

**COUNTRY REPORT**  
**MALTA (Country visited)**  
**Malta Maritime Authority (MMA)**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. RHC Involvement.

Note whether the country is an IHO member, YES /  NO and/or a member of the RHC. YES /  NO

**Malta is an associated member to MBSHC.**

Note whether it was represented at the most recent Regional Conference  YES / NO

**The last 15<sup>th</sup> MBSH Conference was held in Malta and a National Hydrographic Report was also presented (the meeting was attended by a representative from MALTA.**

and whether a National Report was available to the RHC Study Team.  YES / NO  
Where none of these apply, note whether there is any routine liaison with the HO of a RHC or IHO member nation.

2. Preliminary Liaison.

Record any local assistance with co-ordination of the visit.

**Maximum availability of all personnel of Malta Maritime Authority (MMA) and Malta Hydrographic Office (MHO).**

3. Points of Contact.

Confirm the accuracy of details in the IHO Year Book of the local first point of contact for hydrographic and MSI matters.

**Head of MHO: Mr. Joe BIANCO (Hydrographer Cat. B)**  
**Tel. +356 22914430**  
**Fax +356 22914429**  
**Email [joe.bianco@mma.gov.mt](mailto:joe.bianco@mma.gov.mt)**

Comment on any recommendations for change.

**NONE**

Note any local difficulties in line accountability, and loss of top-level awareness and support for the national hydrographic capability, which will be discussed later in the report.

**Only those that have a working relationship with Malta Maritime Authority.**

Report any changes in local legislation or organization which will result in changes to information published by the IHO.

**MMA is responsible for the Safety of Navigation (stated by Malta Maritime Authority Act CAP352 issued 1991).  
In article 6.(2).a is established the responsibility of MMA. The MHO forms part of the Marine Department which falls under the responsibility of the Harbour Master. The HO is carried out in compliance with Malta's obligation in terms of Regulation 9 of Chapter V of Solas (This convention forms part of the laws of Malta).**

## DESCRIPTION OF MARITIME ACTIVITIES

### 4. National Maritime Affairs.

Provide a thumb-nail sketch of the significance and salient features of the maritime sphere in the country visited.

- Commercial shipping
- Ferry shipping
- Cruise ships
- Oil and gas tankers
- Yachting
- Leisure tourism
- Recreational swimming
- Local fishing boats and fish farming
- Power regeneration
- Potable water supply

See Annex A: Shipping Movements – Year 2007.

Note any individuals who have been especially helpful in building up this picture.

**Mr. Joe BIANCO (Hydrographic Surveyor Course Cat B in UK Plymouth 1994 – ENC Course in IMA Trieste).**

**Mr. Paul ELLUL BONICI (Hydrographic Surveyor Course Cat B IMA Trieste 1999).**

**Mr. Godwin BORGE (Hydrographic Course 6 week in UK Southampton – ENC Course in IMA Trieste).**

**Captain Richard GABRIELE – Harbour Master.**

### 5. Trade and Maritime Traffic.

Where possible provide statistics on shipping transit and port calls.

See Annex A: Shipping Movements – Year 2007.

See Annex B: Cargo Throughput in the port of Valletta from 2002 to 2007.

Describe the main components of sea-borne traffic, and the patterns of activity in national waters, under the following headings:

a. Through Routes. Note any regional through routes which pass through the country's waters.

**NONE- There is considerable innocent maritime traffic which passes through our territorial waters when transiting the central Mediterranean.**

b. Transshipment. Comment on the existence of any hub ports.

**MARSAXLOKK – Hub container and oil port connected with bypass route (no highway and railroad).**

**VALLETTA – Mainly for vehicles.**

See Annex B: Cargo Throughput in the port of Valletta from 2002 to 2007.

c. Bulk Trades.

Comment on the significance of this element of international shipping and any impact on port development plans.

See Annex A: Shipping Movements – Year 2007.

See Annex B: Cargo Throughput in the port of Valletta from 2002 to 2007.

Note the existence of refineries and of bulk-loading facilities.

**NO Refinery**

**Dry Bulk loading facilities for wheat and cement in the port Valletta. A major wet bulk facilities also exist in the port of Marsaxlokk.**

See Annex B: Cargo Throughput in the port of Valletta from 2002 to 2007.

d. Feeder, Coasting and Local Trade.

