



IHB File N° S1/5072

**CIRCULAR LETTER 60/2016
02 November 2016**

**APPLICATION FROM THE ASSOCIATION OF ARCTIC EXPEDITION CRUISE
OPERATORS TO BE GRANTED OBSERVER STATUS
AS A NON-GOVERNMENTAL INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATION**

Reference:

- A. IHO Resolution 5/1957 as amended - *IHO Relations with other Organizations*

Dear Hydrographer,

1. The Directing Committee has received an application from the Association of Arctic Expedition Cruise Operators (AECO) to be granted observer status as a Non-Governmental International Organization (NGIO) under the terms of Reference A.
2. AECO is a non-governmental, not-for-profit organization established in 2003 and registered in Norway. AECO is dedicated to managing responsible, environmentally friendly and safe tourism in the Arctic and strives to set the highest possible operating standards.
3. AECO is composed of expedition cruise operators operating in the Arctic and other entities with interests in this industry. It currently comprises 56 members, of which 34 represent most of the expedition cruise operators in the Arctic region.
4. Among its achievements, and of particular relevance to the IHO, AECO has:
 - become the primary organization representing the concerns and views of expedition cruise tourism companies operating in the Arctic;
 - together with the International Association of Antarctica Tour Operators (IAATO), launched a crowd-sourced bathymetry project;
 - served as a contact and advisory group to government ministries and agencies responsible for tourism related management and regulations;
 - contributed to Arctic research with competence and data as well as logistics; and
 - maintained co-operation with related interest-groups such as IAATO and the Cruise Liners International Association (CLIA). Both of these organizations already enjoy Observer status in the IHO.
5. AECO's Marine Committee holds special competence in Arctic maritime related issues and is a resource group for AECO, as well as for others with which AECO has relationships.
6. AECO has established dialogue and cooperation with several hydrographic services with interests in the Arctic, including the Norwegian and Danish Hydrographic Services (Sjøkarverket and Geodatastyrelsen).
7. AECO has a governing body, an executive officer and a secretariat and AECO's Bylaws authorize accredited representatives to speak for its members.

8. AECO undertakes to support the activities of the IHO and to promote the dissemination of its principles and work.

9. More information about AECO can be found at: www.aeco.no.

10. The application from AECO has been duly examined by the Directing Committee which is satisfied that AECO meets the requirements for accreditation as an NGIO as described in IHO Resolution 5/1957 as amended, in that:

- it has the character of a non-governmental international organization, representing individuals and organizations with an interest in nautical charting, high-technology navigation and the use of hydrographic information;
- the objectives and functions of AECO are in harmony with the objectives of the IHO, as defined in Article II of the Convention on the IHO;
- it has a governing body, an executive officer and a secretariat authorized under its constitution to speak for its members; and
- the aims of AECO are entirely consistent and complementary to the aims of the IHO. AECO commits to support the activities of the IHO by promoting and disseminating its principles and work. Accordingly, it will make a positive contribution to the work of the IHO.

11. Member States are invited to consider the application from AECO for accreditation and to submit any objections or comments that they might have by **1 January 2017**. Subsequently, the IHO Secretariat will notify the AECO of the outcome of its consultation with IHO Member States.

On behalf of the Directing Committee,
Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Robert Ward', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Robert WARD
President