in the accompanying report1. As stated in Andy Norris’s May 2015 Report on Activity on Behalf of IAIN at the, IAIN co-sponsored two documents for consideration by the Committee:

A proposal on a way ahead to develop guidance on the so-called ‘S-mode’ for the design of shipboard navigational equipment, as part of IMO’s work on the implementation of e-navigation to enhance safety of navigation and protection of the marine environment (document MSC 95/19/12). This document was a joint submission of Australia and the Republic of Korea and was additionally co-sponsored by the International Federation of Ship Masters’ Associations (IFSMMA), Intermanager (representing companies involved in the management and crewing of ships) and the Nautical Institute.

An information document on Marine Autonomous Systems (MAS), introducing an initiative to explore the application of the existing IMO regulatory framework to MAS to ensure their safe, secure, environmentally sound and sustainable operation (document MSC 95/INF.20). This document was submitted by the United Kingdom and was additionally co-sponsored by the Institute of Marine Engineering, Science and Technology (IMarEST).

S-Mode
The development of IMO guidelines on Standardised modes of operation (S-mode) of shipboard navigational equipment was given the go-ahead with a target completion date of 2019 after the submission co-sponsored by IAIN was debated. In principle, IAIN is in a good position to help with this development, not least from the broad capability of its member organisations over all

1 Report on the ninety-fifth session of the Maritime Safety Committee of the International Maritime Organization (MSC 95, 3-12 June 2015) by Aline DeBievre.
navigational sectors. For instance, the lessons learnt from having much more standardisation of cockpits in the aviation world could perhaps benefit the optimisation of future ship’s bridges.

Suppliers of bridge equipment are concerned that over-standardisation would inhibit innovation and that the only market differentiators would be the cost of the product. This is a very valid concern that S-Mode has to take on. In the fullness of time there is likely to be a correspondence group set up by IMO to detail the proposed standards. IAIN could contribute directly to this, perhaps through consolidated responses agreed by a group of its own interested technical experts.

**Marine Autonomous Systems**

The Committee merely noted the INF document, which is the usual practice with regard to this type of document especially when time is short. (A significant amount of unplanned time had to be spent by the Committee on the demanding and urgent new topic concerning the issues of Maritime Migrants). However, the IAIN delegation was able to initiate informal discussions with several national delegations (e.g. Australia, Marshall Islands, the Netherlands, Norway, Russian Federation, United Kingdom). These proved fruitful in establishing that there is not only growing interest in the increased use of MAS in different maritime contexts but also awareness of the need to ensure that those responsible for the operation of such systems are fully cognizant of existing IMO regulations governing safe shipping.

The contacted delegations seemed very interested in further looking at the INF document and were generally relieved to hear that the direction of the work was currently suggesting that the maritime Collision Regulations could remain completely or virtually unchanged, provided there was an ‘interpretation document’ that clarified the meaning of some of these for autonomous vessels. This includes, for instance, the definitions of ‘hearing’ and ‘sight’.

For IMO to be persuaded that there is a relatively urgent need for international collaboration on the regulations for maritime autonomous vessels then it does need the backing of a number of its prominent national members. IAIN is potentially in a good position to help this by its own national member organisations appropriately briefing their maritime authorities. The authors of this report are willing to contribute to this by responding to any questions from IAIN regarding the matter.
General
It is perhaps an opportune time for IAIN to become more influential within IMO, particularly with e-navigation becoming mainstream and autonomous vessels becoming a critical topic. This could perhaps involve an appropriate correspondence group being set up within IAIN to agree on how it should react to relevant IMO matters. At the very least, the authors of this report are prepared to continue to represent IAIN at IMO and keep its member organisations updated with relevant information.