

**IHB File No. S1/1100**

<p><b>CIRCULAR LETTER 39/2001</b> <b>19 September 2001</b></p>
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**REPORT OF THE 6<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKING GROUP  
(SPWG)**

**16<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> May 2001, Norfolk, USA**

References:                      Decision No. 11 of the XV I.H. Conference.

Dear Sir,

The sixth meeting of the IHO Strategic Planning Working Group (SPWG) was held in Norfolk, USA on the 16<sup>th</sup> and 17<sup>th</sup> May 2001. The SPWG report from this meeting is attached to this Circular Letter for Member States' information.

Member States may send any comments if they wish to do so.

On behalf of the Directing Committee  
Yours sincerely,

Rear Admiral Giuseppe ANGRISANO  
President

Encl.: 6<sup>th</sup> SPWG Report

**Strategic Planning Work Group**  
**6th Meeting – 16<sup>th</sup> to 17<sup>th</sup> May 2001 (Norfolk Virginia USA)**

**Annotated Agenda**  
**[24.04.01]**

**Opening Items**

1. Approval of Agenda.
2. Items arising from March 2000 meeting (see also following items).

***Business Items***

3. Provisional Programme for XVI IH Conference.  
(Doc. SPWG 6.3)

A provisional programme for the XVI Conference was circulated to SPWG members in November 2000, seeking opinions on certain issues. These comments have been examined by the Directing Committee, who present their current plan for the conduct of the Conference.

*Action IHB*

4. Review of the comments to the IHO Work Programme 2001-2005 (IHB C.L. 19/01  
(Docs SPWG 6.4.1 and 6.4.2)

A preliminary version of the Work programme 2000-2005 was circulated on 18 December 2000 to the SPWG members. The IHB gathered the comments received and amended the programme accordingly. The new version was circulated with C.L. 19/01 to the IHO Member States, requesting comments. Comments received from Chile, UK and Germany, along with the comments of the IHB are included in this Agenda item for the consideration of the SPWG. The final amended version will be submitted again to Member States for their final approval. The Bureau believes that this Agenda item must be considered together with Agenda Item 8, "Review of management Structure and Business process", following the approach made by Chile in the light of the sequential revisions of the Work Programme.

It is to be borne in mind that the main work on "Management Structure and Business process" was already carried out by the Study Team established in 1998 (see the following Reports of the SPWG Study Team : 1) SPWG ToRs 2.3, 2) SPWG ToRs 2.4 and 3) SPWG ToRs 2.6)

The findings and recommendations of the Study Team were incorporated into the Work Programme approved by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Extraordinary Conference. Therefore, any matter for future consideration should issue from the revision of the Work programme in which the findings and recommendations of the Study Team were included.

About the examination of the One-year-programme (2002), it is also reminded that Decision 4 of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Extraordinary Conference deferred the approval of the Planning Cycle to the XVIth IH Conference. It is then recommended to limit the action of the SPWG to the consideration of the 5-years. Agenda item 13 forecasts the revision of the Planning Cycle.

*Action IHB and SPWG Members*

5. IHO Language Policy  
(Docs. SPWG 6.5.1 and 6.5.2.)

A report on this item is presented by the IHB, as decided at the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting. A different and opposed approach has been received from the U.S.A. and is included as Doc. SPWG 6.5.2.

Action IHB

6. Frequency of Conferences  
(Doc. SPWG 6.6.)

Advice has been received from the Legal Advisory Committee on this issue, and will be provided to members. The SPWG must decide whether to recommend that the decision of the 2<sup>nd</sup> EIHC should be cancelled and a new proposal submitted to the XVIth Conference or to adopt other strategy.

Action IHB and SPWG Members

7. Policy for NGO Participation in IHO Business  
(Doc. 6.7.)

The CHRIS and its Work groups have made some useful progress on this issue. The SPWG should review the CHRIS work, and decide whether any further SPWG action is required. Supporting paper is provided.

