

**COUNTRY REPORT: UGANDA**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. **RHC Involvement.** Uganda is neither an IMO member, nor an IHO member nor a member of the SAIHC. The Visit Team obtained a short brief from the IHB on the outcome of the Arusha meeting in Oct 05 which was held to review safety of navigation on Lake Victoria. Mr John Paul Muindi, the IMO member of the team, was present at that meeting.
2. **Preliminary Liaison.** Mr P Sanya, Commissioner for Transport Regulation in Uganda, assisted with co-ordination of the visit.
3. **Points of Contact.** An entry for the IHO Year Book is at Appendix 1, designating the Commissioner for Transport Regulation as the point of contact within the responsible Ministry of Works, Housing and Communications (MOWHC). Preparation for the visits was clearly hampered by national and local elections.

**DESCRIPTION OF MARITIME ACTIVITIES**

4. **National Maritime Affairs.** Since the collision in May 2005 between the Uganda wagon ferries PAMBA and KABALEGA, resulting in the sinking of the latter, operations of the Uganda Railway Company ferries have been suspended pending proper licensing and re-insurance. The accident has prompted a major review, leading to efforts to establish a Marine Division within a multi-sector transport regulatory body. There are great challenges in building up expertise in specification for construction and in subsequent inspection and enforcement. Uganda's trained mariners, mostly Class 2 graduates from the Dar es Salaam Maritime Institute, are meanwhile short of practical experience. A drop in water level in the lake of c1.5-2m, and the continuing struggle against the invasive water hyacinth, continues to impact Ugandan ports.
5. **Trade and Maritime Traffic.** The Visit Team sought to update the picture of activity on Lake Victoria presented in 2002 by a consultancy team appointed by the IMO. The following significant changes have occurred:
  - a. **Regional Cargo operations.** Cargoes from Port Bell are uplifted by the Kenyan and Tanzanian wagon ferries. Considerable quantities of coffee are also taken from Jinja to Mwanza for onward transport to Dar es Salaam.
  - b. **National Cargo Operations.** The MV KALANGALA, a landing craft, has been constructed in the floating dock at Port Bell, and is operated to provide services to the Sesse Islands.
  - c. **Regional Passenger Operations.** There are no passenger ferries running between the 3 littoral states.
  - d. **National Passenger Operations.** Private, unregulated craft carry both goods and passengers around the Ugandan coast.
  - e. **Tourist Operations.** There are some private operations, but the sector is small and undeveloped.
  - f. **Fisheries.** The fishery is artisanal and unregulated, and safety standards are low.

6. Responsibility for Safety of Navigation. Apart from a SSB radio station in Port Bell, there is no provision for promulgation of warnings. Apart from an Egyptian operation under the Lake Victoria Environment Management Project (LVEMP) to remove water hyacinth at Port Bell, there is no provision for the maintenance of channels, removal of wrecks, or the provision and maintenance of aids to navigation.

7. Defence Force and Police Responsibilities. The Uganda People's Defence Force operates SAR helicopters from Entebbe, but has no serviceable surface craft. The Uganda Police Marine operates 9m patrol craft throughout Ugandan waters on anti-smuggling patrols. They are also tasked for SAR. The fall in water level, which has exposed uncharted rocks, is causing them anxiety, especially for the safety of inexperienced crews. They would place a high priority on survey of the Sesse Islands and coastal waters around landing places. There is also a non-governmental organisation, "The National Lake Rescue Institute East Africa", with aims akin to those of other lifeboat institutions world-wide.

8. Coastal Zone Management and Environmental Protection. There are no official marine National Parks. The second phase of the LVEMP will address the management of the environment of coastal communities. The Water Resources Management Development Department has 70 basic monitoring stations around the Ugandan coast which record water level. Their records, which span the last century, are related to MSL. They indicate that lake levels are approaching the mean during the period before the 1960s El Nino floods. However, the rate of fall does give grounds for concern.

#### **OUTLINE S-55 ANALYSIS**

9. Status of surveys within the National Maritime Zone. The summary of the status of surveys in the 2002 report holds good. Ugandan authorities concur that the highest priority for modern surveys is Port Bell and its approaches, followed by the route to Kisumu, which forms part of the nation's Northern Corridor to the sea at Mombasa, and then the routes to Mwanza on the Southern Corridor. Kalangala in the Sesse Islands is growing in importance, and should be added to the list of ports recommended for attention in 2002.

10. Collection and Circulation of Nautical Information. There is no process for collecting information which might be used to update charts and publications. The UKHO has placed a warning on the old fathoms charts to alert users to this most serious deficiency in hydrographic provision in Ugandan waters.

11. Survey Capability. The Visit Team were told that there are some surveyors in the Land Survey Department under the Ministry of Land, Water and Environment who have had some hydrographic training. This was not confirmed since the ministry did not attend any of the meetings.

12. Independent Chart Production Capability. There is no chart production capability in Uganda.

#### **PROPOSALS FOR CO-ORDINATION AND CAPABILITY BUILDING**

13. National Hydrographic Committee. The Visit Team were informed of the work of the East Africa Community (EAC)'s Marine Task Force. However, there is no body which draws together Uganda's stakeholders in the marine environment of Lake Victoria. The Team recommended that the Commissioner for Transport Regulation, with his responsibilities for marine safety, should call a meeting of all those authorities with whom they had met as soon as possible after receipt of the visit report. They strongly recommended that this group should be constituted as a National Hydrographic Committee, and that it should meet at least annually.