Comment on volume and patterns, and list significant ports, including ferry ports.

**Ferry connection from Valletta to Italy and Tunis.**

**Valletta – Pozzallo (Sicily) by High Speed Craft.**

**In view of the container transshipment hub in the port of Marsaxlokk a large number of feeder services connect this port to other Mediterranean ports.**

**Local ferryboat CIRKEWWA – MGARR (GOZO).**

e. Offshore Supply and Support.

Comment on significance and on any particular influence on MSI and GMDSS requirements.

**Medserve Base Marsaxlokk servicing the offshore oil industry.**

f. Tourism - Cruise Liners. List all local ports of call and anchorages.

**See Annex A: Shipping Movements – Year 2007.  
In GOZO 7 cruise calls on anchors in 2007.**

g. Tourism -Small Craft.

Comment on the significance of leisure cruising, and note major cruising areas and concentrations of marina developments. In some smaller island states this may be the most significant maritime segment of the economy.

**The main yacht marinas are located within the ports of Valletta, Marsamxett and Mgarr (Gozo). The number of berthing facilities within these marina amount to over 1,500. Besides these organized yacht marina, there are a number of bays around Malta and Gozo where small pleasure bouts can moor. Yacht chartering and local sightseeing cruises are very popular all year round but with peaks during the summer season.`**

h. Fisheries.

Note the volume and type of fishing in national and adjacent waters. Include both local artisanal and pelagic fisheries, and the presence of foreign vessels.

**Fishing Harbours: Marsaxlokk is primary, St. Paul Bay, Mgarr in Gozo Island.  
Sometimes Valletta offers berthing to foreign fishing boats, generally involved in tuna fishing.  
The amount of fish caught in 2007 was of 1245 tons. This quantity includes artisan and pelagic fisheries.**

6. Responsibility for Safety of Navigation.

Record the authority which is responsible for the maintenance of channels, removal of wrecks, provision and maintenance of navaid, and the promulgation of Notices to Mariners.

**MMA is responsible for all these functions and it is the duty of the MHO to promulgate the NtM and Navigational Warnings.  
See Annex C: MMA Notice to Mariners (Facsimile)**

Note any difficulties in conducting these tasks e.g. defective buoy-tenders.

**MMA has one boat (15 meters length), sometimes used for navaid maintenance.  
In view of the limitations of this boat the MMA is completed to rent a private boat for heavy work.**

7. Defence Force Responsibilities.

Note the roles of the Navy/Defence Force Coast Guard (CG). e.g. SAR, fishery protection, and operations to counter traffic in drugs or illegal immigrants.

**There is no Navy but the Maritime Squadron of the Armed Forces of Malta has the role of Coast Guard and is responsible for SAR operations. The Maritime Squadron is in cooperation with the Navy/Coast Guard of neighbour countries (especially Italy).**

Comment on any specific defence requirement for improved hydrographic data.

**The Maritime Squadron uses one pier in the port of Marsamxett and relies on the MMA for hydrographic surveys and data.**

8. Coastal Zone Management and Environmental Protection.

Note the existence of any marine National Parks or other management zones, and the existence of any climate monitoring stations.

**Two miles south of Malta there is a nature reserve in Filfla Island.**

**There is also another marine nature reserve to the North West of Malta.**

**Reserved area were instituted on artificial wrecks for diving activity (not for fishery).**

**There are also many areas that are reserved for swimmers between July and September.**

**Two oceanographic buoys (wind/wave) are to be commissioned in the near future.**

## OUTLINE S-55 ANALYSIS

### 9. Status of surveys within the National Maritime Zone.

Summarise the status of surveys within the territorial sea and EEZ, and comment on any areas of particular concern in the light of the foregoing description of maritime activities.

