

Comments by Australian Maritime Safety Authority (AMSA) on International Maritime Organisation (IMO) issues which may be relevant to IHO Hydrographic Commission on Antarctica (HCA) members.

1. Australian participation in the development of a mandatory code for ships operating in polar waters

AMSA is coordinating Australia's participation in an IMO Correspondence Group for the development of the Polar Code. AMSA has circulated documentation provided by the Correspondence Group to the relevant parts of Australia's maritime industry, including the Australian Antarctic Division, for comment. The deadline for the report of the Correspondence Group is 7 November 2011. The report will then be discussed by the IMO's Ship Design and Equipment Sub-Committee (DE 56) in January 2012. It may be opportune to brief HCA members on specific issues arising during development of the Polar Code.

2. Polar vessel traffic monitoring and information systems

Within the work being conducted to develop the IMO's Polar Code there has been some discussion about including provisions which would require the creation of polar vessel traffic monitoring and information systems, and this may be of interest to HCA members
(ref IMO document DE 55/12/9).

3. IMO Safety of Navigation Circular regarding navigation safety in polar waters

The minutes of the last HCA meeting mention a discussion about work being led by Denmark to produce an IMO Safety of Navigation Circular on navigation using ECDIS in polar regions where mariners need to be aware about certain matters concerning the quality of Electronic Navigational Charts (ENCs). Since last year this work has progressed and, with significant input provided by the Australian Hydrographic Service. AMSA has provided an Australian response to Denmark's initial draft. HCA members could be provided with an update on this issue and be asked for any further comments or input which Australia could on forward to Denmark.