

IHB File No. SPWG-2

<p>CIRCULAR LETTER 6/2004 23 January 2004</p>

SPWG INTERIM REPORT

Dear Hydrographer,

The XVI International Hydrographic Conference which took place in April 2002, tasked the Strategic Planning Working Group (SPWG) to carry out a study on the following; the need to revise the IHO Convention, to consider the harmonization of the text of the IHO Basic Documents and present the results of these studies to the IHB Directing Committee who will circulate a report to Member States.

Please find attached the Interim Report of the SPWG provided to the Directing Committee by the SPWG Chair Group. Please note that the SPWG will meet from the 1-4 March 2004 in Tokyo in order to finalize the texts of the Convention and Basic Documents. The final SPWG report including the recommendations to be discussed at the Extraordinary Conference in Monaco in April 2005, will be sent to Member States at the beginning of April 2004.

On behalf of the Directing Committee
Yours sincerely,

(original signed)

Vice Admiral Alexandros MARATOS
President

Annex 1: Interim Report

SPWG Study into the Organizational Structure and Procedures of the IHO

Interim Report to Member States

The following text, submitted as an interim report to Member States, forms the basis of the Executive Summary to the Final Report of the SPWG Study Group, which will be issued in April 2004.

In April 2002, the XVIth International Hydrographic Conference resolved that there should be a thorough review of the Basic Documents of the IHO and of its structure and procedures, in order to determine whether a more flexible, efficient Organization could be constructed.

It tasked the SPWG to undertake this review and to make appropriate recommendations to an Extraordinary Conference in April 2005. The SPWG was also tasked with addressing a number of proposals deferred from the Conference, which were seen as being complementary to the main review. The XVIth International Hydrographic Conference encouraged each Regional Hydrographic Commission to select a representative for the SPWG. It elected the Chairman and two Vice-Chairmen for the SPWG, and asked the IHB President to represent the Bureau and to provide a secretary. The SPWG met in full plenary sessions on 5 occasions to address this task; all the RHCs and several individual Member States contributed strongly to the debates.

A holistic approach to the task was adopted, to ensure a structured, logical and rigorous review. The SPWG established an image of the future IHO defined through statements of its Vision, Mission and Objectives. It determined, through a review of past documents and a survey of Member States' opinions, what strengths and weaknesses the IHO currently possessed which would help or hinder it from achieving the Vision, Mission & Objectives. After assessing and debating many potential candidates for an IHO structure, the SPWG proposed a structure and set of operational procedures which it believes are best suited to maintain the strengths, overcome the weaknesses and achieve the Mission, Vision and Objectives. It took into account the need to show increased effectiveness and cost-effectiveness, and to maintain the IHO's status as a competent international organization.

The new Vision, Mission and Objectives of the IHO proposed by the SPWG are:

Vision: *to be the recognised international hydrographic authority advancing maritime safety and efficiency and sustainable development of the marine environment.*

Mission: *to create a global environment in which States provide adequate and timely hydrographic data, products and services and ensure their widest possible use.*

Objectives

- promote the use of hydrography for the safety of navigation and all other marine purposes and to raise global awareness of the importance of hydrography;
- improve global coverage, availability, quality and access to hydrographic data, information, products and services;
- improve global hydrographic capability, capacity, science and techniques.
- establish and support the development of international standards for the quality and formats of hydrographic data, information, products, services and techniques and to achieve the greatest possible uniformity in the use of these standards;
- give authoritative and timely guidance on all hydrographic matters to governments and international organisations;
- facilitate coordination of hydrographic activities among Member States;
- enhance cooperation on hydrographic activities among States on a regional basis.

The strengths which the IHO currently has, which will help it achieve its Vision, Mission and Objectives can be summarised through it being: an international organization with global reach but acting regionally through the RHCs, being technology focussed, concerned with improving technical capability amongst its members and being cost-effective. The SPWG determined that any re-structuring of the IHO must not diminish those strengths in any way.

The perceived weaknesses of the current organization include its slow decision-making processes, legalistic/inflexible nature, slow growth in membership, its style and frequency of its Conferences, inadequate interaction with industry, slow pace of improvement in technical capability of many members, the lack of progress within RHCs, and the appearance of the Bureau as almost a separate entity to the IHO itself. The SPWG determined that any re-structuring of the IHO must remove those weaknesses.

Thus the proposed new structure for the IHO is designed to maintain the strengths, eliminate the weaknesses, achieve the Vision, Mission and Objectives of the IHO and be a more effective and cost-effective system. It is based on:

- An Assembly
 - comprising all Member States, meeting every 3 years
 - being the supreme organ of the IHO
 - being strategically focused.
- A Council
 - comprising a restricted number of the Member States, meeting annually
 - (the exact mechanism for electing MS to the Council to be determined at the SPWG meeting in Tokyo in March 2004)
 - being a smaller, more dynamic body
 - focusing on the continuous operation of the IHO.
- Budget review mechanism/body
 - (the exact mechanism for budget review to be determined at the SPWG meeting in Tokyo in March 2004)
- Subsidiary Organs
 - Committees comprising all Member States, meeting annually:
 - a Hydrographic Services & Standards Committee (HSSC), being a technical committee responsible for the development of international standards for the quality and formats of hydrographic data and information, and the greatest possible uniformity in their use of these standards;
 - an Inter-Regional Coordination Committee (IRCC), being responsible for generating and monitoring the work to be carried out by the Regional Hydrographic Commissions, promoting Capacity Building and co-operation with regional organizations concerned with the use of hydrographic information.
- Regional Hydrographic Commissions
 - continuing as presently configured
 - some part of the Agenda of RHC meetings being prescribed to take account of the Strategic Plan & Work Programme and Capacity-building, other parts being structured to consider regional issues and plans.
- Industry and INGO Participation
 - accredited International Non-Governmental Organisation groups, comprising representatives of Industry, Academia, Professional Institutions, and end-users of the IHO's products and services
 - defined and managed as determined by their own participants

- coordinating industry participation in the work of the IHO, and proposing relevant methodologies and solutions
- representatives of the accredited Groups attending Subsidiary Organs, Council and Assembly meetings as observers.
- Legal Advisory Group
 - comprising legal experts from any or all MS
 - meeting by request of the Assembly or Council or Major Committees
 - advising on specific matters and within specific timescales.
- A Secretariat
 - Secretary General
 - elected by the Assembly for a period of 6 years
 - possible re-election at a subsequent Assembly for a further 3 years
 - head of the Secretariat and responsible for its efficient operation
 - supporting the Assembly and the Council
 - representing the IHO to other national, international or non-governmental organizations.
 - Directors (two in the first instance)
 - elected by the Assembly for a period of 6 years
 - possible re-election at a subsequent Assembly for a further 3 years
 - providing support to the Subsidiary Organs.
 - reporting to the Secretary-General.
 - Professional Assistants (five in the first instance)
 - assisting the Secretary General.

The Convention and Basic Documents of the IHO have been re-drafted to accommodate the proposals above, and to take into account several other resolutions passed to the SPWG for consideration, by the XVIth Conference. The re-drafts will be included in the final report.