**MHO sent to IHB the S-55 Questionnaire in 2003.**

**IHO Delegates suggest to update the questionnaire with a new one and to send it again.**

**Limit of Malta territorial water is 12 miles.**

**Malta has not declared the EEZ but declares the continental shelf. The continental shelf shall be that determined by agreement between Malta and such other state or states or, in the absence of an agreement, the median line, namely a line every point of which is equidistant from the nearest points of the base lines from which the breadth of the territorial waters is measured.**

**Bilateral Agreement with Libya (limited) and “Gentlemen Agreement” with Italy.**

**Malta became independent Country in 1964. The surveys around the island was made by UK around 1958 and after 1964 UK made some surveys in limited area.**

**MMA made harbour surveys (Valletta and Marsaxlokk) from 1989 until to date in collaboration with UK.**

**MMA wishes to make surveys with modern equipment, according to the actual standard S-44 5<sup>th</sup> Edition, of its territorial water until 12 miles with eventual agreement with others Nations.**

Make particular note of any coastal areas which are charted purely from lead-line surveys.

**Area outside territorial water, as reported in the chart legend of paper chart UK194, need to be completely resurveyed. I (NE Malta)W GoE of Malta**

Note any offshore banks or other shoal areas which require sidescan sonar coverage to bring the area to full modern standards.

**Existence of some banks that need to be surveyed with modern equipment (e.g. Hurd Bank and Sikka-il-Bajda).**

Note the need to obtain co-ordinates for offshore oil and gas fields.

**NONE**

### 10. Collection and Circulation of Nautical Information.

Assess the effectiveness of this crucial process, based on information from the HO with charting responsibility as well as the national co-ordination point.

**MMA is responsible and provides Nav aids and maintenance through the Maintenance Department.**

**MHO promulgate Notice to Mariner and Navigational Warnings as required.**

Note any advice which has been given to local authorities, and detail any assistance which is required from the HO with charting responsibility.

**NONE**

### 11. Survey Capability.

Comment on the state of any local hydrographic service/unit, and draw attention to any supporting documentation in accompanying Attachments e.g. Mission and Output Plan documentation.

**MHO performs only harbour and very near shore surveys with one survey boat (15 meters) with three people and with portable equipment (analogue/digital singlebeam and differential GPS base/rover). MHO own also a small survey boat (6 meters) for very shallow water equipped with the same devices.**

**Personnel involved in hydrographic surveys is the same people that perform also post processing, managing of sounding data and a small ENC capability production.**

Summarise the future plans of the unit, and assess the sufficiency of manpower and equipment resources.

**Due to very low economic resources at the moment there isn't the possibility to recruit additional personnel nor acquire specialised boats.**

**MMA would wish to increase its capability, with upgrading the SBs and/or buying a MB Echosounder to perform surveys until the 12 miles.**

### 12. Independent Chart Production Capability.

Note any charts which are being produced locally, and comment on their standard.

**NO official charts/documentation production, printing and distribution independent capability.**

**NO chart catalogue.**

**MHO send raw data from fair sheet and nautical information to UK HO for charts/publication production and correction.**

**MHO has product 6 ENC and which used only for internal purposes (VTS).**

Summarise discussion of implementation of the INT chart scheme in the region, noting local comment on proposals for coverage.

**NO INT Chart Scheme.**

Report clearly any local proposals for modification or extension of coverage of INT small-scale, large-scale and port schemes.

**At the moment there is no intention to improve or modify INT Chart Scheme.**

Report proposals for local surveys within the area of coverage of proposed new charts.

**After the new surveys of the territorial waters, harbour and littoral/coastal water, it is intention to publish new paper chart and upgrade the ENC portfolio.**

## PROPOSALS FOR CO-ORDINATION AND CAPABILITY BUILDING

### 13. National Hydrographic Committee.

Note the existence of any high-level co-ordinating bodies, and assess their awareness of the contribution of hydrography to national policy-making.

**MHO is involved for updating paper chart, ENC and publication issued by UKHO sending NtMs and Navigational Warnings. Most of the surveys performed out of the harbours were made by UKHO before 1958. UKHO made two surveys at the approaches to the harbours one in 1999 (off Valletta) and one in 2006 (off Marsaxlokk Harbour).**

State whether the Team has advised creation of a more focussed committee, and note any proposals for reporting route and frequency.

**IHO Delegate report that is necessary to resurvey with modern technology all the water around Malta until 12 miles. Malta, at the moment, does not have sufficient funds to finance these surveys nor does it have technical equipment and personnel.**

Note whether the local hydrographic service/unit is making a technical contribution to delimitation, offshore resource exploitation, environmental management, maritime traffic control, or any other areas of National Maritime Policy.

