



**TERMS OF REFERENCE**  
**For the Advisory Board on the Law of the Sea (ABLOS)**  
**of the**  
**International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) and**  
**the International Association of Geodesy (IAG)**  
**(as amended 24 October 2009)**

Ref: 1<sup>st</sup> HSSC Meeting (Singapore 2009)

**OBJECTIVE:**

To provide advice on technical aspects of the Law of the Sea.

**1. Terms of Reference**

- 1.1. To provide advice, guidance and, where applicable, offer expert interpretation of the technical aspects of the Law of the Sea to the parent Organizations (IHO/IAG), their Member States or to other organizations on request.
- 1.2. To review State practice and jurisprudence on Law of the Sea matters which are relevant to the work of ABLOS so as to be in a position to provide expert advice when needed.
- 1.3. To study, promote and encourage the development of appropriate techniques in the application of the technical provisions contained within the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea.
- 1.4. To review and update IHO Special Publication C-51 "A Manual on Technical Aspects of the United Nations' Convention on the Law of the Sea - 1982" (TALOS Manual).
- 1.5. To prepare, review and update other ABLOS publications as required by the parent organizations (IHO/IAG).

**2. Rules of Procedure**

- 2.1. ABLOS shall be composed of eight full members, preferably chosen with wide geographic representation. Each parent Organization (IHO/IAG) shall appoint four members. The Division for Ocean Affairs and the Law of the Sea of the UN Office of Legal Affairs (DOALOS), and the International Hydrographic Bureau (IHB) ("*the International Hydrographic Bureau (IHB)*") to be replaced by "*the IHO Secretariat*" when the Secretariat is established) shall have representatives in an ex-officio capacity without voting rights.
- 2.2. ABLOS should normally take decisions by consensus. Should a vote be necessary then a simple majority of those present and voting is required, subject to a minimum of 4 voting members being present. In the case of a tied vote the Chair shall have a casting vote.

- 2.3. The Member States of the IHO, the IAG and ABLOS through its Chair may nominate additional observers to ABLOS. Observers may participate in correspondence and attend meetings but may not vote.
- 2.4. Appointed Members shall serve for a term of four years, renewable by a recommendation of the Board for one additional four-year term and with the approval of the corresponding parent organization. The Chair shall inform the relevant parent organization of any foreseeable vacancy in a timely manner. Members and Observers are expected to attend every meeting of ABLOS. Where a Member fails to attend two consecutive meetings the Chair should raise the matter with the parent Organization (IHO/IAG) with a view to rectifying the situation.
- 2.5. Whilst members of ABLOS are appointed by their parent Organizations (IHO/IAG), to whom they are accountable, members are expected to serve as individual experts in their own right. No statements or publications may be issued in the name of ABLOS without ABLOS's prior approval.
- 2.6. The Chair and Vice-Chair shall be elected by ABLOS and should normally come from different parent Organizations (IHO/IAG) on a rotational basis. They will serve for a two-year period, after which the Vice-Chair becomes Chair and a new Vice-Chair is elected. If the Chair is not present or available, the Vice-Chair shall act in this capacity until the next meeting. Should the Vice-Chair not be available to take office as Chair when required, a new Chair and Vice-Chair should be elected.
- 2.7. ABLOS may establish Working Groups to carry out specific tasks.
- 2.8. ABLOS will have its permanent Secretariat at the IHB ("*the IHB*" to be replaced by "*the IHO Secretariat*" when the Secretariat is established), Monaco. The Secretariat will publish the documents and publications produced by the Board as required.
- 2.9. Members and Observers of ABLOS are expected to be supported by their own host organizations or governments for travel expenses and work. Exceptionally an ABLOS appointed observer may be supported by ABLOS for a specific task.
- 2.10. ABLOS will normally meet once a year at a venue and time that minimizes cost and conduct business by correspondence between meetings.
- 2.11. ABLOS may organise conferences and seminars. A biennial technical conference will normally be held in Monaco in conjunction with an ABLOS Meeting. ABLOS may operate a fund to cover the receipts and expenses of running such a conference. Guidelines for the operation of this fund are appended to these terms of reference.
- 2.12. The Chair shall report on the activities of the Board to the annual meeting of the IHO Hydrographic Services and Standards Committee (HSSC) and to each ordinary session of the International Hydrographic Conference ("*each ordinary session of the International Hydrographic Conference*" to be replaced by "*each ordinary session of the Assembly through the Council*" when the Council and Assembly are established). The Chair shall also provide an annual report on ABLOS's activities to the IAG and a report covering the inter-sessional period to the General Assembly of the IAG.
- 2.13. These TOR should be reviewed by ABLOS as required and not less frequently than every 4 years. Amendments, recommended by ABLOS, are to be submitted to the parent Organizations (IHO/IAG) for approval.

**ABLOS CONFERENCE FUND GUIDELINES**  
(As amended 15 October 2008)

**1. Introduction**

1.1 The Advisory Board on the Law of the Sea (ABLOS) is formed by four representatives from each of the following bodies: The International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) and the International Association of Geodesy (IAG). Secretarial support for ABLOS is provided by the International Hydrographic Bureau (IHB) (“*the International Hydrographic Bureau (IHB)*” to be replaced by “*the IHO Secretariat*” when the Secretariat is established). The parent organizations (IHO/IAG) approve the Terms of Reference (TOR) for ABLOS. The UN Division of Ocean Affairs and Law of the Sea (DOALOS) and the IHB (“*the IHB*” to be replaced by “*the IHO Secretariat*” when the Secretariat is established) attend ABLOS meetings in an ex-Officio capacity.

**2. Biennial Conference**

2.1 The TOR invite ABLOS to organise seminars and technical conferences and permit the operation of a fund to support such activities.

**3. Income**

3.1 The primary source of income for the fund will be from the registration fees of delegates attending such seminars / conferences. ABLOS should set the level of registrations fees in order to provide a modest excess of income over expenditure given an estimated attendance.

**4. Expenditure**

4.1 The primary expenditure for the fund will be to cover the costs of running the seminars / conferences. Expenditure may include but is not limited to: assistance to speakers / tutorial leaders, conference equipment, documentation, proceedings, staff overtime, reception and tea breaks.

4.2 ABLOS may use any funds in excess of 3000 Euros remaining after all expenses for a seminar / conference have been settled, to fund other activities conducted by ABLOS. Limited support for travel / subsistence in connection with production of a new edition of C-51 ‘A Manual on Technical Aspects of the Law of the Sea’ might be considered such an activity. Such expenditure must be approved by a simple majority of the ABLOS Membership.

4.3 Routine expenditure in support of a seminar / conference may be transacted by the IHB (“*the IHB*” to be replaced by “*the IHO Secretariat*” when the Secretariat is established) and reported in the fund accounts.

**5. Operation**

5.1 The fund will be operated by the IHB (“*the IHB*” to be replaced by “*the IHO Secretariat*” when the Secretariat is established) on behalf of ABLOS. A copy of the fund accounts will be provided to the Annual Business Meeting of ABLOS and immediately after finalising the accounts following a seminar / conference.

**6. Review**

6.1 This guidance should be reviewed, and amended as necessary, by ABLOS at intervals not exceeding 4 years.