Action IHB

8. Review of Management Structure and Business Process

See comments under Agenda 4.

Action IHB and SPWG Members

9. Impediments to achievement of strategic objectives.  
**CANCELLED (To be considered in conjunction with Agenda 4)**

10. Improved implementation of Resolution T.R.3.4 regarding copyright  
**CANCELLED; Item not requested**

11. Implications of a zero nominal growth budget  
**CANCELLED. Not requested by neither any official proposal nor any Conference decision.**

12. IHO Finance Briefing.

The finance briefing provided to the 4<sup>th</sup> SPWG meeting was considered by members to be a most important agenda item. Subsequently the Directing Committee has followed SPWG advice in obtaining an independent review of financial management, and has made a number of changes which were reported to Member States in Finance Circular letters 1 – 4 of 2000. Item 12 will provide an update on the financial situation of the IHO, and on proposals for future adjustments. An information document is provided, along with the 2002 Budget, the 5-year budget 2003-2007 (zero real growth) the final Finance Report for 1999 and the Draft Finance report for 2000.

Action IHB

13. Preliminary to 2001 review of Strategic Plan

**CANCELLED**

Although the Planning Cycle (not yet approved by the IHO) indicates that the revision of the Strategic Plan should be initiated 12 months before the Conference, this is rather applicable to a normal situation. However, due to the fact that the IHO has a Strategic Plan since March 2000, it is felt too premature to initiate this process only one year after its adoption. The IHB then recommends to refine the Planning Cycle for its approval by the XVIth IH Conference and to fully implement the Strategic Plan until 2007.

It is then proposed to replace this Agenda 13 by the following item :

Reviewing of the Planning Cycle

Decision 4 of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Extraordinary Conference decided to postpone the approval of the proposed Planning Cycle (Proposal 3). The comments from the SPWG members are now sought on this item to prepare an updated Planning Cycle for approval from the XVIth I.H. Conference..

Action IHB and SPWG members

14. Public Relations Strategy

The first SPWG meeting in 1997, identified the *improvement of public awareness of the importance of hydrography* as a matter of priority. A discussion paper is presented, in which comments from SPWG members have been included.

15. Proposals to the next IHC

Within the framework of the preparation of the XVIth IH Conference, the SPWG may advise the IHB about any proposal of strategic characteristics which may be submitted, either by the IHB or by some Member State or group of Member States. It is reminded that the present Rules establish that any Proposal should be submitted 8 months before the Conference. The Directing Committee will inform the SPWG about the action taken jointly with the Monegasque government (depository of the Convention) on the possible ways of simplifying the IHO membership procedure, which now prevents a rapid incorporation of new Member States.

Action IHB and SPWG Members

16. Revised Terms of Reference for the SPWG

The IHB believes that the work of the SPWG has been successfully achieved and that the possible remaining tasks can be carried out by the D.C. and Conferences, in accordance with the dispositions of the Convention. Therefore, the IHB will propose to the XVIth Conference to disband the Group. The SPWG members may comment on this proposal

Action IHB

**Closing Items**

Any Other Business

Closing Remarks

**REPORT OF THE 6<sup>th</sup> MEETING OF THE IHO  
STRATEGIC PLANNING WORKING GROUP**

16-17 May 2001,  
Sheraton Waterside Hotel  
Norfolk, Virginia, USA

The 6<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the IHO Strategic Planning Working Group was held at the Sheraton Waterside Hotel, Norfolk, Virginia, from 16 to 17 May 2001, hosted by NOAA and chaired by Rear Admiral G. Angrisano, President of the IHB Directing Committee.