**MMA has a VTS based in Valletta covering his responsibility waters.**

### 14. MSI Organization and GMDSS.

Summarise any proposals for improvement of liaison and effective passage of information between national and regional charting agencies.

**MMA sends/receives MSI to UK, Spain, Russia and Italy.**

**GMDSS in implementation.**

Comment on the requirement for liaison with Transport Ministries or Port Authorities.

**MMA is a part of the Ministry for infrastructure, Transport and Communications and it is also considered to be the Port Authority with regulatory functions for all the ports in Malta.**

#### a. MSI (Navigational Warnings).

Note the existence of local navigational warnings and Notices to Mariners and other publications e.g.

**Maltese Information and NtM concerning Sailing Directions are sent to UKHO for publication update.**

Lists of Major Nav aids, Tide Tables. Comment on their reliability.

**UKHO provide to distribute the publications.**

Comment on discussions with local authorities, and summarise proposals offered for improvement of MSI in national waters.

**NO COMMENT**

#### b. Information on Ports and Harbours.

Comment on discussions with government representatives concerning the legal requirement and economic importance of timely supply of plans and co-ordinates of new development to responsible charting agencies.

**MMA sends to UKHO every information to maintain the upgrade of port and harbour information.**

Note where the local hydrographic service/unit or port authorities need better top-level support in collation and dissemination of this information.

**MMA is informed with sufficient time about any port information.**

Where there is no hydrographic unit comment on the capacity of the Land Survey Department to advise port authorities and other agencies.

**Exist an Hydrographic Unit. There is a collaboration with Land Mapping Department.**

c. GMDSS Status. Summarise the status of GMDSS in local waters, and any advice offered to local authorities.

**In implementation.**

### 15. Hydrographic Capability.

Comment on the adequacy of top-level support and resourcing for the local hydrographic service/unit.

**MHO has a very high capacity to conduct harbour surveys.**

Summarise any proposals which the Team has made for revision of line accountability of the unit.

1. **In addition to of Regulation 9 of Chapter V of Solas which is part of Malta's Laws as stated in Item 3 – page 1, IHO Delegates propose to insert an amendment in Malta Maritime Authority Act CAP352 issued 1991 to establish the duties of MHO (e.g. "providing and maintain adequate and efficient Hydrographic Surveys and Chart Production for Safety of Navigation"), similar as which is stated in the article 6.(2) para d. of the Act for the Lighthouses and Signals Service.**
2. **IHO Delegates propose to resurvey the territorial water of Malta as convenient or at least the three/four miles zone in very short time.**
3. **IHO Delegates propose to increase personnel, equipment and financial resources of MHO to conduct, independently, hydrographic surveys and chart/publication production.**

Where there is no local hydrographic unit, comment on the requirement for independent capability.

**There is a local hydrographic unit able to conduct hydrographic surveys in harbours.**

**If required by Malta the independent capability, MHO need adequate funding and skilled personnel for resources and equipment.**

a. Provision of Survey Data.

Clarify accountability for this task. Note any commitment to pass data to other Hos with INT or primary charting responsibility in the area.

**There exists a bilateral agreement with UKHO to pass sounding data and information for chart/publication production, updating and distribution.**

List any data which has been passed to the Team for onward transmission.

**NONE**

b. Survey Capability.

Summarise the Team's judgment of current and potential capability. Comment on advice given by the Team.

**HO has a very high capacity to conduct harbour surveys.**

**If required by Malta the independent capability, MHS need adequate founding and skilled personnel for resources and equipment.**

Identify areas where RHC members could assist by loan of experts or equipment.

**Vessel/survey boat, survey equipment, database/compilation sw/hw for hydrographic data management and chart compilation/production if requested from Malta .**

Note opportunities for regional collaboration.

**As requested by MMA.**

c. Chart Production.

Summarise the Team's judgment on current and potential capability, and on viability of local chart production. Comment on advice given by the Team.

**NO capability for official ENC, paper chart and publication production and printing (refers to UKHO).**

**Capability of ENC production for internal use.**

Assess quality of routine data management, paying particular attention to such measures as assessment of density of sounding coverage and development of capability in plotting bottom contact detail from side-scan sonar.

