

INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC
ORGANIZATION



ORGANISATION HYDROGRAPHIQUE
INTERNATIONALE

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CIRCULAR LETTER 113/2005
14 November 2005

VOLUNTARY IMO MEMBER STATE AUDIT SCHEME

Reference: IHB CL 54/2005 dated 25 May 2005

Dear Hydrographer,

The IHB thanks the following 13 Member States who responded to CL54/2005 : Australia, Argentina, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, France, Greece, Japan, Norway, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom and the USA. Some countries provided comments regarding the provision of additional guidance for the Voluntary IMO Member State Audit Scheme and these are included at Annex A.

Those Member States who responded supported the idea of the IHO providing additional guidance with most suggesting that this should be based on IHO Publication S-55. Consequently the IHB has prepared the guidance included at Annex B. This requires answers to a few general questions plus the detailed information in S-55.

The proposal by the UK to amend Section VIII, paragraph 9 of the Pre-Audit Questionnaire at Appendix 2 to the Annex MSC 80/8 was not considered practical at this stage as this has already been passed to the IMO Assembly for adoption as a Resolution in document A 24/19 a copy of which is available on the IHO web site (www.iho.shom.fr > Int Org > IMO).

The IHB considers that the concerns expressed by Ecuador regarding the objectivity of the audit are adequately covered in Sections 6 and 8 of the Annex to document A 24/19.

The IHB requests any comments on the guidance provided at Annex B by **9 January 2006** in order that the IHB can prepare the submission to IMO by the due date.

On behalf of the Directing Committee
Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in purple ink, appearing to read 'A. Maratos', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized and cursive.

Vice Admiral Alexandros MARATOS
President

Annex A: MS Comments
Annex B: Draft Guidance

Australia:

Australia supports the proposal for the IHO to develop this additional guidance and prepare a submission to the next session of the MSC in May 2006. The audit of Hydrographic Services should include those items in the IHO Publication S-55 (Status of Hydrographic Surveying and Nautical Charting Worldwide) and there is a need specifically to ensure that for each Member State the following is identified:

- i. status of surveying and charting (accuracy, currency, coverage) in EEZ of each country (categorised for shipping routes etc.);
- ii. existence, or otherwise, of a national hydrographic service or comparable mechanisms to ensure the regular updating of charts and associated publications – including in-country monitoring of changes to navigational aids, undersea features and any other relevant information contained in nautical charts and associated publications;
- iii. whether charts and associated publications are available globally – if so, by what mechanism ?

Brazil:

(a) Brazil supports the development of a guidance comprising an Audit Scheme for SOLAS Regulations V/4 and V/9;

(b) The form might be a IHO special publication including procedures and performance indicators to be checked. Therefore, it will be necessary more time to elaborate such publication, perhaps conducted by a “correspondence group”;

(c) Below follows some suggested indicators to be verified in a SOLAS Contracting State.

Regulation V/4

- 1) Is there an operative national service in order to disseminate Navigational Warnings?
- 2) Is there national legislation which encompasses proceedings for Navigational Warnings Services? (in affirmative case) Is this legislation in conformity with international legislation? (in negative case) In which legislation existing service is based on?
- 3) How* data and information to be disseminated through Navigational Warnings are received?
- 4) How* received data and information are evaluated regarding reliability of the source?
- 5) How* received data and information are organized and prepared for dissemination?
- 6) On which basis (periodicity, means and languages) dissemination of Navigational Warnings are made?
- 7) Are there internal written proceedings which encompass activities related to phases of evaluation, organization, preparation, dissemination and filling of?
- 8) How* data and information disseminated through Navigational Warnings are shared by the other SOLAS Contracting States?
- 9) Does the existent Navigational Warning Service meet the navigators needs considering the relevance of the data and information and ready dissemination?

* *Meaning of the word “How”:* The word “How” requests description of organization **management practices** and **work standards**, including the responsible and frequency of practices, the methods used for **controlling** the practices i.e. for verification of standards compliance and finally it requests the **deployment** of practices and standards evidencing the dissemination and continuity.

