



THIS CIRCULAR LETTER REQUIRES YOU TO VOTE

IHB File S3/8151/CHRIS

CIRCULAR LETTER 30/2007  
12 March 2007

PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES  
for  
MAKING CHANGES TO IHO TECHNICAL STANDARDS AND SPECIFICATIONS

- References: a) IHB Circular Letter 54/2002, dated 18 November 2002  
b) IHB Circular Letter 11/2007, dated 30 January 2007

Dear Hydrographer,

The Circular Letter in reference a) included, in its Annex B, *Principles and a Set of Procedures for making Changes to IHO Standards*, which had been developed by CHRIS at its 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting (Athens, Greece, September 2001). Reference a) proposed that those principles and procedures be adopted as a new IHO Technical Resolution, to make the updating of IHO standards uniform within the Organization. However, the proposal failed to obtain the required number of positive votes from Member States.

The matter was raised again at the 10<sup>th</sup> WEND meeting (Monaco, September 2006) where it was agreed to invite CHRIS to review its principles and procedures for making changes to IHO standards, so that the IHB could then draft a proposal to the 17<sup>th</sup> IHC, [see reference b)]. This review was done at the 18<sup>th</sup> CHRIS meeting (Cairns, Australia, September 2006), where improvements to the initial text were made with, in particular, the addition of the typical life cycle of an IHO standard.

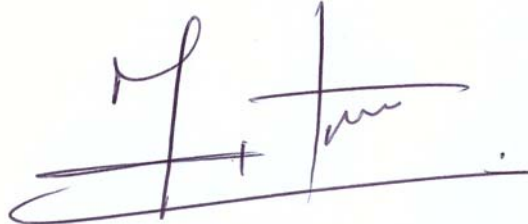
The revised *Principles and Procedures for making Changes to IHO Technical Standards and Specifications* are provided in **Annex A**.

The term “relevant IHO bodies” will apply to all IHO organs which are responsible for IHO standards and specifications under the current IHO structure; i.e. CHRIS, S-44 WG, Tidal Committee etc. In the proposed future IHO structure, they will apply to the Hydrographic Services and Standards Committee (HSSC). Footnotes have been included in the draft text to reflect this.

It is proposed that these principles and procedures be adopted as a new IHO Technical Resolution A1.21. As the deadline for making proposals to the 17<sup>th</sup> IHC has passed, the matter is being addressed by Circular Letter. Member States are requested to complete the voting paper at Annex B, to be returned to the IHB by 31 May 2007.

On behalf of the Directing Committee

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, consisting of a large, stylized 'M' followed by a horizontal line and a vertical line, with a flourish underneath.

Vice Admiral Alexandros MARATOS  
President

Encls:

Annex A: Principles and Procedures for making changes to IHO Technical Standards and Specifications

Annex B: Voting Paper on the proposed IHO Technical Resolution A1.21

**PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES**  
**for**  
**MAKING CHANGES TO IHO TECHNICAL STANDARDS AND SPECIFICATIONS**

**History**

These principles and procedures are derived from those agreed at the 18<sup>th</sup> meeting of CHRIS in Cairns, Australia 26-29 September 2006. The latter superseded those developed at the 13<sup>th</sup> meeting of CHRIS in Athens, September 2001 and revised at the 15<sup>th</sup> meeting of CHRIS in Monaco in June 2003.

**Scope**

These principles and procedures are intended to be applied to all proposals for changes to IHO technical standards and specifications and for new work items that will require significant resources to resolve or will potentially impact on those who need to apply the standards and specifications.

These procedures are not intended to be applied to minor or technical issues that arise from the work of IHO subordinate bodies<sup>1</sup>, or for the correction of identified problems or for clarification of elements of the standards themselves.

Any reference to “standards” in these principles and procedures also includes specifications and guidelines as appropriate.

**Principles**

Improvements to technical standards can only occur by change. However, significant change can lead to problems such as incompatibility between systems, high updating costs, market monopoly, dissatisfied users, or increased risks to safety of navigation. These guiding principles have been developed to avoid these circumstances.

1. Before approval is granted, any proposed changes to existing standards should be assessed from a technical and commercial perspective, also taking into account any other relevant factors.
2. Where possible, assessment should involve all relevant parties such as international organisations, maritime administrations, equipment manufacturers, data distributors, users and other professional organisations.
3. As far as practicable, any change to standards or systems should be "backwards compatible", or the existing version must be supported for a specified time.
4. If changes are required for the basis of product enhancement rather than for safety of navigation, then the previously approved system must be allowed to continue to be used at sea for a sufficient time to allow changes to be implemented on board.
5. If not already specified by external or higher IHO authority, the timeline for making changes should be defined.
6. In exceptional cases (for example, those affecting safety of navigation), it may be necessary to make recommendations for immediate change to standards and systems to the relevant authorities. This may be achieved through shortening the normal time frames for submission and consideration of proposals.