**MHO has not a SSS. In the past until 1997 they had an analogue SSS (Klein).**

**They conduct SB surveys in the harbours with very close line spacing (every 5 meters), that ensures a good data density.**

Comment on the balance of effort devoted to data collection compared to local production of publications.

**MMA is fully devoted to maintain updating the harbour charts.**

d. Potential for Regional Activity.

Comment on volume of work in local waters and remaining capacity to assist other states in the region.

**Work volume related to the harbours. NO remaining capacity.**

**There was limited assistance (two days) of MEDA Project 7 towards Cyprus HS in 2008 on the use of the equipment and software.**

Make recommendations on the ability of the hydrographic service/unit to provide technical hydrographic advice to neighbouring states.

**They have limited potential capability.**

Note any potential for regional burden-sharing e.g. DGPS provision.

**NO provision.**



## PROPOSALS FOR ASSISTANCE

### 16. Training.

Identify training priorities, and comment on advice given by the Team.

**IHO Delegates propose to form the personnel as CAT A/B Hydrographic Surveyors.**

Note the status of any National Indicative Plan.

**NONE**

Comment on response to any assistance offered by IHB e.g. reserved places on the IMA Cat B Course.

**For the past MMA had responded positively to the assistance offered by IHB (Course B, MEDA Project etc.). Any assistance and proposal offered from IHB and/or other IHO member nations should be very positive and taken into account by MHO.**

Summarise proposals for training available from other RHC or IHO member states.

**NONE**

### 17. Equipment.

Summarise any advice given for equipment procurement options, or for technical advice.

**IHO Delegates propose:**

- 1. Improve capability to perform shallow water survey with MB and Digital SSS;**
- 2. Upgrade of the existing survey boat or a new survey boat fully equipped for coastal surveys;**
- 3. Create and managing an Hydrographic Sounding Database and a Cartographic Database;**
- 4. Install one new tide gauge station in Gozo.**

Note where any special conditions (e.g. local topography and disruptive masking of GPS) need to be taken into account.

**Not available.**

### 18. Funding.

Confirm that local authorities are aware of the information in IHO Paper M-2.

**Confirmed.**

**IHO Delegate released a PDF file of IHO Publication M-2, MHO is evaluating the content.**

Note any specific proposals for advice or lobbying by RHC or IHB.

**As convenient.**

## FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

19. Encouragement of Formation of a NHC, Development of a National Hydrographic Strategy, and RHC Membership. Summarise recommendations for contacts, or supply of documentation. ACTION: IHB; RHC Chairman.

**If required by Malta the independent capability, MHO need adequate founding and skilled personnel for resources and equipment.**

20. Encouragement of Effective and Timely Collection and Promulgation of Hydrographic Information.

a. Note any commitment by the Team to forward Hydrographic Notes with urgent MSI. Note where copies are to be supplied to Hydrographic Unit and Maritime Services/Port Authorities to give them a format for subsequent routine communication of updates. ACTION: **Study Team.**

**MHO distribute MSI and Navigational Warning as convenient to other Countries.**

b. Note any requirement for MSI/SAR liaison with local authorities. ACTION: NAVAREA Coordinator.

**MMA is already in liaison with Navarea III Coordinator (Spain).**

21. Encouragement of Development of Hydrographic Capability. Note areas where the Hydrographic Unit merits assistance:

a. Options for provision of consultative support including temporary secondments. ACTION: RHC Members.

1. **Necessity to survey the territorial water as soon as possible.**
2. **After decision of Malta , give assistance to produce charts and publications and to become independent for chart/documentation production.**

b. Options for transfer or loan of equipment. ACTION: **RHC Member States.**

**As convenient, if some IHO/RHC Member States are available to transfer resources/equipments to MHS.**

c. Assessment of the case for regional investment in equipment purchase e.g. DGPS. ACTION: RHC.

**As convenient and as requested.**

d. Recommendations for follow-up technical assistance in development of a National Indicative Plan for training funding. ACTION: RHC and IHB.

**As requested by Malta , it could be prepared a National Indicative Plan to increase the capacity of MHO.**