**The meeting was attended by the following delegates representing the IHO Regional Hydrographic Commissions:**

	IHB	Rear Admiral Giuseppe ANGRISANO, Chairman of the SPWG Rear Admiral Neil GUY, Director, IHB
	USA	Mr. Erich FREY, NOAA, USA, Secretary of the SPWG
SWPHC	Australia:	Mr. R.A. FURNESS, Director of Coordination and Development Commander Robert WARD, RAN, Head of Policy Development
US-CAN	Canada:	Mr. Anthony O'CONNOR, Dominion Hydrographer
SEPHC	Chile:	Captain Fernando MINGRAM, Director, SHOA Captain Hugo GORZIGLIA, International Advisor, SHOA
EAHC	China:	Mr. Wang JINFU, Deputy Director-General Mr. Zhu JIANLIANG, Engineer
SAIHC	France:	IGA Yves DESNOES, Director, SHOM ICA Michel Le Gouic, SHOM
BSHC	Germany:	Dr. Peter EHLERS, President
	Greece:	Rear Admiral Alexandros MARATOS, HN, Director
	India	Rear Admiral K.R SRINIVASAN, Chief Hydrographer of India
EAHC	Japan:	Mr. Kunikazu NISHIZAWA
NSHC	Norway:	Mr. Frode KLEPSVIK, Director
	Portugal:	Vice Admiral José TORRES SOBRAL, Director General
EAtHC	Spain:	Cdr. Manuel PARDO DE DONLEBUN, Deputy Director
CGMHC	UK :	Dr. Wyn WILLIAMS, Chief Executive and Hydrographer Mrs. Rosemary TUHEY, Head of External Relations Department
	USA:	Mr. Kenneth D. COOPER

Cuba (CGMHC representative) sent apologies.

## **Agenda Item 1. Approval of Agenda.**

The Agenda was approved with some minor amendments regarding the priority to be given to topics for discussion, as requested by some delegates.

## **Agenda Items 2 and 4. - Items arising from March 2000 and Review of the comments on the IHO Work Programme 2001-2005 (IHB CL 19/2001).**

The Working Group reviewed the Work Programme for the period 2001-2005, on which Member States had already made comments. The following points are to be mentioned:

### **Programme 1.**

1. The Working Group discussed the function, composition and role of the Regional Hydrographic Commissions. It was generally agreed that their role in progressing the IHO Work Programme should be strengthened, in spite of some difficulties existing at present, such as the rotation and short term of mandate of Chairmen.

It was also agreed that general tasks should be clearly assigned to the Regional Hydrographic Commissions, creating a standardized reporting system. The tasks assigned will be approved by the Conference and monitored by the SPWG. There was general agreement on the need to provide clear guidelines to RHCs – for example as TORs.

This new approach will be implemented by making some amendments to Technical Resolution T1.3, jointly drafted by the Australian delegation and the IHB. These amendments will be included in the proposals to the forthcoming IH Conference in April 2002.

***ACTION: IHB/Australia will draft comments for a CL. (This has been done and the text of a modified version of the IHO Resolution T1.3 has been drafted jointly by the Australian delegation and by the IHB). (see Annex).***

2. The Chairman referred to the good relationship with other organizations: IALA, IMO, IOC, IAPH, IEC and UN, as well as about jointly developed tasks. The Chairman noted that, under the recent IOC-IHO MOU, the ocean mapping office of the IOC will be moved to the IHB for a period of one year, from 1st October 2001. He also informed the WG that the Government of Monaco will propose to the UN Secretary General that the IHO be granted permanent observer status at the UN Assembly.

### **Programme 2 Capacity Building**

1. The Chairman noted that more emphasis should be given to this important programme and that this was reflected in the Working Programme.

2. The meeting discussed the suggestion by Germany to disband the existing FIG/IHO TACC, based on the statement that closer co-operation with other international organizations may cover what TACC does. This suggestion was not fully supported by the delegates.

As the FIG Commission IV Chairman has verbally requested to hold a meeting FIG/IHO to re-conduct the TACC tasks, it was agreed not to disband TACC until FIG Commission IV Chairman has put forward his intentions.

