

INTER-GOVERNMENTAL MARITIME  
CONSULTATIVE ORGANIZATION

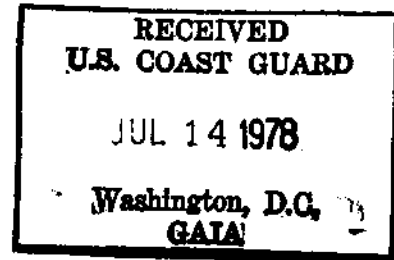
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IMCO

SN/Circ.89  
6 July 1978



Ref. T2/2.05

REGIONAL HARMONIZATION OF BUOYAGE SYSTEMS

1. At its thirty-fourth session the Maritime Safety Committee considered and approved the final text of the "Combined Cardinal and Lateral System (Red to Port) - System A", prepared by IALA and endorsed by the Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation.
2. At the request of the Committee (MSC XXXIV/18, paragraph 77), a description of System "A" was brought to the attention of all Member Governments by SN/Circ.80 of 21 May 1976.
3. A paper prepared by IALA on the progress made in the implementation of Buoyage System "A" and the development of System "B" is attached for the information of Member Governments.

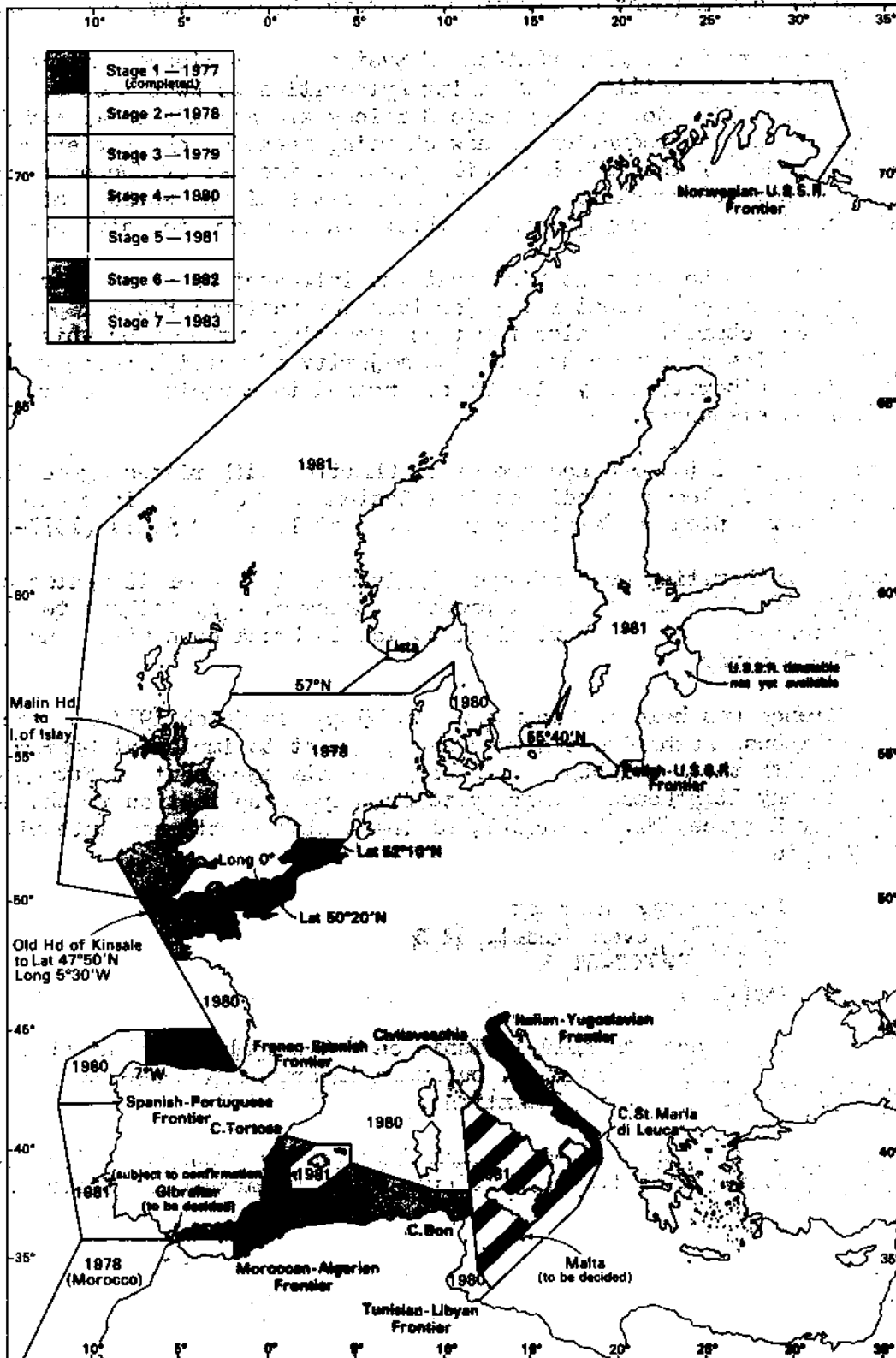
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## IALA BUOYAGE SYSTEMS

