

# **Liaison Note to the Electronic Communications Committee – Working Group FM**

## **Digitisation of Maritime Services – digital VHF (voice)**

### **1 Introduction**

IALA would like to thank the Electronic Communications Committee (ECC) Working Group for their document FM(19)75 - Annex 15 notifying IALA of the establishment of a new Project Team (FM58). This document was considered by the 23<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the IALA ENAV Committee between the 1 and 5 April 2019 in Singapore (paper ENAV23-3.1.2). Working Group FM58 will investigate the possible expansion of the number of VHF voice channels based on the implementation of digital technology. This investigation will look at the feasibility of digitization of voice radiotelephony in the VHF maritime mobile band (ITU-RR Appendix 18).

### **2 Digitisation of VHF Maritime Mobile Band (VHF Voice)**

IALA recognises and agrees that the maritime voice service on the maritime VHF band should be digitised. In this respect, IALA recommends that the following shall be included in the consideration:

1. That any evaluated technologies have a clear migration path both from the current analogue systems to the new digital systems by allowing both the digital and analogue systems to co-exist in the same transceiver for the duration of the entire migration period. This could extend to using the same antenna and other existing physical installation hardware.
2. The channel efficiency be a high priority by allowing up to four (4) digital voice channels for each 25Khz maritime VHF voice channel.
3. The digital service includes the capability of transmitting the location of the radio for the entire duration of the digital voice conversation.
4. The digital service allows a Short Message Service (SMS) without the need to set up a digital or other voice call.
5. The digital voice quality be similar to or better than the analogue voice service especially using weaker radio signals at the extents of the radio coverage.

IALA is currently evaluating digital Private Mobile Radio (dPMR) as one of the candidate technologies and is able to share high-level evaluation reports when this process is completed.

### **3 Action requested**

The Electronic Communication Committee is requested to note the information provided and take action as appropriate.