Regulation V/9

- 1) Does the Contracting State's law establish nautical cartography as its responsibility?
- 2) Does the Contracting State's law define an entity responsible for both production and promotion of necessary information to the safety of navigation?
- 3) Does the Hydrographic Service, or a correspondent organisation, assure and make available nautical charts and publications of aids to navigation in order to improve the safety of navigation, in compliance with the IHO Publications?
- 4) How* does the organization produce and promote information deriving from hydrographic, tidal, geodetic and geomorphologic data?
- 5) Are the quality standards established by the organisation responsible for data collecting and processing in accordance to the OHI publication *Standard for Hydrographic Surveys (S-44)*?
- 6) Does the organization establish directives and goals to guide planning and accomplishing the necessary surveys to the safety of navigation?
- 7) How* do nautical charts and publications of aids to navigation become available to users?
- 8) How* does the hydrographic service, or equivalent organization, assure that the means used for nautical publications dissemination satisfy the mariners needs?
- 9) Does the hydrographic service, or equivalent organisation, issue and make available Notice to Mariners in order to maintain up-to-date, as far as possible, the nautical charts and publications of aids to navigation which are under its responsibility?
- 10) On which bases (periodicity, means and languages) dissemination of Notice to Mariners is made?
- 11) Are the means used for dissemination of the Notice to Mariners appropriate for worldwide scale?
- 12) Does the hydrographic service, or equivalent organisation, keep permanently opened channels of communication to receive any data and information related to the safety of navigation?

Chile:

This is to inform you that this Service fully supports the content of CL54/2005, this is in order to a) better regulate ECDIS operability and PS, and b) coordinate the best possible quality and coverage of official hydrographic information for a safe navigation and environment protection.

Ecuador:

With reference to the IHB CL54/2005, our comments are as follows :

It will always be important to know and recognize the technical and efficiency level of each hydrographic office, in the benefit of the optimization of resources and to get a high administration and responsibility level according to the mission and the basic functions of such resources.

The voluntary audit is a good solution to assess externally the efficiency degree of each hydrographic office, but for some countries it can be quite unpleasant or inconvenient that a hydrographic office of another country be the one taking care of this audit, as there might be misinterpretations or subjectivities.

An idea would be that this type of audit be made by specialized bodies or working groups, for example: concerning bathymetry the audit could be made by the ocean mapping group, in the cartographic area by the International Cartographic Association or the different universities in charge of training hydrographers as are: the University of New Hampshire, the University of Southern Mississippi and the University of New Brunswick among others. In this way the approval of the countries to be audited would be facilitated.

France:

With reference to the above mentioned circular letter, I am pleased to inform you that SHOM is ready to give her contribution to the policies elaboration concerning hydrographic services, as requested by SOLAS, which will represent an additional contribution to the optional Audit's programme of all IMO Member States.

For hydrography, this Audit issue can be studied on two levels:

- The general evaluation level which corresponds to the evaluation already carried out as part of publication S-55, or as part of evaluation missions carried out either by RHC or by IHB. The model adopted by the EAthC can be used as guideline for general evaluation; this model expects that any audit must be carried out upon Invited States request only, which corresponds to the optional Audit's programme notions as per IMO's proposal.
- A very good operational level of organizations. The ISO 9000 certification obtained by some hydrographic services for their activities related to the Safety in Navigation, carried out as part in response to the SOLAS Convention, is an immediate answer to the Audit's notion proposed by IMO on one side, and can help, through all the documentation achieved during this certification procedure to establish the hydrographic guidelines as requested.

Greece:

We support the development of the additional guidance to be submitted to the next session of MSC.

Japan:

Because the IHO is the competent organization for navigational warnings and hydrography, existing IHO documents should be applied to the IMO Audit Scheme on navigational warnings and hydrographic services.

I propose that the hydrographic offices whose governments would volunteer themselves to be audited would be requested to prepare ONLY the S-55 questionnaires in order to avoid duplicated work. I guess the S-55 questionnaire is enough for the audit to understand their hydrographic activity.

Turkey:

TN-DNHO supports the IHO to develop additional guidance for coastal States, in the context of paragraph 7.4.2. of the Draft Framework for the Voluntary IMO Member States Audit.

United Kingdom:

The UK most strongly supports the development of guidance on compliance with SOLAS V/4 and 9 to be included in the revised draft Audit Scheme which IMO MSC will debate in May 2006. It is suggested that this could best, be achieved by amending Section VIII, paragraph 9 of the Pre-Audit Questionnaire at Appendix 2 to the Annex of MSC 80/8 to read:

"The arrangements you have for hydrographic services under SOLAS V/4 and SOLAS V/9 (up-to-date details of which should be recorded in the IHO S-55 database www.iho.shom.fr); ship reporting systems and vessel traffic services should be described."

This would have the virtue of high-lighting the amount of work which the IHO has done to alert coastal states to their SOLAS obligations, culminating in the issue of MSC/Circ 1179. It would also further the end of encouraging coastal states to input and update their S-55 entries. It is noted that two of the countries which supported the proposal in MSC 80/23/5 have yet to submit their data.

Finally, the appeal for assistance from Ghana is noted. Ghana was of course included in the EAtHC West Africa Action Team visits, and UK will be conducting a follow-up visit in October 2005 to advise government and Port Authority on implementation of basic Phase 1 and 2 capability to meet the significant deficiencies in provision of hydrographic services.