***Action : the IHB will take care of the further development and new guidelines for this Committee.***

3. Chile suggested that reference to the Government of Monaco be deleted from the “action” of tasks 2.2.2, 2.2.3 and 2.2.5. Chile further suggested guidelines were needed for visits carried out by the IHB Directors to “Developing” Member States and to non-Member States to avoid inappropriate levels of attention being given to non-Member States over Member States. The Chairman will take this issue as an action.

**Action: The IHB to reflect the priority to be given to the IHO Member States in the Working Programme related to technical co-operation visits.**

4. UK made reference to financial assistance and that it would be useful to help bring HOs to meetings, etc. by subsidising their attendance by other HOs.

**Action: IHO MS**

The Chairman reported that the IHB has strengthened its relations with international institutions such as the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the World Bank (WB), the Inter-American Development Bank (IADB). The IHB has engaged a consultant to liaise with those institutions and the results are to date very satisfactory, at a reasonable cost.

**Action: The IHB to continue to liaise with these institutions in order to discuss the way to obtain funding for regional projects. This is not an action issuing from some SPWG decision, but from the implementation of the IHO Work Programme approved by the IHO Member States about which the SPWG is informed.**

**Programme 3 Techniques and Standards**

1. The meeting decided that almost all tasks in this Programme are ongoing but some of them should be modified.

**Action: IHB**

2. Following a request from Greece, the meeting agreed that Maritime Safety Information should continue to be the responsibility of the IHO and that the priority of Task 3.5.1 (Implementation of GMDSS through the work of NAVAREA) may be raised to High Priority. This must be implemented through cooperation with IMO (COMSAR Subcommittee).

**Action: IHB (on-going).**

3. The Chairman reported on the status, progress and future of some specific IHO publications. The Chairman also explained the future reduction which will be made in the Translation Staff of the IHB. The Chairman took this opportunity to note that the IHB staff will be reduced to a maximum number of 19 persons before the end of 2003, from the previous 22, as presented in the following plan :

Directing Committee : 3 Directors

Category A staff

(Professional Assistants) 4 Senior Hydrographers – Nautical Cartographers.  
1 Administrative Assistant

Category B staff:

1 Office Superintendent  
1 Directors' Secretary  
1 Data/word Processor  
1 Registrar  
0.33 Secretary  
1 French translator  
0.67 Spanish translator  
1 Assistant editor/ Librarian/local public relations.  
0.5 cat. B printer  
0.5 cat. B computer graphic operator  
1 Office Manager  
1 Book keeper

Cat C 1 Assistant office manager (2 year contract expiring in March 2003).

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TOTAL

19

The total reduction forecasted will be about 14%. The chairman also noted that the salaries have only been increased to take into consideration the annual inflation, as communicated by the Monegasque Government, in conformity with the Staff Regulations. However, no accelerated promotions have been granted since 1997 and no increase of the Directors' basic salaries has been made in the last 15 years, as the increase proposed in 1992 was rejected by the XVth I.H. Conference (1997).

#### Programme 4 - Public Information and Management Report.

1. It was agreed that the IHB will provide Member States, upon request, with the existing information on the status of hydrography in developing countries on the occasion of official visits. The present IHO publication S-55 will be amended and developed to provide more useful information.

*(Note after the meeting : Member States are reminded that a very useful source of data about Technical Assistance projects, which includes relevant information on the status of hydrography in some countries, is available as from July 2000 on the IHO Web Site, restricted to the IHO Member States).*

2. The Chairman noted that several countries take initiatives on a national level; he cited the case of the Hydrographic Institute of Spain visited by H.M. King Juan Carlos I, the case of the Italian Hydrographic Institute, that celebrated its 125th anniversary in the presence of the President of the Republic. Portugal added that, on the occasion of the unfortunate accident of the bus that fell into the river Doro in March 2001, the Hydrographic Institute acquired a very high visibility during the survey operations directed to locate the wreck which lasted almost one month. Those operations were given excellent coverage by the Portuguese National Television.

