

Report of the North Sea ENC Harmonization Working Group (NSEHWG) to the 30th NSHC Conference

1. Background

From the NSHC 29 report;

The 29th NSHC Conference recognized the need to study the harmonization of the ENCs within the commission region (INT chart region D) in order to promote increased consistency, common encoding standards and an improved level of ENC quality to better satisfy the needs of the mariner.

To progress this task the NSHC 29th Conference established the North Sea ENC Harmonization Working Group hereafter referred to as NSEHWG

UK to draft TOR's and circulate to MS for approval.

UK to provide chair of NSEHWG.

The chair to propose program of work including actions related to ECDIS display issues (NAVAREA1 warning 230/210).

2. Progress since NSHC 29

- The UK has supplied a Chair initially this was Mr Brian Parish but now Mr Mark Aspden has taken on this role.
- Terms of reference have been agreed by 8 member states who have also nominated points of contact for the group. (provided at Annexe A)
- A draft work program modelled on that used by the Baltic Sea ENC Harmonisation group has been proposed and agreed by 5 member states. (provided at Annexe B)
- Some member states have provided input for the first item of the work program which involves collating known issues for consideration.

3. Future Plans

- To encourage further members states to actively participate by agreeing the TORs and the draft work program
- To progress the work program in order to prepare a report for NSHC31 containing recommendations for consistent ENC encoding this may require a meeting to be held.

Mark Aspden, Chairman, North Sea ENC Harmonization Group, May 2012

Annexe A

Terms of Reference for the North Sea ENC Harmonization Working Group (NSEHWG) (6th September 2011)

With reference to:

- Terms of Reference for the Baltic Sea ENC Harmonization Working Group (BSEHWG) – 14th June 2007
- IHO Work Programme 2008 – 2012: Task 3.3.4 ENC Production, Distribution and Update,
- IHO CL 32/2007: Recommendations for Consistent ENC Data Encoding,
- WEND Report to the XVII IH Conference [CONF.17/WP.3 Page 6] and
- WEND principle 2.8,

The NSHC at its 29th Conference recognised the need to study the harmonisation of the ENCs within the Commission region (INT chart region D) in order to promote increased consistency, common encoding standards and an improved level of ENC quality and display to satisfy the needs of the mariner.

To progress this task the NSHC 29th Conference established the North Sea ENC Harmonization Working Group hereafter referred to as NSEHWG.

The Working Group should:

- Analyse ENCs within the Commission region to identify any existing consistency issues due to differences in interpretation of ENC encoding guidance and ENC product specification.
- Propose solutions and measures to avoid inconsistencies, improve ENC encoding and where possible propose changes to improve display.
- Actively gather and analyse feedback from mariners on the use of ENCs in ECDIS in NW European waters to identify any issues related to ENC display.
- Exchange views on and propose solutions and measures that can be implemented by NSHC members that would improve the consistency and display of ENCs.
- Report to IHO HSSC WGs and / or propose amendments to the IHO and RENC recommendations to gain wider acceptance of proposals amongst ENC producers where this is appropriate.
- Present a report to the 30th NSHC Conference outlining the actions taken and the progress made in implementing harmonisation recommendations across the Commission area. This should include an Action plan with specified time schedule for the anticipated completion of the ENC harmonisation task.

Rules of procedures

- All NSHC Members are strongly encouraged to participate in and contribute to the work of the NSEHWG.
- The NSEHWG should be chaired by one of the Member States elected at the NSHC Conference.
- The NSEHWG should work as far as possible in accordance with existing guidelines and recommendations issued by the IHO and the RENCs.
- The work of the NSEHWG will be carried out primarily by correspondence (via e-mails). The members are strongly encouraged to reply without unnecessary delay.
- The NSEHWG should consult the WEND Working Group, HSSC and its Working Groups or other relevant bodies, as deemed necessary.

- The results of the NSEHWG should be harmonized with the related issues of the BSICCWG of BSHC where appropriate.
- The NSEHWG should inform adjoining Regional Hydrographic Commissions of its activities and decisions to ensure as far as possible harmonisation across commission boundaries.
- The members of the NSEHWG should have access to ENC's, as necessary, to undertake their task.

Annexe B

NSEHWG Work Programme				
Number	Objective	Action	Responsibility	Completion Date
1	To identify cases of inconsistency across ENC's in the NSHC region.	To provide a list of cases of inconsistencies identified.	All	
2	Survey Mariners for feedback	To prepare a questionnaire for users which can be used to obtain feedback on consistency issues in ENC's. For review by the group then to distribute and collate results.	Secretary	?
3	Analyse the identified issues	Based on the outcomes of items 1 and 2 collate the cases, distribute and request proposals for solutions to the issues identified.	Secretary	?
4	Propose Solutions to the identified issues	Consider each issue and develop/propose solutions as appropriate.	All	?
5	Report to HSSC Working Groups	To produce a report collating any outcomes and agreed recommendations from the work of the NSEHWG for consideration by HSSC working groups.	Chair	As required
6	Report to NSHC ??	To produce a report to explain the work of the working group and make recommendations for endorsement.	Chair	For NSHC ??
7	Consider ENC Scheming guidelines		All	