



IHB File No. S3/3055

**CIRCULAR LETTER 54/2005**  
**25 May 2005**

**80<sup>th</sup> SESSION OF THE MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE**  
**IMO, London (11-20 May 2005)**

Dear Hydrographer,

1. The 80<sup>th</sup> session of the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) of the IMO was held at the IMO's London Headquarters from 11 – 20 May 2005. The IHO submitted two documents to MSC:

a. MSC 80/21/2 “Amendments to the Performance Standards for Electronic Chart Display and Information Systems (ECDIS)” (Submitted by IHO and Greece). The MSC agreed to add this item to the work programme of the Sub-committee on Safety of Navigation (NAV) and to put it on the Agenda of NAV52 and NAV53 in 2006 and 2007 respectively. NAV were also to be instructed to consider other relevant documents during its deliberations. The following Member States supported the proposal during the debate at MSC: Australia, Denmark, Islamic Republic of Iran, Norway and the United Kingdom.

b. MSC 80/23/5 “Proposal for issuance of an MSC Circular on deficiencies in surveying and nautical charting worldwide and their impact on safety of navigation and protection of the marine environment.” This circular brings to the attention of IMO Member States, the deficiencies in surveys, charting, including ENCs, and the promulgation of MSI highlighted by the 3<sup>rd</sup> Edition of S-55. The MSC strongly supported this proposal and agreed to issue the Circular. The following Member States supported this proposal during the debate at MSC: Brazil, Chile, Cyprus, France, Ghana, Greece, Japan, Netherlands, Philippines, Rep. of Korea, United Kingdom and Uruguay. At the request of Cyprus and France an additional paragraph was added to the covering note reminding Member Governments, Parties to SOLAS, of their obligations under regulation V/9, for the provision of hydrographic services. During the debate Ghana informed the Committee that they would require assistance to overcome the deficiencies identified for Western Africa. The IHO responded that it would be happy to consider any such request for assistance. The draft version of MSC/Circ 1179 can be downloaded from the IHO website ([www.iho.shom.fr](http://www.iho.shom.fr) > INT Organizations > IMO).

2. The IMO has, during the last 3 years, been debating the establishment of a Voluntary IMO Member State Audit Scheme. This scheme, which will be voluntary, is designed to encourage Member States to volunteer themselves to be audited as to their compliance with IMO Mandatory Instruments. One such Instrument is SOLAS, Regulation V/4 of which requires the issuing of navigational warnings and Regulation V/9 of which requires the provision of hydrographic services. During its 80<sup>th</sup> session, the MSC considered document MSC 80/8, “Report of the outcome of the joint Maritime Safety Committee / Marine

Environmental Protection Committee / Technical Cooperation Committee (MSC/MEPC/TCC) WG on the Audit Scheme” (Available from the IHO website as above).

The WG considered that it might be useful for additional guidance to be provided with respect to Hydrographic Services as explained in paragraphs 5.7 and 5.8 on page 7 of the annex to MSC 80/8. Consequently the MSC endorsed the recommendation set out in paragraph 9.3 on page 2 of MSC 80/8 as follows “endorse the proposal by IALA to develop additional guidance for coastal States, in the context of paragraph 7.4.2 of the draft Framework and invite the IHO to consider undertaking a similar initiative in its field of competence (paragraph 5)”.

The procedural, administrative and technical details for the conduct of audits are set out on pages 12 – 46 of the Annex to MSC 80/8. Section VIII (Information on coastal State activities) on page 41 requires information on the arrangements for promulgating dangers to navigation (SOLAS V/4) and the arrangements for hydrographic services (SOLAS V/9). The provisional list of IMO Mandatory Instruments to be covered by the audit is published in MSC 80/WP.1 which is also available from the IHO website as above.

3. The IHB considers that it is appropriate for the IHO to develop this additional guidance and prepare a submission to the next session of the MSC in May 2006. Member States are requested to inform the IHB as to their support for the development of such additional guidance. Member States supporting this submission are requested to provide comments especially as to the form and content of the guidance.

**Responses are requested by 29 July 2005.**

4. Member States are reminded that the 51<sup>st</sup> session of the NAV Sub-committee of IMO will take place from 6 – 10 June 2005. The IHO have submitted the following documents:

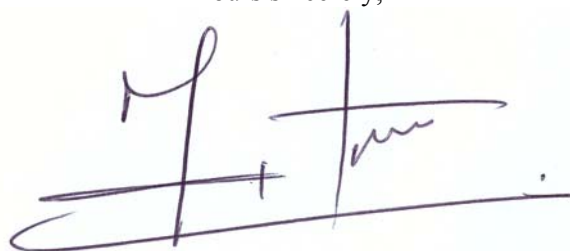
- a. NAV51/6/1 Evaluation of the use of ECDIS and ENC development.
- b. NAV51/10/1 Report on action to improve the availability of hydrographic data in remote areas.
- c. NAV 51/INF.4 The production of the South China Sea Electronic Navigational Charts (ENCs).
- d. NAV 51/INF.7 An example of co-operation within the Baltic Sea Hydrographic Commission. The HELCOM Harmonized Re-Survey Plan.

Additional documents that will be of interest to Member States are:

- a. NAV 51/6 is the report of the Correspondence Group on the evaluation of the use of ECDIS and ENC Development.
- b. NAV 51/6/3 is a response to the Correspondence Group report by Japan and
- c. NAV 51/6/2 contains comments on the Performance Standards for ECDIS submitted by the Russian Federation.

All the above documents are available from the IHO website ([www.iho.shom.fr](http://www.iho.shom.fr) > INT Organizations > IMO).

On behalf of the Directing Committee  
Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'A. Maratos', written over a horizontal line.

Vice Admiral Alexandros MARATOS  
President