THIS CIRCULAR LETTER INCLUDES A REGISTRATION FORM

IHB File No. S3/8157

CIRCULAR LETTER 68/2011
03 November 2011

2nd IHO TECHNICAL WORKSHOP ON ECDIS SOFTWARE ISSUES

References:

a) IHB Circular Letter 46/2011 dated 1August (ECDIS Presentation Test for Ships)

b) HSSC3-07.1B (Progress report on action taken covering unexpected behaviour of some ECDIS)

c) CL 19/2011 dated 24 February 2011 - *ECDIS Software Issues Workshop Outcomes*

Dear Hydrographer,

1   As reported at Reference a), a simple user validation check has recently been distributed to all ships using ENCs. This is in support of various Circulars issued by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) concerning operating anomalies identified within ECDIS and maintenance of ECDIS software. This ENC/ECDIS data presentation and performance check is intended to highlight to mariners the importance of operating ECDIS equipment that conforms to the latest applicable IHO standards. The documentation accompanying the check also provides practical advice on what measures mariners can take if their ECDIS is found not to perform optimally until such time as the software can be upgraded by the relevant manufacturer. Mariners have been invited to submit the results of the check to the IHB so that these can be considered and any further action taken as may be necessary. The check dataset and the accompanying documentation have also been placed on the IHO website for download.

2   Prior to the ENC/ECDIS data presentation and performance check being released, the UKHO and the UK Maritime and Coastguard Agency co-hosted a technical workshop in London attended by invited experts to review the current situation with reported ECDIS issues. The participants comprised 23 leading ECDIS experts drawn from IHO Member States, ECDIS manufacturers, type-approval laboratories, training establishments, mariners' professional and industry bodies, and maritime Administrations. As well as providing valuable input to the documentation accompanying the IHO ENC/ECDIS data presentation and performance check, the workshop identified a number of other actions that the IHO and other relevant organisations may wish to consider, including proposals for urgent amendments to certain IHO standards. In particular, the workshop participants identified that revisions or clarifications may be required to the S-52 Presentation Library, S-57- *Use of the Object Catalogue,* S-58, S-63 and S-64. More details are included in reference b) and related proposals will be considered by the HSSC at its third meeting in November. A combination of other actions were identified, either for the various stakeholder groups represented at the meeting or for others to undertake and these actions will be pursued by the relevant organisations represented at the meeting.

3   In May, ongoing concerns relating to ECDIS were brought to the attention of the IMO, at the 89th meeting of the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 89). Several delegations spoke on the issue. They fully supported the concerns outlined in documents MSC 89/24/2 and MSC 89/24/3 and were of the view that it was an important matter of relevance and concern for the Subcommittees on Safety of Navigation (NAV), Radiocommunications and Search and Rescue (COMSAR), and Standards of Training and Watchkeeping (STW) that needed to be considered carefully on an urgent basis. Accordingly, MSC 89 decided to refer the matter to NAV for further consideration and to COMSAR and STW to provide their comments. The comments from these Sub Committees together with any other inputs would then enable MSC 90, meeting in May 2012, to provide suitable guidance on the best way forward. The IHB proposes to provide such a submission on behalf of the IHO, describing what action has been taken by the IHO so far and the results of the IHO ENC/ECDIS Data Presentation and Performance Check.

4   In order to review progress and the results of the ENC/ECDIS Data Presentation and Performance Check, the Directing Committee proposes to host a workshop in January 2012 at the IHB, where relevant stakeholder organizations will be able to discuss progress, identify any further proposed actions and develop the key points to be reported to the IMO. These might include:

-   the requirement for software in ECDIS equipment already fitted in ships to be periodically upgraded when appropriate;
-   improving mariner awareness of the need to upgrade ECDIS software;
-   improving the consistency of data encoding in ENCs; and
-   the need for a coordinated reporting, assessment and feedback mechanism for ECDIS related equipment performance issues.

5   The format for the technical workshop will be similar to the workshop hosted by the IHO in February 2011 and the UK-hosted workshop held in London in September. The agenda will be prepared over the coming weeks; in the meantime, an outline is attached at Annex A. Please note that this is an initial draft and will be refined following discussion with invited attendees and an initial analysis of the results of the ENC/ECDIS data presentation and performance check now being submitted to the IHB by mariners. The Directing Committee would welcome any comments or suggestions on the topics to be discussed.

6   The workshop will take place at the IHB in Monaco from **0900 to 1700 on Wednesday 25 January 2012** and from **0900 to no later than 1200 on Thursday 26 January 2012**.

7   Invitations to the workshop will be sent to those international organizations, ECDIS equipment manufacturers, technical bodies, and other stakeholders, as well as to those IMO Member States that have contributed to the discussions so far. IHO Member States wishing to contribute to the ongoing discussions about ECDIS issues should confirm attendance by sending the attached registration form (Annex B) to info@ihb.mc **by 31 December 2011**.

On behalf of the Directing Committee
Yours sincerely

Robert WARD
Director

Annex A: Proposed topics for the ECDIS/ENC Software Issues Workshop
Annex B: Registration Form
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Information copy to: NGIOs

PROPOSED TOPICS TO BE INCLUDED IN THE ECDIS/ENC SOFTWARE ISSUES WORKSHOP

DAY 1		
0900-1030	1.	Introduction / Progress report
1100-1500	2.	Discuss results from ENC/ECDIS data presentation and performance check Identify any further actions required - by IHO - by others
1530-1700	3.	Is a coordinated reporting, assessment and feedback mechanism for ECDIS related equipment performance issues required? If so, how might it operate?
DAY 2		
0900-1000	4.	SPARE
1030-1200	5.	Develop and endorse outline of IHO report to MSC90

REGISTRATION FORM FOR ATTENDANCE AT THE
WORKSHOP ON ECDIS/ENC SOFTWARE ISSUES
(To be returned to the IHB (info@ihb.mc) by 31December 2011)

Member State:..

Name of person attending: ....

Email address for correspondence: ....

Brief description of expertise/experience to be contributed to the workshop topics:

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