1. IALA wishes to draw the attention of IMCO Member States to the progress made to date with regard to the implementation of IALA Buoyage System A - The Combined Cardinal and Lateral System (Red to Port) - and to the progress being achieved in the development of System B - Lateral System only (Red to Starboard).
2. With regard to the implementation of System A, experience has proved that the key factor is the ability of Charting Authorities to keep pace with the rate of change. All major Hydrographic Services are already under considerable pressure due to the introduction of new charting methods, changes shown up by surveys, the needs of the off-shore oil industry, the use of deeper draught ships and new harbour developments in various parts of the world, and the introduction of the new buoyage system throws an even greater strain on them.
3. It should also be borne in mind that the introduction of changes in buoyage systems not only creates a major task for national Hydrographic Services publishing local charts, but also for those Charting Authorities which publish a world-wide series of charts used by the majority of foreign going vessels. These Charting Authorities may already be engaged to capacity in charting buoyage changes elsewhere.
4. Nevertheless, IALA, IHO and the major Charting Authorities agree that the new task can be handled on condition that Systems A and B are introduced world-wide in an orderly planned fashion spread over at least 10 years (1977-1986).
5. Charting Authorities must however be given a minimum of 12 months advance notice with complete details of all proposed changes. Any failure to observe these conditions will cause chart distribution to break down with consequent danger to the mariner.
6. A Conference was held in Copenhagen on 15 and 16 March 1977 at which thirteen Lighthouse Authorities signed an Agreement to implement System A in consultation with their neighbours. A copy of this agreement is attached. It is open to any Lighthouse Authority to sign upon application to the Head of the Depositary Service, Mr. O. Gredal, of the Danish Lighthouse Authority, whose address is:  
  
Farvandsdirektoratet  
Overgaden oven Vandet, 62 B  
1001 - KØBENHAVN K  
Denmark.
7. A second Conference was held in Tunis on 6-8 December 1977 at which small changes were made to the first plan, but more importantly a number of other countries also indicated their intentions.
8. A map prepared by the United Kingdom Hydrographic Department is attached overleaf which illustrates the present time-table in Europe and North Africa.

To accompany Admiralty Notice to Mariners No. 164 of 1978

### I.A.L.A. BUOYAGE SYSTEM 'A' IMPLEMENTATION TARGET PROGRAMME 1978-1983



9. A third conference arranged by IALA in conjunction with the Port Management Association for West and Central Africa, was held on 5-7 June 1978 in Cotonou, People's Republic of Benin, to consider the further extension of System A along the coast of West and Central Africa after 1981. The Conference attended by representatives from Mauritania, Senegal, Guinea, Liberia, Ivory Coast, Benin, Nigeria and Gabon agreed in principle to the introduction of System A in two stages during 1982 and 1983.

10. The Government of Cyprus has agreed to host a Fourth IALA Conference to deal with the Eastern Mediterranean, Black Sea and Red Sea, probably at the beginning of 1979. Further conferences will be held as necessary with a view to the steady implementation of System A.

11. In addition to those attending this series of conferences the following Lighthouse Authorities have informed IALA of their intentions to adopt System A as follows:

Singapore	has the changes in hand, completion 1978
Australia	will introduce System A in 1978-1981
Hong Kong	will introduce System A in 1979-1980
Malaysia	will introduce System A in 1979
New Zealand	will introduce System A in 1982-1984.

The programme from now until the end of 1981 has reached saturation point and Charting Authorities cannot cope with any more changes during this period.

12. To ensure the smooth introduction of both System A and System B, the IALA Executive Committee has appointed Mr. N.F. Matthews of the IALA Secretariat to act as co-ordinator for the implementation of all the changes, to avoid overloading Charting Authorities at any one time. To assist him in his task, all IALA members have been asked whether they intend to adopt System A or System B and if so the likely implementation date so that the full impact of the changes may be monitored. These changes to be spread over the remaining years of the ten year period, i.e. 1982-1986.

13. With regard to System B, the situation is that the IALA Committee considering this System has met three times so far as follows:

Long Beach, California (USA)	in January 1977
Lima (Peru)	in July 1977
Mexico City (Mexico)	in March 1978.

The Committee is next due to meet in Tokyo, 19-25 April 1979.

14. There are still technical problems to be overcome but good progress has been made at the Mexico City meeting. In principle, it is hoped that System B will be as compatible as possible with System A, and that it will be finalized by 1980.

