



# ANNUAL REPORT 2023

One Sea Association

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The One Sea Association is a non-profit global alliance of leading commercial companies involved in the value chain of automated and autonomous maritime transport systems. Membership is also open to entities that provide training on related technologies.

The association works towards establishing and implementing a necessary environment for an automated and autonomous maritime transport system. It plays an active role in developing the international legal framework and is involved in standardisation efforts.

During 2023, One Sea (OS) followed the selected strategic priorities, focusing on international regulatory work, increasing awareness of maritime automation and expanding its membership base.

The association strengthened its position as a recognised expert group and continued to build its role as a thought leader. Its focus on strategic objectives and effective management enabled this progress. The extensive and versatile but selective networking played its part and supported the positive development.

### Collaboration with International organisations and networks

Application for Consultative Status at IMO was one of the main actions for 2023. Unfortunately, the application had to be postponed to spring 2024. This was due to IMO's unusual proceedings in 2021 caused by COVID. The applications, including One Sea's, were considered in October 2021 instead of July, which is the usual timetable. Reapplication may be considered the earliest two years after the Council's previous rejection. In 2023, IMO returned to its regular schedule, and NGO applications were evaluated in July. In the spring, IMO informed OS that if the association submits an application, it cannot be processed as it had been less than two years since the previous application.

In June, One Sea had the honour of addressing IMO during the 107th meeting of the Maritime Safety Committee. The session, kindly hosted by IACS, allowed member states to hear from One Sea members about the latest developments in autonomous maritime technologies and the challenges that need to be overcome as the work on the MASS Code continues. Following the model from the previous event directed to IMO members, three members of the One Sea joined the Secretary General on stage. This time, the audience heard presentations from Kongsberg, Sea Machines and Orca AI. The event received positive feedback from the audience, indicating the need for the industry's insight and support.

During the review period, OS participated in the meetings of two different IMO committees connected to developing the MASS code (MSC and FAL). In addition, the Secretariat took part in two working group meetings on MASS. The Secretariat also monitored other IMO meetings and provided the members with updates on outcomes related to digitalisation.

In addition to meeting participation, OS had an opportunity to discuss the key principles and technological solutions for remote and autonomous shipping and how adopting such technologies can enhance ship safety and performance as an invited speaker in the Symposium on MASS Code, hosted jointly by IMO and the Republic of Korea.

OS continued its collaboration with the Swedish Lighthouse "Smarta Fartyg" network and participated in three virtual and one onsite meeting. The association also continued participating in the Nordic cooperation organised by the Norwegian SAMS network. In addition, the Secretariat also facilitated inputs to IHO and participated in meetings of ISO and IALA

The European Maritime Safety Agency did not arrange any events concerning MASS in 2023.

## Membership

In 2023, OS surpassed its goal of acquiring 2-5 new members by signing six new joining agreements.

Groke Technologies from Finland and ELTA Systems from Israel joined the association during the spring and summer, and MAHI from Belgium and COSCO Shipping Technology from China became members during the autumn. In the latter half of the year, Marine AI (UK) and Marautec (China) signed a joining agreement that would make them members starting in 2024.

Discussions with various companies indicated that OS membership is seen as a valuable networking and advocacy channel option. Several companies on the Secretariat's membership acquisition list have indicated that the timing for joining is unsuitable, but they are interested in continuing the discussion later. This gives a cautiously optimistic outlook for the coming year.

Unfortunately, during the year, there were also departures from the membership. Three Finnish companies, Wärtsilä, Tietoevry, and Haltian, ended their membership. According to the information received, the decisions were driven by internal restructuring within the companies and not dissatisfaction with the association's goals or activities. In December, Sea Machines (USA) withdrew due to the company's internal reasons.

## Communication and event participation

OS continued its efforts to strengthen its position as an influential industry expert voice. The association published its third paper, "Autonomy in Maritime Industry". The paper provides an overview of the key topics related to the autonomous ship concept.

