

**EIGHTH MEETING OF THE IHO INTER-REGIONAL COORDINATION
COMMITTEE
IHO-IRCC8
Abu Dhabi, UAE, 29-31 May 2016**

Report of the IHO Hydrographic Commission on Antarctica (HCA)

Submitted by:	Chair, HCA
Executive Summary:	This paper provides a summary report of the work of the Hydrographic Commission on Antarctica since the last meeting of IRCC

1. Chair, Officers

Chair: Robert WARD, IHB, since Sept. 2012

Vice-Chair: John J. HAUMANN Jr., US, since October 2012

Secretary: Yves GUILLAM, IHB, since July 2014

2. Members States: Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Chile, China, Ecuador, France, Germany, Greece, India, Italy, Japan, Republic of Korea, New Zealand, Norway, Peru, Russian Federation, South Africa, Spain, Uruguay, USA, Venezuela, UK

Colombia has recently indicated its intention to become a full member of the IHO HCA

Observers: Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM)
International Maritime Organization (IMO)
Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (IOC)
Council of Managers of National Antarctic Programmes (COMNAP)
International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators (IAATO)
International Association of Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA)
The Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR)
General Bathymetric Chart of the Ocean project (GEBCO)
International Bathymetric Chart of the Southern Ocean (IBCSO)

3. Meetings

3.1 The HCA has not met in the period since IRCC-7.

3.2 The following meetings related to HCA have taken place in the 2013-17 quinquennial period:

- HCA-13, 3 - 5 Dec. 2013, Cadiz, Spain
- ATCM-37, 28 April - 2 May 2014, Brasilia, Brazil (represented by HCA Chair)
- COMNAP AGM, 27 - 28 Aug. 2014, Christchurch, New Zealand (represented by HCA Chair)
- ATCM-38, 1 – 10 June 2015, Sofia, Bulgaria (HCA represented by Foreign Affairs of Monaco)
- ATCM-39, 23 May – 1 June, Santiago, Chile (HCA represented by SHOA, Chile) – meeting in progress

Next Meeting

3.3 The 14th meeting of the HCA will take place 28-30 June 2016 in Tromsø, Norway

4. HCA Working Groups

4.1 Hydrography Priorities Working Group (HPWG), in operation since Oct. 2012

- Chair: Andy WILLETT, UK
- Membership: Argentina, Australia, Chile, Germany, Greece, South Africa, Spain, United Kingdom, USA, COMNAP (observer) and IAATO (observer)

4.2 The HPWG, through its Chair, identifies the priority areas requiring survey for charting purposes, and coordinates the coverage schemes for both INT paper charts and ENC.

5. Status of Charting and ENC Coverage

5.2 The current status of INT chart and ENC coverage for the Antarctic region is as follows:

- a. So far, only half of about 170 ENCs that have been identified by the IHO Hydrographic Commission on Antarctica (IHO HCA) as being required for navigation in the region have been published.
- b. The production of ENCs for Antarctica is severely hampered by the lack of data, the poor state of the corresponding paper charts that they are intended to replace and the production and financial priorities of those States that have volunteered to make the ENCs; only 10 ENCs were produced in 2014, and only five¹ in 2015.
- c. According to the information received at the IHB, within Charting Region M covering the area of responsibility of the HCA, 77 INT charts out of 113 have been published so far. Three INT charts only were published in 2015.

5.3 The information available in the IHO GIS for Antarctica is kept updated on a regular basis for INT charts, ENCs and undersea feature names. No information was received recently for updating the other layers (shipping routes, surveyed areas, tidal stations, etc.).

6. HCA Cooperation with Other Organizations

6.1 HCA attempts to work closely with stakeholder organizations such as COMNAP, IAATO, SCAR, IMO, IALA, and IOC. However, with the exception of IAATO and IALA, active interest for the other organizations is very limited. Only IAATO and IALA will be represented at the forthcoming meeting of the HCA.

7. Matters of Concern

7.1 The state of hydrographic surveying and nautical charting in Antarctica continues to pose serious risks for the safety of navigation as well as compromising other activities taking place in the surrounding seas and oceans.

7.2 A number of IHO Member States, through their national Hydrographic Offices, continue in their efforts to improve the situation. However, available resources remain limited and there does not appear to be much prospect of significant improvements in the near future. New policy and coordinating action is required by governments together with other Observer Organizations if significant progress is to be made – particularly with regard to obtaining bathymetric data. This is a matter that will be discussed at the next meeting of the HCA.

7.2 An annual report from the IHO on behalf of the HCA has been prepared by the IHB for tabling at the 39th session of the Antarctic Treaty consultative Meeting (ATCM) in Santiago, Chile. The report repeats much of the content of previous reports. The report highlights the concerns already reported to the ATCM that the lack of hydrographic knowledge in the region should be a serious matter of concern for the ATCM, yet the States Party to the Antarctic Treaty appear not to place any significant priority on improving hydrographic knowledge.

7.3 While the ATCM is made up of the States Parties to the Antarctic Treaty, the IHB has recently been informed by the ATCM secretariat that the ATCM regards itself as a permanent diplomatic conference and not as an international or inter-governmental organization. This may be one of the reasons why the ATCM as a body appears unwilling to engage directly with the HCA or the IHO or to acknowledge any particular responsibility for addressing the shortfalls in hydrographic knowledge and charting.

¹ Argentina (1), Chile (1), UK (3).

8. Actions required from IRCC7

IRCC is invited to:

- a. **Consider** the content of this report;
- b. **Take any actions** as considered appropriate.