



**IHB Files S3/0112 + S3/0123**

**CIRCULAR LETTER No. 11/2005  
21 January 2005**

**TSUNAMI IN ASIA**

Reference: Circular Letter No. 02/2005 dated 5 January 2005

Dear Hydrographer,

At the invitation of the Secretary-General of IMO, the President of the Directing Committee and the Secretary-General of IALA participated in a meeting at IMO's London Headquarters. The needs of the States affected by the tsunami disaster with respect to the safety of navigation were discussed and a joint plan for future actions agreed. The needs as reported to the three Organizations by the official National Agencies in the area were presented and discussed. The IHO emphasized its actions to assess the damage to hydrographic infrastructure and the requirements for surveys in those areas affected by the tsunami, while IALA reported on the damage to navigational aids and IMO reported on the status of various ports. From the discussion it was clear that, at this stage, it was not possible to draw up a concrete set of requirements.

The participants agreed to the IHO proposal for the need for an immediate review of the IMO/IHO documents dealing with the promulgation of navigational warnings through NAVTEX and SafetyNET. Consequently the IMO Subcommittee on Radio communications and Search and Rescue (COMSAR), the 9<sup>th</sup> session of which is from 7 to 11 February, will accept documents on this matter until the 28<sup>th</sup> January. The Bureau is working closely with Mr. Peter Doherty from the USA, the Chairman of the IHO CPRNW and of the IMO COMSAR working group dealing with MSI, to present on behalf of the IHO a paper proposing amendments/improvements which will result in a better coordination and response to a tsunami threat. The availability of the IMO/IHO NAVAREA Warning system to the IOC tsunami warning structure was briefly discussed and specific actions will be decided during the COMSAR meeting.

Following the meeting in London a Press Release was prepared on behalf of the three Organizations; a paper prepared on the outcome of the meeting that will be presented by the IMO Secretariat to the COMSAR meeting and a further paper that will be presented by the Director of the IMO Maritime Safety Division, on behalf of the three Organizations, at the World Conference on Disaster Reduction in Kobe in Japan. These three documents have been posted on the IHO web site under the title "Tsunami disaster information in SE Asia". The IHO submission to COMSAR relating to MSI is also available on this site.

The IHB continues to communicate with the Hydrographic Offices of the States in the area in order to collect the information needed to support and co-ordinate any necessary actions. The Chairmen of the NIOHC and EAHC, which will meet in February, have included an Agenda item, in order to discuss the needs and determine follow-on actions. The Bureau was pleased to hear that Sri Lanka has accepted support from Germany to help overcome the problems caused by the tsunami. Thailand has informed the Bureau that there are some minor problems with the nav aids and sedimentation in channels in Phuket, Krabi and Phang-gna provinces and that restorative actions are taking place.

The Bureau will keep you informed of developments on this matter.

On behalf of the Directing Committee

Yours sincerely,

Vice Admiral Alexandros MARATOS  
President