



IHB File No. S3/3055

**CIRCULAR LETTER 81/2005  
25 August 2005**

**IMO SHIPS' ROUTEING MEASURES - PROVISION OF HYDROGRAPHIC INFORMATION**

Reference: IHB CL 67/2005 dated 29 June

Dear Hydrographer,

The IHB thanks the following 8 MS who provided comments on the Reference: Algeria; France; Italy; Norway; Singapore; Sweden; Turkey and the UK. The responses supported the need to rationalise the process through which the IHO provides comments to IMO on Routeing Measures with some suggesting modifications to the process set out in the Reference. MS comments are at Annex A.

The IHB intends to propose the following to IMO, which it believes, takes into account the comments made by MS:

- a. Ask IMO to remind IMO MS submitting Routeing Measures for consideration by NAV of the requirement set out in MSC/Circ.1060 to provide "information on the adequacy of the state of hydrographic surveys and nautical charts in the area of the proposed routeing system". The IHO will only comment where the document from the proposing State makes this appropriate.
- b. Inform IMO MS submitting Routeing Measures, who do not have the necessary hydrographic information, that they may seek the assistance of the IHO in obtaining such information. Such assistance should be requested at an early stage in the formulation of the Routeing Measures.
- c. The IHO will comment should a request for Routeing Measures not contain the relevant hydrographic and cartographic information.
- d. The IHO will comment when requested by IMO.

The IHB will of course continue to attend meetings of the Safety of Navigation Sub-committee and participate in the Working Group on Routeing Measures, cooperating with the UKHO, as set out in their comments on the Reference.

On behalf of the Directing Committee  
Yours sincerely,

Vice Admiral Alexandros MARATOS  
President

Comments by Member States

Algeria: Agrees

France:

We refer to the above mentioned CL informing us of the important task given to IHO as per IMO's instructions for Ship's Routeing Measures (reference MSC 57), a task which is difficult to achieve and causes delays.

I'm pleased to inform you that the process described in the CL67/2005 has never been used in France, where the Maritime Authority consults the Hydrographic Service during the file preparation process in order to ensure that all requirements under 3.2.2 and 3.3 of the IMO's Resolution A572 (14) have been completed.

Italy: Agrees

Norway: Agrees

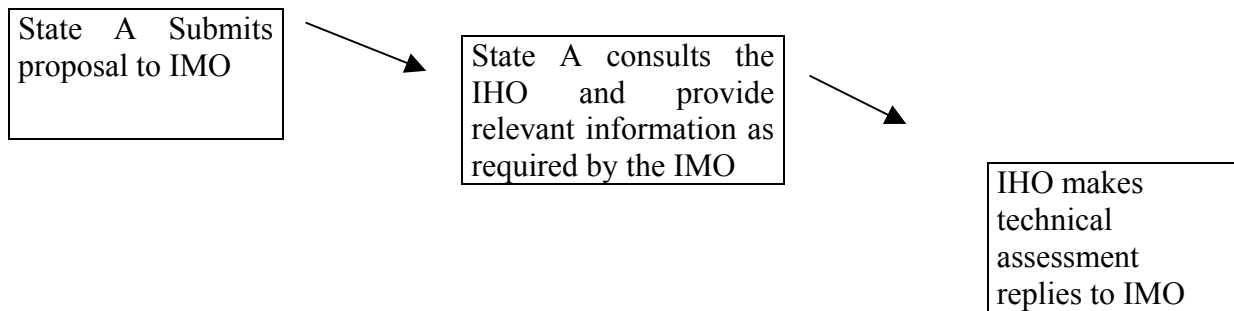
Singapore:

We refer to IHO CL67/2005 dated 29 June 2005. After much consideration, we are of the opinion that although the IHB's concerns and difficulties may be valid there also lies an opportunity for the IHO to stay relevant and profile its contributions to the international maritime community on navigational safety. This, the IHO can achieve by continuing to be engaged with the IMO by being consultative body on hydrographic matters. This would ensure that the IMO continues to rely on and recognize the IHO as the competent technical authority on hydrography. Otherwise, one of the possible consequences of limiting IHO's role in the decision making process of the IMO would be for it to develop its own in-house expertise on hydrography and thus reduce its dependency on IHO's expertise

2/ The difficulties experienced by the IHO are not insurmountable. Firstly, the time allocated to complete assessment can be on a graduated basis i.e. from 2 months to 4 months depending on the complexity of the proposal. Second, the proposer of the Ship's Routeing System must provide a set of up-to-date and relevant charts. The IHO need not have an up-to-date worldwide set of charts but only maintain a set of charts for the approved Routeing Systems. Last but not least, IMO must make it clear that if the State does not obtain IHO's endorsement, the proposal would not be considered by the relevant Committees.

3/ The role of the IHO in this context is particularly significant in shared waterways involving several coastal States (including non IHO Member States), where States may have varying capabilities, expertise and resources. In such cases, independent assessment by the IHO would provide major benefits, in terms of ensuring consistency of standards and information to all concerned parties.

4/ Therefore, for the reasons stated above, Singapore is of the opinion that it would be more beneficial for the IHO to propose simplification of the consultation process and ensuring that it would be the State making the proposal to provide the relevant information within the time frame. In addition, the lengthy process of consultation between the hydrographic office of the proposing Member State and IHO could be shortened to:



5/ We need to recognize that the IMO is an important vehicle that could be used to raise IHO's international profile and expand our membership. Considering the fact that IMO has a membership of more than two times that of the IHO, the IHO can leverage on this and try to increase its membership in the course of interaction with States who are non-IHO members. For example, by the IMO placing importance on the work of the IHO it will encourage other non-member States to join the organization. It could also be highlighted that one of the main benefits of being a Member State is the provision of assistance by IHO Member States in terms of carrying out hydrographic surveys or capacity building etc.

6/ In conclusion, we are of the opinion that the difficulties experienced by the IHB could be circumvented by requesting the IMO to make the necessary changes to the process and for the State submitting the proposal to take more responsibilities to facilitating proper assessment by the IHO. We hope that the IHB will take our comments into consideration.

Sweden: Agrees

Turkey: Agrees

UK:

1- It is agreed that the current method whereby IHO provides an analysis of the state of hydrographic surveys in a proposed traffic separation scheme or routeing measure is lengthy and cumbersome

2- Whilst we understand the wish to rationalise this process, we would strongly urge that the IHO should make professional advice available at the meetings of the Safety of Navigation Sub-Committee (NAV). UKHO feels that this is needed to ensure that adequate information on the state of hydrographic surveys is being provided within the submissions and that this aspect of the submissions is thoroughly discussed and analysed

3- UKHO routinely examines all proposed traffic separation schemes and other routeing measures, from a hydrographic and cartographic perspective, to ensure that the proposals are logical, bearing in mind the particular geographical area and proposed layout. UKHO's comments are provided to the UK representatives at IMO (UK Maritime and Coastguard Agency). This examination normally includes an assessment of the state of hydrographic surveys and nautical charts in the area of the proposed routeing system (as far as we are able to ascertain from the information available to UKHO)

4- UKHO would be happy to provide such professional input, on behalf of IHO, at the Ship's Routeing Working Group meetings of the Safety of Navigation Sub-Committee (NAV), should the IHB attendees be fully committed to other business at NAV. Such input has been provided by UKHO in the past.