During 2023, OS received several invitations to speak and present at various events. Participating in these events was done selectively. Priority was given to those occasions where the participation was deemed to reach an appropriate audience for the core messages of the association. In addition to opportunities for advocacy, the evaluation also considered the potential to connect with companies that may be interested in joining the association. OS Secretariat participated, for example, at The 4th International Ship Autonomy and Sustainability Summit (part of the Norshipping Conference), London Shipping Week, and the International MASS 2023 seminar (in conjunction with MARINTEC Shanghai). The association was also on stage at the ICMASS 2023 Conference.

The association's Secretariat conducted several interviews with parties interested in the association's field throughout the year. These interviews offered an opportunity to increase awareness about OS and share the association's core messages. One significant achievement in this regard was that the top-tier media, the BBC (UK), reached out to the association in the spring. This can be considered evidence of the association's effective profile-building.

The Secretariat has made efforts to enhance the recognition and visibility of OS in the port sector. Activities included participation in port industry events like Digital Port Days (Rotterdam, NL) and Annual Port Days (Naantali, FI). In addition, One Sea was featured in extensive articles in Seatrade Maritime's Global Ports report and the official publication of the International Association of Ports and Harbors (IAPH).

The association's LinkedIn profile attracted many visitors and followers, proving its effectiveness in reaching a diverse audience. The aim was to get 1000 followers by the end of the year, and this goal was successfully achieved, with the number of followers steadily increasing to around 1,140 by the year's end.

## **The organisation of the activities**

The operation of the association remained largely unchanged from previous years. Per the association's Statutes, the Annual Meeting was held in April. In September, the members had an Extraordinary General Meeting to discuss and approve the updated Statutes, authorise the Board to draft and upkeep the association's first Bylaws and consider the Board's proposal on how to arrange the secretariat services in the future. The Board of Directors held four meetings during the year.

The Regulations Working Group held one virtual meeting in 2023. The Group worked through emails and contributed to 10 of the 17 work streams of the IMO MASS Correspondence Group. However, the IMO MASS group did not make significant progress because some fundamental regulatory principles required the main part of the resources of the IMO member states.

The Communication Working Group held two meetings in the spring term, but there were no meetings during the autumn season. Towards the end of 2023, the Secretariat began evaluating the purpose and objectives of the Comms WG. The evaluation process is ongoing, and decisions regarding the group's activities will be made after consulting with members.

## **Financial situation**

In 2023, there was a significant change in the financing of the association's operations when the opportunity to utilise the public funding granted by Business Finland for the One Sea Ecosystem –project ended at the end of October. As a result, the association now relies solely on membership fees.

The change weakened the association's financial situation in the short term. An Extraordinary General meeting held in September decided that at least one member would pay the 2024 membership fee in advance to stabilise the cash balance situation. Eventually, two members paid their membership fees in advance.

The Board considered different ways to organise Secretariat services to ensure smooth operation while adapting to financial constraints.

## **Board of Directors**

The One Sea Board of Directors is composed of individuals with a diverse range of skills, experiences, and backgrounds. The composition of the Board is carefully considered to ensure a balance of perspectives and a commitment to improving gender balance.

The Board members were elected during the General Meeting held in April. Three people resigned during the reporting period as their companies terminated their membership at One Sea. Even though the number of members decreased, the Board remained quorate. The association's rules require the Board to have a minimum of four members, including the chairperson.

- ABB, Eero Lehtovaara, Chair
- Cargotec, Tommi Pettersson
- Finnpiilot, Sanna Sonninen
- Kongsberg, Anton Westerlund, Vice-Chair
- Haltian, Matti Vakkuri (until 2.11.2023)
- Sea Machines, Lauren Lamm (until 2.11.2023)
- Wärtsilä, Michael Christiansen (until 28.2.2023)

## **Administrative matters**

In 2023, One Sea's operations changed when its long-standing collaboration with DIMECC Ltd ended in October, concluding the One Sea Ecosystem – an ongoing project since 2016. The association was formed during this project, and One Sea's Board served as the project's Management Group, with secretariat services being provided through DIMECC.

In September, the One Sea members unanimously decided to remove the association from DIMECC's internal operating environment and directly acquire secretariat services from the existing staff. The main goal was to implement this administrative change with minimal impact on the association's core activities. The Secretary successfully executed the transition, meeting the set goals within the specified timeline.