Agenda Item 3 – Provisional Programme of the XVI International Hydrographic Conference ( 15–19 April 2002)

The Chairman explained the conference programme and drew the delegates' attention to two specific points: the Finance Committee meeting and the election of the new D.C.

Some representatives identified anomalies in the forecasted budget for the précis-writers and the simultaneous interpreters.

**Action : The IHB will revise the cost estimate of these two activities and report consequently.**

*Note after the meeting : the figures were reviewed after the meeting after having received the cost estimates from the firms in charge of the related items. These figures are lower than those indicated in the document presented to the SPWG meeting.*

It was recommended that the Conference documents should be dispatched to the delegates in time before the Conference, that delegates would make only brief introductions of the documents to conference and that standardization should be sought in the presentation of reports from Regional Hydrographic Commissions.

*Note after the meeting : The IHB will continue to distribute the Conference Documents in accordance with the stipulations of the present Basic Documents as done in the preceding Conferences.*

**Action: The IHB will give the RHC Chairmen guidance as to how they should present their reports.**

The Chairman also requested early information on ship visits during the Conference.

**Action: IHO Member States who intend sending a ship to Monaco during the Conference should communicate this information to the IHB as soon as possible.**

#### Agenda item 5. - IHO Policy on Languages.

Spain complained about the decision of the 2<sup>nd</sup> EIHC to postpone the voting of a Proposal correctly submitted and announced that, for that reason, Spain has withdrawn the Proposal.



The US representative made a summary of the document submitted about the IHO Policy on Languages. It was noted that, essentially, it is a matter of priorities and affordability.

The Chairman presented a study carried out by the IHB and endorsed by the IHB Directing Committee, which basically demonstrates that a policy is already established in the IHO Basic Documents. The existing arrangements are that there are 2 official languages, English and French, and also give guidelines in the General Regulations, Rules of Procedure for I.H. Conferences and Technical Resolutions about the management of other languages within the IHO.

China noted that this matter has been under discussion for a long time and emphasized that the consideration of new languages would add an extra burden to the IHB workload.

Japan's main concern was focussed on avoiding any increase in costs.

**After some discussion, it was decided that the existing policy was satisfactory for the majority of Member States and that it was wise to maintain the in-force arrangements.**

#### **Agenda item 6 - Extraordinary Conferences**

The Chairman noted that the decision taken by the 2<sup>nd</sup> Extraordinary I.H. Conference about permanently holding Extraordinary Conferences every 2.5 years was against the IHO Convention. The Chairman reported that the subject had been passed to the IHO Legal Advisory Committee, but that the various members of that group had reached differing and opposed conclusions, thus, its advice was not decisive.

Canada stated that they plan to make a Proposal for an Ordinary Conference to take place every two and half years. It was noted that Proposals were due by 15 August 2001 and that the mentioned proposal would require an amendment to the existing Convention.

India insisted that the decision of the 2<sup>nd</sup> Extraordinary I.H. Conference was illegal and unconstitutional according to their appreciation made by its legal service.

*Note after the meeting: The IHB has received an official complaint from the Government of India on this issue.*

Germany noted that the problem consisted of finding a legal solution to the general agreement of increasing the frequency of IH Conferences and that this was the goal to achieve.

***Action: Some Member States and the IHB will make relevant proposals to the next Conference.***

#### Agenda Item 7 – Relationships with Industry

RAdm Neil Guy (IHB) talked briefly about the planned meeting with industry (28-29 June 2001). Document SPWG 6-17 stresses this relationship. The formation of a Special Technical Working Group with all those concerned was mentioned. However this needs the consideration of the SPWG because Non-Government Officials (NGOs) would be on this WG and several nations had voiced strong views against the inclusion of NGOs in any such meetings. He also noted that industry has not a great interest in Workshops and they want to be more actively involved.