In conclusion, the UK is willing to contribute to the development of the additional guidance for the IMO audit scheme. Specifically, Captain M.K. Barritt RN, who continues to assist the IHO with the revision of S-55, is available for this task.

USA:

Recognizing that the voluntary audit may prove beneficial for some hydrographic offices that might appreciate guidance and assistance with meeting their IMO responsibilities, the U.S. supports the provision of additional guidance to Member States who request it.

GENERAL

1. Are you a member of the IHO?
2. Are you a member, or associate member, of an IHO Regional Hydrographic Commission?
3. Do you have a Hydrographic Office? If not is there another Governmental, or non-Governmental, Agency with responsibility for hydrographic matters?
4. Do you require Capacity Building Support to help develop your hydrographic services? If the answer to this question is yes please indicate in which of the following areas support is required: Hydrographic Surveys, Production of paper and/or electronic charts, Promulgation of MSI, Training.

SOLAS regulations V/4 and V/9

1. Hydrographic Surveys
 - a. How many hydrographic vessels do you have?
 - b. Do you conduct hydrographic surveys? If yes do you comply with the IHO Standards for Hydrographic Surveys (S-44)?
 - c. Do you conduct hydrographic surveys in cooperation with other countries? If yes please provide details.
 - d. Do you contract out hydrographic surveys to commercial companies? If yes do these surveys comply with S-44?
 - e. Please complete the following information relating to the status of hydrographic surveys as reported in IHO Publication S-55 "Status of Hydrographic Surveying and Nautical Charting Worldwide" – 3rd Edition. Comments should be added wherever appropriate:
 - A1 Percentage of national waters, 0 – 200m in depth, which is adequately surveyed: %.
 - A2 Percentage of national waters, greater than 200m in depth, which is adequately surveyed: %.
 - B1 Percentage of national waters, 0 – 200m in depth, which requires resurveying at a larger scale or to modern standards: %.
 - B2 Percentage of national waters, greater than 200m in depth, which requires resurveying at a larger scale or to modern standards: %.
 - C1 Percentage of national waters, 0 – 200m in depth, which have never been systematically surveyed: %.

C2 Percentage of national waters, greater than 200m in depth, which have never been systematically surveyed: %.

2. Nautical Charting

- a. Do you produce nautical paper charts, RNC s, ENCs, and nautical publications as defined in paragraph 2 of SOLAS Regulation V/2?
- b. Do you have bi-lateral agreement with other countries for the production of nautical charts? If yes please give details.
- c. Are the charts you produce available to worldwide shipping?
- d. Do you have an agreement with a Regional ENC Distribution Centre (RENC) for the distribution of ENCs and RNCs? If yes please give details.
- e. Please complete the following information relating to the status of nautical charting as reported in IHO Publication S-55 "Status of Hydrographic Surveying and Nautical Charting Worldwide" – 3rd Edition. Comments should be added wherever appropriate:

A. Offshore passage and small scale-charts:

Percentage of national waters covered by INT ¹Charts: %.
Percentage of national waters covered by RNCs²: %.
Percentage of National waters covered by ENCs³: %.

B. Landfall, coastal passage and medium-scale charts:

Percentage of national waters covered by INT Charts: %.
Percentage of national waters covered by RNCs: %.
Percentage of National waters covered by ENCs: %.

C. Approaches, ports and large-scale charts:

Percentage of national waters covered by INT Charts: %.
Percentage of national waters covered by RNCs: %.
Percentage of National waters covered by ENCs: %.

¹ INT = International Charts or national equivalent meeting the standards set out in IHO publication « Regulations of the IHO for International (INT) Charts and Chart Specifications of the IHO » (M-4).

² RNC = Raster Navigational Chart meeting the standards set out in IHO Publication « Product Specification for Raster Navigational Charts (RNCs) » (S-61).

³ ENC = Electronic Navigational Charts meeting the standards set out in IHO Publication « IHO Transfer Standards for Digital Data » (S-57).

3. Maritime Safety Information

- a. Are you a NAVAREA coordinator? If so for which area?
- b. Are you a sub-area coordinator? If so for which sub-area?
- c. Are you a national coordinator? If not who is your national coordinator?
- d. Please complete the following information relating to the promulgation of MSI as reported in IHO Publication S-55 "Status of Hydrographic Surveying and Nautical Charting Worldwide" - 3rd Edition. Answers may be Yes, No or Partial and comments should be added wherever appropriate:

Navigational Warnings:

- Do you issue local warnings?
- Do you issue coastal warnings?
- Do you issue port information?
- Do you issue NAVAREA warnings?

GMDSS Implementation (IMO GMDSS Handbook):

- Master Plan?
- A1 Area?
- A2 Area?
- A3 Area?
- NAVTEX?
- SafetyNET?