



**IHB File No.S3/3055**

**CIRCULAR LETTER 43/2006  
29 May 2006**

**81<sup>st</sup> SESSION OF THE IMO MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE**

Dear Hydrographer,

1. The 81<sup>st</sup> session of the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) of the IMO was held at the IMO's London Headquarters from 10 - 19 May 2006.

2. The MSC considered the report of the 51<sup>st</sup> session of the Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation (NAV 51), document NAV 51/19. MSC took, inter alia, the following actions which will be of interest to Member States:

- Adopted the routing measures proposed by NAV with the exception of the TSS for 7 Colombian Ports and "Areas to be Avoided" (ATBA) in the Gulf of Morrosquillo which were withdrawn by Colombia before adoption;
- Endorsed the amendment to the footnote to subparagraph 2.1.5 of SOLAS regulation V/19 regarding the definition of the term "appropriate portfolio of up-to-date paper charts";
- Approved the draft MSC resolution on the proposed amendments to the 2000 HSC Code, chapter 13 to implement a phased possible carriage requirement for ECDIS for High Speed Craft. This will now go to MSC 82 for adoption. The text of the MSC resolution is at annex 9 to document NAV 51/19;
- Invited Member States to consider and consult with relevant hydrographic authorities on which paper charts would meet the "appropriate folio of up-to-date charts" criteria in waters under their jurisdiction and communicate this information to the IHO for inclusion in the online chart catalogue; and
- Approved the draft Assembly resolution on draft Guidelines on voyage planning for passenger ships operating in remote areas for submission to the 25<sup>th</sup> session of the Assembly for adoption;

3. Under the Agenda Item on Safety of Navigation the IHO introduced two submissions:

- MSC 81/INF.3 "Release of official Malacca and Singapore Straits Electronic Navigational Charts (MSS ENC)". This document was well received and the Director of

IMO's Maritime Safety Division expressed his view that this was a good model for co-operation between Member States. He also expressed his hope that the Marine Electronic Highway Project for the Malacca and Singapore Straits would get underway during 2006; and

- MSC 81/10/1 "Ships' Routing Systems". The 4 actions which IHO requested of the Committee were agreed. An amended MSC/Circ.1060 will be issued including the revised text of sub-paragraph 3.4.2.3 as follows: "*adequacy of the state of hydrographic surveys and nautical charts in the area of the proposed routing system. Governments, who do not have the necessary hydrographic information, may, at a very early stage in the formulation of the routing system, seek the assistance of the IHO in obtaining such information*";

4. The MSC considered urgent matters emanating from the 10<sup>th</sup> session of the Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications and Search and Rescue (COMSAR 10), document COMSAR 10/16. MSC took, inter alia, the following action which will be of interest to MS:

- Considered the proposed amendments to resolution A.888(21), "Criteria for the provision of mobile satellite communication systems in the global maritime distress and safety system (GMDSS)". The major issues debated were: the validity of the International Mobile Satellite Organization (IMSO) both selecting alternative service providers and providing the subsequent oversight action; and the legal liabilities of IMO and IMSO Member States. It was noted that any revised resolution could not be adopted until the 25<sup>th</sup> Assembly in December 2007 and therefore agreed to reconsider the revision of resolution A.888(21) at MSC 82 in November / December 2006 on the basis of further comments / proposals from Member States and legal advice.

5. Under the Agenda Item on new Work Programme Items the MSC considered the following documents and took the actions indicated:

- Document MSC 81/23/10 "Development of an E-Navigation strategy". This paper submitted by 7 IMO Member States, was supported by several other IMO MS, the IHO and other International Organizations. The MSC decided to put this on the Work Programme and Agenda of the NAV Sub-Committee. This will be given preliminary consideration at NAV 52 in July 2006 and then be considered further at NAV 53 and NAV 54 in 2007 / 2008 respectively prior to NAV reporting back to MSC in late 2008. This work programme item is to develop a strategy and will not go into technical details which will be considered at a later date. The widespread availability of ENC's will be a critical consideration in any discussion of an E-Navigation strategy.
- Document MSC 81/23/13 "Proposal for a new work programme item for the NAV Sub-Committee on carriage requirements for ECDIS, and for the Sub-Committee on Standards of Training and Watchkeeping (STW) on ECDIS training and familiarization". Whilst considering this matter the Committee also considered document MSC 81 INF.9 "FSA study into ECDIS". The only objection raised to the FSA was that it was based on their being full ENC availability which clearly was not yet the case. The IHO commented that ENC availability had, and would continue, to increase significantly. Australia stated that they had brought the date for full ENC coverage of Australian waters forward from 2019 to 2009. The Committee decided to put this item on the work programmes and Agendas of NAV and STW. As with the case of an "E-navigation strategy" this will be given a preliminary consideration at NAV 52 and further consideration at NAV 53 and 54 with a report going back to the MSC in late 2008.

6. Under Any Other Business the IHO introduced document MSC 84/24/4 "IMO Voluntary Member State Audit Scheme". The Committee also considered document MSC 81/24/1 by IALA on the same subject. Both papers were well received and the Committee

decided to pass these to the Sub-Committee on Flag State Implementation (FSI) and to NAV to determine the best method of incorporating the guidance into / amending IMO resolution A.974(24). The recommendations of FSI and NAV will then be considered at MSC 82 with a view to forwarding it to the Assembly for adoption.

7. During Any Other Business the IHO made a statement on World Hydrography Day the text of which is at Annex A.

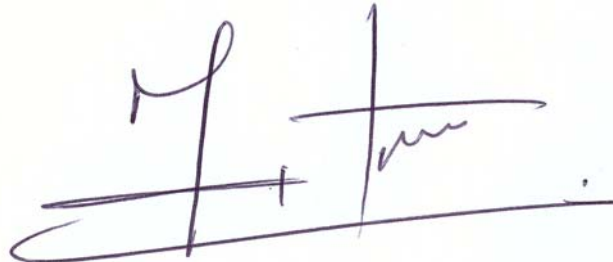
8. The opportunity was taken to hold discussions with the IMO secretariat and IALA regarding progress with the action plan agreed following the December 2004 tsunami disaster in the Indian Ocean. It is anticipated that the IMO will provide some funding from the IMO Tsunami Relief Fund to the IHO for the procurement of surveying equipment for Sri Lanka as discussed at the 6<sup>th</sup> meeting of the NIOHC. Further information on this matter will be passed to Member States when it is available.

9. All the above mentioned documents are available from the IHO website ([www.iho.int](http://www.iho.int) > INT Organizations > IMO). The final report of MSC 81 will also be placed on the web site as soon as it is released by IMO.

10. The 82<sup>nd</sup> session of the Maritime Safety Committee, from 29 November to 8 December 2006, will be held in Istanbul, Turkey. This is due to the refurbishment of the IMO HQ building in London during the period July 2006 to July 2007. The 83<sup>rd</sup> session of the MSC which would normally be held in May 2007 is tentatively programmed for October 2007 when the IMO HQ building should be available.

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

Annex A: World Hydrography Day Statement

**Statement to the 81<sup>st</sup> Session of the Maritime Safety Committee by the International Hydrographic Organization**

Mr Chairman, the International Hydrographic Organization is pleased to have this opportunity to inform the Committee that the IHO will this year, for the first time, be celebrating “World Hydrography Day” on the 21 June, the date that the IHB was established in 1921. The United Nations General Assembly, on 29 November 2005, under its Agenda item on the Oceans and the law of the sea adopted Resolution A/60/30. This resolution includes the statement, “The UN GA ....welcomes the adoption by the International Hydrographic Organization of the “World Hydrography Day”, to be celebrated annually on 21 June, with the aim of giving suitable publicity to its work at all levels and of increasing the coverage of hydrographic information on a global basis, and urges all States to work with that organization to promote safe navigation, especially in the areas of international navigation, ports and where there are vulnerable or protected marine areas”.

World Hydrography Day will be celebrated nationally by Hydrographic Offices around the world and internationally by the IHB in Monaco. The theme for this first celebration will be “85 years of the IHO contributing to worldwide safety to navigation”.