15. No firm boundaries have been drawn to indicate the limits of Systems A and B, and it is for each Authority to make its own choice. Immediate neighbours are however encouraged to make the same choice as far as possible and especially in situations where marks operated by two Authorities are in close proximity in the same body of waters. Most of Europe, the USSR, parts of Africa, Australia, New Zealand, Hong Kong, Singapore and Malaysia have decided to adopt System A. Canada, United States, Mexico, some South American countries, and Japan have indicated their preference for a red-to-starboard system, and are expected to adopt System B when ready.

16. It seems probable therefore that the choice between Systems A and B will be:

System A: Europe, Africa, Australia, New Zealand, parts of Asia including India, Malaysia and the Pacific coast of the USSR, some other areas in the Western Pacific

System B: North, Central and South America, Japan and some other parts of Asia and the Western Pacific.

17. This matter will also be discussed at the 1980 IALA Conference in Tokyo and if necessary a further buoyage conference may be convened about this time.

18. IALA would be grateful if IMCO would draw the attention of Member States to the need for nations to ensure that their mariners are fully aware of the new Buoyage System A.

19. Suitable literature about the new system is available from this Association and from National Buoyage and Hydrographic Services. Similar literature is planned for System B when it is finalized.

AGREEMENT FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF MARITIME BUOYAGE SYSTEM "A"

The Lighthouse Authorities of:

Belgium  
Denmark  
France  
Federal Republic of Germany  
German Democratic Republic  
Ireland  
The Netherlands  
Norway  
Polish People's Republic  
Sweden  
United Kingdom

Recognizing that, for the safety of maritime navigation the harmonization of maritime buoyage systems is an urgent necessity,

Considering that some of the Authorities have already committed themselves to implementing System "A" - The Combined Cardinal and Lateral System (Red to Port) developed by the International Association of Lighthouse Authorities and approved by the Maritime Safety Committee of the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization,

Expecting that regional harmonisation will promote a world-wide simplification of buoyage systems,

Considering the provisions of Regulation 14 of Chapter V of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1960 (1974 when in force),

Have agreed to adopt the following provisions concerning the implementation of System "A" - The Combined Cardinal and Lateral System (Red to Port).

Article 1

Participating Lighthouse Authorities (hereinafter referred to as Participating Authorities) are those which have already committed themselves to the implementation of System "A" for their aids to marine navigation in agreement with the Lighthouse Authorities of the neighbouring countries at the date of signing this Agreement.

Contracting Lighthouse Authorities (hereinafter referred to as Contracting Authorities) are those which undertake to adopt System "A" for their aids to marine navigation.

Article 2

Contracting Authorities agree to implement System "A" in accordance with the provisions of the regional plan attached as Annex drawn up with the agreement of Participating Authorities.

Article 3

Any Lighthouse Authority may notify its intention to become a party to the Agreement by application to the Depository Authority (see Article 4) which will inform Participating and Contracting Authorities as required.

Participating and Contracting Authorities agree to assist any other Lighthouse Authorities wishing to become parties to this Agreement, to draw up further regional plans to enable System "A" to be implemented by other Lighthouse Authorities.

Participating and Contracting Authorities also agree to add other Lighthouse Authorities to the list of Authorities signing this Agreement.

Article 4

The present Agreement will be deposited with the Lighthouse Authority of Denmark which will transmit certified copies thereof to all Lighthouse Authorities party to this Agreement, maintain all necessary records and add names of further Contracting Authorities when required.

IN FAITH WHEREOF, the undersigned have appended their signatures to the present Agreement, which comes into force this day the 16th March 1977.

DONE in two copies, one in French and one in English, both texts being equally authentic and which will remain deposited in the archives of the Lighthouse Authority of Denmark.

ANNEX

REGIONAL PLAN FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF MARITIME BUOYAGE SYSTEM "A"

Stage I - 1977 (15 April 1977 - 31 December 1977)

Dover Strait and Southern North Sea

Northern boundary: Latitude  $52^{\circ} 10' N$

Southern boundary: Latitude  $50^{\circ} 20' N$

Western boundary: Longitude  $00^{\circ}$

Stage II - 1978 (1 April 1978 - 31 December 1978)

From Latitude  $52^{\circ} 10' N$  to Latitude  $57^{\circ} N$  in the North Sea  
(East Coast of Scotland to the West Coast of Jutland).

Stage III - 1979

From the western boundary of Stage I to:

- (a) A line joining Old Head of Kinsale to the point Latitude  $47^{\circ} 50' N$   
Longitude  $5^{\circ} 30' W$  and thence eastward to the French Coast.
- (b) A line joining Malin Head to the Rinn of Islay Lighthouse.

Stage IV - 1980

The remainder of the coastal areas of France, Ireland, United Kingdom, Denmark (including the Faroe Islands) and the Federal Republic of Germany. The West and South Coasts of Sweden to Latitude  $55^{\circ} 40' N$  in the Baltic Sea.

The entire coastal areas of the German Democratic Republic, the Polish People's Republic and Norway.

Stage V - 1981

The remaining coastal areas of Sweden.

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