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| **Legal Advisory Panel**  11th Session  Agenda item 8 | **LAP 11 / 8 / 1**  September 19-21, 2012 |

**PROVISIONAL NATIONAL MEMBERSHIP FOR DEVELOPING COUNTRIES**

***Background***

IALA attention was drawn to the case of Eastern African countries wishing to join IALA as National Members but reluctant to do so due their poor financial resources and only a few Aids to Navigation. The two countries mainly concerned are Comoros and Madagascar.

Our contact in Africa James Collocott of SAMSA (South Africa) enquired about possible arrangements for countries in such a situation joining IALA at a reduced cost, possibly under Associate Membership.

***Proposal***

The LAP may consider some form of Provisional National Membership for submission to the Council and potentially General Assembly in 2014. A reduced rate could be offered, which would provide access to IALA services but not associated with voting rights.

***Comments***

Until 1994 IALA had two classes of National Members, “A” Members and “B” Members. “A” members were equivalent to our current National Members. “B” Members were equivalent as well in terms of national responsibilities but they paid a reduced fee and thus had no right to neither vote for Council election nor be elected on the Council. The decision on “A” or “B” membership was up to the country.

“B” Membership was abolished in 1994 and the fee gradually increased until 1998 when it had reached the same level as “A” Membership.

As a consequence IALA lost 12 “National” members, 6 of them being African countries.

Before 1994 some small countries with a limited number of Aids to Navigation had been accepted as Associate members, on exceptional basis, although they had national responsibilities. The countries concerned were required to opt for National Membership or leave when the new class of National Membership was created.

Provisional National Membership was tried in the past but with no fee at all and all provisional members (quite a few) left at the end of the provisional/trial period.

***Action requested***

The LAP is invited to consider the relevance of introducing some flexibility in IALA Membership in order to attract new countries with limited funds and, if relevant, submit to the Council the necessary amendments to the IALA Constitution.