The decision was made to delay forming a special Technical Working Group until MS's comments on NGO relationships had been sought by CL. IHO annual workshops would continue.

The Chairman summarized the comments from delegates stressing that care should be taken when considering the invitation to individual commercial entities or associations and that there was a general feeling about needing the advice of industry.

***Action : The IHB will seek MS views by CL on the inclusion of NGO's within WGs. The IHB would reformulate if necessary the proposal taking into consideration the restrictions agreed to NGOs, ECDIS manufacturers and other items identified by the SPWG members.***

## **Agenda item 12 – Financial Briefing.**

1. The Chairman noted that the item "zero nominal growth" had been deleted from the agenda as no Member State had officially requested its discussion. The representatives from USA then announced that an official proposal on this subject may be made to the XVIth I.H. Conference, in accordance with the existing procedures for proposals.

Following insistence by Germany and Greece about considering the subject, the Chairman opened the forum, stressing that the adoption of zero nominal growth would mean the interruption of IHO activities within a period of 3 years. After this time, the Organization would have to start a drastic reduction of its operational capabilities that could lead to its termination. He stressed that the realistic approach of the IHB, to address this concern, as already mentioned, was to progressively reduce its administrative staff and this was now reflected in the draft 5-year budget (SPWG document 6-12b).

2. The Chairman then requested the comments of the SPWG on various finance/administrative items such as the use of consultants, secondment of personnel, functioning of the Finance Committee and arrears in payment of contributions to the IHO.

3. When discussing other financial topics, the Chairman noted that the Bureau is now in a good financial position thanks to a better financial management over recent years, but that this status is negatively affected by the Member States' late payment of their annual contributions to the IHO. Two large countries will probably be suspended in early 2002.

The discussion focussed on whether it was appropriate to jointly consider the Work Programme and the budget in order to allow the alignment of the planning and budget cycles, excluding the less urgent items from the Programme. However, this was judged to be impractical since the Finance Committee needed at least 2 meetings per year.

**Action: the IHB will prepare a Finance CL to include:**

- a) *the proposed 5 year budget for 2003-2007 based on zero real growth and the implications for Member States*
- b) *the internal administration of the adoption of the Euro.*

## Agenda Item 13 – Planning Cycle

The SPWG discussed the Strategic Planning Cycle presented by Captain Gorziglia (Chile) who clarified some details of the project.

***Approval of the Planning Cycle as it appears in document SPWG 6-13 was deferred to IHC 2002 due to insufficient detailed finance and resources information being available to make a decision at this meeting.***

## Agenda Item 14 – Public Relations

All the members agreed that it was desirable to increase the visibility of the IHO and that both Member States and the IHB could improve their activities in this field. There is no justification to hire a public relations specialist but several representatives commended the value of training existing IHB staff in basic PR skills.

*Note after the meeting : Two recent events held at the IHB demonstrate that the IHB Directing Committee and the Professional staff are able to prepare and carry out activities aimed at increasing this mentioned "visibility" of the IHO. These two events are :*

- 1) *Visit to the IHB of Representatives of the Diplomatic Corps of the IHO Member States in Monaco, organized by the President of the D.C. and successfully held on 12 June 2001. The authorities, among whom the Ministry of State of Monaco, followed a presentation about the mission, vision and tasks of the Organization and thus, the "visibility" of the Organization was enhanced at the highest political level.*

- 2) *The second event, on 13 June, was the meeting held by the President of the Directing Committee and the Professional Assistant Head of the Technical Assistance Section with the Ambassador of El Salvador and other authorities of that country to prepare the official visit that the President of the Republic of El Salvador will make to the IHB on 13 July. This visit will be the first at such a high diplomatic level having been made in the history of the IHO.*

Agenda Item 15 – Consideration of the procedures for IHO Membership

The Chairman noted that the Bureau will draft a Proposal on this issue to speed up the membership procedure of new MS. The Bureau will be assisted in this task by a study carried out by INDEMER (Institut du Droit Economique de la Mer).

