

IHB File No. S3/8151/MEH

**CIRCULAR LETTER 63/2003
23 October 2003**

MARINE ELECTRONIC HIGHWAY

Dear Hydrographer,

As you may know during the last few years there have been extensive discussions on the development of a Regional Marine Electronic Highway Project in the Straits of Malacca and Singapore. This is a project of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), implemented by the World Bank (WB), and has an overall objective to develop and establish a marine electronic highway system in these straits for enhanced maritime services, improved navigational safety, integrated marine environment protection and sustainable development of the coastal and marine resources. The WB has agreed to finance the project and a Project Steering Committee (PSC) has been formed in order to provide overall direction/strategies and guidance for the execution of the project.

The PSC is composed of representatives from the three littoral States (Indonesia, Malaysia and Singapore), the WB, IMO which acts as the Executive Agency, the IHO and the International Association of Independent Tanker Owners (INTERTANKO).

The backbone of the MEH is precision navigation and will utilize a network of Electronic Navigational Charts (ENCs) in conjunction with ECDIS, Differential GPS and other maritime technologies. The production of large scale ENCs will be based on the resurvey of the area using state-of-the-art surveying technology of multi beam with DGPS, to obtain quantitative depth information with full coverage of the bottom.

A Technical Committee on Hydrographic Survey and ENCs has been formed in order to provide technical guidance during the planning and execution of the hydrographic survey and the production of ENCs in which technical experts from the Members of PSC will participate.

The IHB participates actively in the discussions of the PSC providing technical guidance and support for the planning of the survey and the production of the ENCs, the systems needed in the field and the Standards that have to be used.

During the last Meeting of the PSC the WB asked for an MOU to be signed between the Members of the PSC. This is a standard document required for the funding of the Project.

In Annex A is a draft text, prepared by the Project Consultant to be included in the MOU, referring to the support that will be provided by the IHO which was circulated during the last Meeting of the PSC, 13-15 October in Jakarta. In Annex B is a revised wording proposed by the IHB.

If you have any comments on the wording please provide them by the **15th of November** at the latest, because we have to respond on this issue to IMO by the 20th November 2003.

On behalf of the Directing Committee
Yours sincerely,

(original signed)

Vice Admiral Alexandros MARATOS
President

Annex A: Draft MoU prepared by the Project Consultant
Annex B: Revised wording of the MoU proposed by the IHB.

International Hydrographic Organization

1. Provision, mobilization and strengthening of support and resources available, including experts for the Project through the Project Management Office; in particular, the conduct of hydrographic survey, electronic navigational charts development and production, sensitivity mapping and in the development of geo-referenced environmental data;
2. Serve as a permanent member of the Project Steering Committee and shall nominate representatives or members to the Project Steering Committee and its technical committees and *ad hoc* working groups;
3. Provision of all available information/data required by the Project for the implementation of activities;
4. Leverage technical co-operation among its member states for the Project in the development of ENC's and related products (i.e., sensitivity maps, marine information objects) including standardization;
5. Provision of training opportunities on relevant aspects of hydrographic survey and the production of electronic navigational charts; and
6. Monitoring progress of Project activities.

International Hydrographic Organization

1. Provision of technical support through the Project Management Office for:
 - a) the execution of hydrographic surveys
 - b) the planning, production and distribution of ENC's and other related standardized products.
2. Serve as a permanent member of the Project Steering Committee and nominate a representative to the Technical Committee for Hydrographic Survey and ENC's
3. Provision of available information/data required by the Project for the implementation of activities.
4. Provision of training opportunities in aspects of hydrographic surveys and ENC production.
5. Monitoring the progress of Project activities