14. MSI Organisation and GMDSS. This organisation is effectively non-existent, and the most urgent action for Uganda is to put this first phase of hydrographic provision into effect.

a. MSI (Navigational Warnings). The Visit Team urged that a mariner from the Uganda Railway Corporation (URC) should be trained and stationed at Port Bell for this role. As well as

the SSB radio, consideration should be given to using an internet site to draw in reports from other harbours, and local radio and press notices to promulgate information. The Visit Team also noted that consideration is being given to the establishment of an aeronautical and marine Joint Rescue Coordination Centre at Entebbe Airport, where existing VHF communications might be exploited for the broadcast of MSI.

b. Information on Ports and Harbours. Pending the hoped for major project to fund surveys and chart production, the Visit Team urged that one of the currently unemployed URC masters should be employed to write sailing directions drawing together the pilotage information currently used by the wagon ferries.

c. GMDSS Status. It is understood that the EAC Marine Task Force is steering consideration of implementation of GMDSS for the Lake. The team would urge that this discussion should be given the highest priority, with advice from the IHO CPRNW.

15. Hydrographic Capability. The Visit Team considered that the required modern surveys would only be achieved in timely fashion by out-sourcing, with a capacity building element.

a. Provision of Survey Data. The Visit Team consider that each littoral state on Lake Victoria must take measures to communicate information to the charting HO, and that for Uganda this responsibility should be co-ordinated from Port Bell. This will require the Commissioner for Transport Regulation to take urgent steps to identify personnel and to make provision for training and appropriate resources.

b. Survey Capability. There is no capability in Uganda at present, nor could the Visit Team readily identify a source of suitable personnel from whom a national team, or members of a regional team, could be drawn. This matter requires urgent consideration by the Ugandan government. If they choose not to train any nationals in this area, then they must make adequate budgetary provision for contract advice and field work.

c. Chart Production. The visit team support the conclusion of the 2002 report that assistance should be sought from IHO Member States to compile and print charts of the Lake. A start could be made by obtaining satellite imagery and GPS ground control, and the EAC should resource such work as soon as possible.

d. Potential for Regional Activity. The Visit Team considered that a regional team approach was the only viable one to provide long-term sustainable capacity for hydrographic surveying. They also consider that the EAC should pursue pragmatic measures which would encourage the development of appropriate and sustainable regional and national capacity e.g. by the funding of a DGPS service which could be exploited by all Lake users, and especially the hydrographic surveyors.

## **PROPOSALS FOR ASSISTANCE**

16. Training. Uganda should send a representative to the SAIHC meeting and Technical Workshop in Maputo in the first week of June. This forum would greatly assist the government to begin to frame a national plan for the provision of hydrographic services, including a training plan.

17. Equipment. No equipment should be resourced until trained personnel are in place.

18. Funding. The Visit Team consider that only the successful implementation of the Lake Victoria Safety of Navigation project will release the level of funding to address the lack of modern surveys and charts and supporting MSI. However, Uganda could benefit from the seed-corn funding of the IHOCBC if the government, through a NHC, draws together a prioritised survey plan, clearly allocates responsibilities for hydrographic outputs, and identifies existing skilled staff or sources of new recruits. SAIHC can assist in this process, but the first steps must be taken locally.

## **FOLLOW UP ACTIONS**

19. Encouragement of Formation of a NHC, Development of a National Hydrographic Strategy, and RHC Membership. The Commissioner for Transport Regulation should consider the convening of a NHC for Uganda. He should also attend, or be represented at the SAIHC meetings in Maputo in Jun 06.

**ACTION: Uganda Commissioner for Transport Regulation.**

20. Encouragement of Effective and Timely Collection and Promulgation of Hydrographic Information. Staff of URC should be appointed and empowered to co-ordinate the collection and promulgation of new navigational safety information for Ugandan waters. **ACTION: Uganda Commissioner for Transport Regulation.**

21. Encouragement of Development of Hydrographic Capability. SAIHC and IHOCBC can provide advice on the following options, all of which might secure IHO funding support:

- a. A short-term attachment of a trained surveyor from an IHO MS to assist to define the national prioritised survey plan.
- b. Advice and or training by IHO CPRNW.
- c. Advice for the development of a National Indicative Plan for training funding.

**ACTION: Ugandan government, SAIHC and IHOCBC.**

**DRAFT ENTRY FOR UGANDA IN THE IHO YEAR-BOOK**

**UGANDA (REPUBLIC OF)**

**COMMISSIONER FOR TRANSPORT REGULATION**  
**Ministry of Works, Housing and Communication**  
**P.O. Box 10**  
**Entebbe**  
**UGANDA**

**Department: Ministry of Works, Housing and Communication**

**Principal functions:** Hydrographic policy and planning. In due course these will be included in the responsibilities of a new Marine Division to be included in a multi-sector regulatory body.

**Telephone:** + 256 41 320101

**FAX:** +256 41 320135

**E-mail:** mowhc@utlonline.co.ug

**Name of the Commissioner:** Mr Patrick SANYA.