Agenda Item 16– Revise TORs (see also discussions held under Reviewing of Programme 4, page 3)

The question of whether the SPWG should continue to exist was addressed with various opinions being expressed by delegates. It was finally agreed that the work of the SPWG might need to continue under different Terms of Reference.

It was felt that, as the entire IHO Convention should be reviewed, this review may be a task assigned to the SPWG, with a view to have it approved at a future Extraordinary Conference. The SPWG could be assigned this task in its new Terms of Reference.

***Action : At the XVI Conference, the IHB will present a proposal containing new SPWG TORs which will be basically:***

- *To monitor and report on progress to EIHC on the implementation of the IHO rolling Work Programme.*
- *To give support, when needed, to the IHB DC for implementing the Strategic Plan and the related working programme.*
- *To carry out a study on the revision of the IHO Convention that might be discussed and eventually approved by an Extraordinary Conference*

Since monitoring the IHO Work Programme was a continuing task, the issue of whether it should, after the EIHC, be undertaken by a steering committee instead of a WG, would be considered as part of the revision work on the Convention.

It was also agreed that if the XVI Conference approves the new TORs for the SPWG and a review is made of the Convention, the advice and cooperation of legal experts will be necessary to ensure the validity of many aspects of the task.

It was finally decided that the SPWG will not hold any further meetings before the XVIth I.H. Conference.

### **T 1.3 ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSIONS (RHC)**

1.- It is resolved that the IHB shall encourage Member States having common regional interests in data collecting or nautical charting to form Regional Hydrographic Commissions (RHC) to cooperate in the undertaking of surveys and other projects. As part of IHO, the RHC shall complement the work of the Bureau.

*2.- RHCs are intended to provide, in pursuance of the resolutions and recommendations of the IHO, regional co-ordination with regard to nautical information, hydrographic surveys, production of nautical charts and documents, training, technical cooperation and hydrographic capacity building projects. They (RHC) should enable the exchange of information and consultation between the hydrographic services concerned. Geographically adjacent RHCs should liaise with each other.*

3.- RHCs shall be properly constituted and have activities in line with the objectives of the IHO as described in Article II of the Convention on the IHO and in accordance with the approved IHO Work Programme. Geographical areas of the RHC will normally coincide with INT chart regions, modified as appropriate to meet regional requirements and special circumstances. There are special provisions for Region M (Antarctica) because of its special status.

*4.- RHC membership may include full members, associate members, and observers. Full membership is reserved for IHO Member States within the region who sign the statutes of the RHC. Associate membership is available to coastal states of the region who are non-IHO members but who are signatories of the statutes of the RHC. Other Member States of the IHO may participate as associate members (as signatories to the statutes of the RHC) or observers, if they contribute to the safety of navigation by their activities in the fields of hydrography, nautical charting, or nautical information in the region concerned. Organizations active in the region concerned, in the fields of hydrography, nautical charting, nautical information, or aids to navigation may be invited by the RHC to participate as observers.*

5.- The working languages used by the RHC shall be agreed upon by their members and designated to ensure the best communication between participants. The reports and IHO documents relating to RHC activities shall be in at least one of the official languages of the IHO. For correspondence with the Bureau, one of the official languages of the IHO shall be used.

6.- A representative of the Bureau shall be invited to attend meetings of RHCs.

6bis.- RHCs shall assess regularly the hydrographic capacity and requirements within their region.

7.- Chairs of RHCs shall report to the I.H. Conference on RHC activities, hydrographic capacity and requirements within their region, future plans and the agreed key targets that support RHC tasks detailed in the IHO Work Programme. Between sessions of the IHC, reports of studies or other activities, which may be considered of general interest to all Member States, shall be sent by Chairs of RHCs to the Bureau for general dissemination.