

**INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC
ORGANIZATION**



**ORGANISATION HYDROGRAPHIQUE
INTERNATIONALE**

IHB File No. S1/1809

**CIRCULAR LETTER 19/2006
6 February 2006**

**THE ROLE OF HYDROGRAPHIC SERVICES WITH REGARD TO GEOSPATIAL DATA
AND PLANNING INFRASTRUCTURE.**

References: A. CL 30/2005 dated 21 March 2005
 B. CL 73/2005 dated 26 July 2005
 C. CL 100/2005 dated 28 September 2005
 D. CL 119/2005 dated 30 November 2005

Dear Hydrographer,

The IHB thanks the following 6 Member States who provided comments in response to Reference D: Canada, France, Netherlands, Norway, Turkey and the United Kingdom. The comments made are at Annex A. The responses acknowledge the importance of an MSDI and agree that CHRIS should take this matter forward.

The IHB will forward the comments received to the Chairman of CHRIS for further action as necessary. The IHB also notes the proposal by Norway that the IHB should prepare a brief report on the issue for the XVIIth IHC which it will do in conjunction with the Chairman of CHRIS.

On behalf of the Directing Committee
Yours sincerely,

Vice Admiral Alexandros MARATOS
President

Annex A. Member States responses to CL119

Responses to CL119-
The role of Hydrographic Services with regard to Geospatial Data and Planning Infrastructure

Canada:

Canada has considered the financial, technical and administrative issues relating to national SDIs (Spatial Data Infrastructure). In fact Canada has been at the fore front with such initiatives as Inter-Agency Committee on Geomatics, the Marine Geospatial Data Infrastructure and the GeoPortal. Several international papers have been published which reflect this commitment.

Canada presented a paper at this seminar entitled “Spatial Data Infrastructure in Canada” and fully supports the national Marine SDI concept.

France:

Firstly I would like to thank the IHO and congratulate BSH for the organisation of the seminar on “the role of hydrographic services with regard to geospatial data and planning infrastructure”, held in Rostock in November 2005. Following the CL119/2005, I am pleased to inform you that SHOM supports the initiative to further identify within the IHO the actions related to the development of hydrographic and maritime components in geospatial data infrastructure, as appropriate. Subject to manning, SHOM will participate in the activities carried out by the relevant working groups.

I do agree that CHRIS is the commission to be involved. In accordance with the pending MoU between IHO and DGIWG (ref: CL4/2006 dated 13 January 2006), and in order to avoid duplication, it might be beneficial to make sure that some of these questions, such as development of a common geospatial data model, both for maritime and land features, are not already addressed by DGIWG. This group is closed to NATO1, OGC2 and ISO and it would be wise to liaise before going ahead.

SHOM thinks these issues will become more and more important for the environment and sustainable development, SDI will be key components of ICZM, therefore it might be wise to use current developments within EU, such as GMES³, as driving forces for the hydrographic community and also to identify funding sources.

However, it is important to make sure that these efforts will not prevent the other important IHO activities, as our main *raison d'être* is still safety of navigation. Many issues in this field are not well addressed yet, and IHO has other major issues to be faced with, when integrated e-navigation is becoming a reality.

Netherlands:

NLHO has attended the meeting in Rostock and agrees to the intentions stated in the CL. NLHO is cooperating with national parties within the framework of INSPIRE as far as capacity permits.

Norway:

CL119/2006: NHS agrees that CHRIS consider technical aspects of the SDI in their standardisation efforts. However it is anticipated that marine SDI will become of increasingly strategic importance to IHO in the future. NHS therefore proposes that a brief report on the issue be prepared by the IHB to the XVII International Hydrographic Conference in 2007. Further initiatives required by IHO on MSDI eg: Amending the strategic plan and work programme should be considered by the Conference.

CL 126/2005 Norway will not provide any legal experts to the meeting on 13-14 February 2006.

1 As it is undertaken within the NATO Core GIS Services project, the objective of which is to provide a common geospatial situational awareness to all users, for land and maritime areas.

2 Open GIS Consortium

3 Global Monitoring for Environment and Security.

Turkey:

As the Office of Navigation, Hydrography and Oceanography, our comments on the CL119 are as follows:

We are absolutely in favour of the principle of “obtain once, use many times, by different users”. That may be our communities fixed guide for the future. Also the new objective recognised “promoting the use of hydrography for the safety of navigation and all other marine purposes and raising global awareness of the importance of hydrography” must be another important issue to establish and share effective use of geographic information.

As the hydrographic community, we have to recognise the importance of hydrographic data and information not only for navigational purposes, but also all marine engineering, environmental protection, pollution monitoring, research and prediction purposes.

We believe that both IHO and Hydrographic Offices have important roles to coordinate the demands and requirements for data collection, interoperability, dissemination and important marine projects. Coordinating activities on a dynamic geospatial data infrastructure establishment at both national and global levels must be accelerated on both organisational and technological bases.

Therefore priorities, requirements, standards, responsibilities, procedures of related services need to be defined and recognised by the IHO and all the community.

United Kingdom:

The IHO Seminar “The role of Hydrographic Services with regard to Geospatial Data and Planning Infrastructure” was attended by 3 members of the UKHO, who all agreed that the seminar was well organised and successful in exchanging views on the development of Spatial Data Infrastructures (SDIs).

Circular Letter 119/2005 requested comments. UKHO agrees that the development of SDIs falls within the remit of CHRIS and its successor, HSSC. As was suggested at the seminar, we feel that the setting up of a steering group, within CHRIS, could best take this initiative forward.

As indicated during the seminar, UKHO has been instrumental in building a UK SDI. We would be more than happy to participate in such a steering group and to share expertise we have been able to develop.

If required further advice can be sought within UKHO from Head of National & International Relations, Mrs Liz Dunn (email: Elizabeth.dunn@ukho.gov.uk)