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<sup>1</sup> “IHO subordinate bodies” to be replaced by “HSSC and its subordinate bodies” after the HSSC has been established

7. The principles of a recognised project management system should be followed.
8. All interested parties should be encouraged to continuously improve IHO technical standards. Constructive feedback should therefore be provided for all rejected proposals.

## Procedures

These procedures are recommended to ensure that any proposed changes are properly assessed and implemented. These procedures should remain simple to encourage their use.

The life cycle of a typical standard is illustrated in Annex A.

1. The relevant IHO body<sup>2</sup> will consider proposals at its meetings.
  - The relevant IHO body<sup>3</sup> will consider the impact on relevant stakeholders in assessing the proposal and planning any subsequent work. Relevant stakeholders may include representation from international organisations, maritime administrations, non governmental international organisations, equipment manufacturers, data distributors and other users of the standard.
  - If rejected, feedback will be provided to the proposal originator giving the reasons for rejection.
2. After endorsing proposals, and establishing a work priority, the relevant IHO body<sup>4</sup> will forward proposals to the IHB for necessary action including incorporation into the relevant IHO work programs.
3. Relevant stakeholders should be notified by the IHB of the timetable for new work items and be invited to comment and participate as appropriate. The notification should include a summary forecast of:
  - the potential changes,
  - the documents affected,
  - the likely action list for relevant stakeholders,
  - the timetable for implementation, and
  - the proposed effective date of the new or revised standard.
4. Relevant IHO bodies<sup>5</sup> should provide progress reports on a regular basis and after each milestone during the development and testing phases. These should be made available to stakeholders by the IHB.
5. At the end of the development and testing phases the relevant IHO body<sup>6</sup> will review the standard. If endorsed, a “change note” should be forwarded to relevant stakeholders. The “change note” will provide:
  - a summary of changes,
  - the documents affected,

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2 “relevant IHO body” to be replaced by “HSSC” after the HSSC has been established.

3 “relevant IHO body” to be replaced by “HSSC” after the HSSC has been established.

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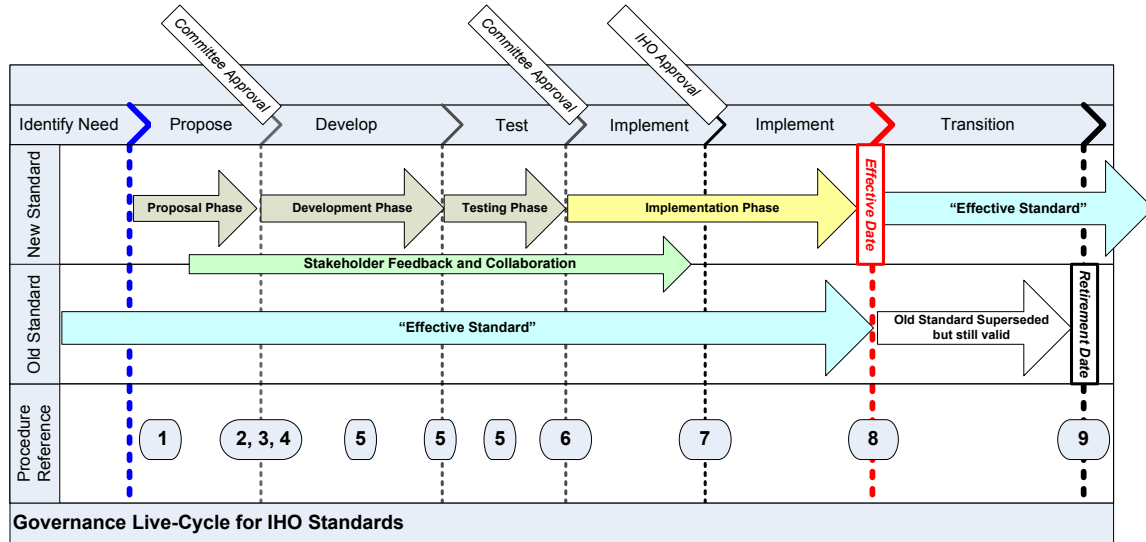
5 “Relevant IHO bodies” to be replaced by “HSSC” after the HSSC has been established

6 “relevant IHO body” to be replaced by “HSSC” after the HSSC has been established

- a recommended action list ,
  - the timetable for implementation, and
  - the proposed effective date of the new or revised standard.
6. Following an adequate period for comment on the "*change note*", and incorporation of any relevant feedback, the revised standards should be submitted to Member States by the IHB for approval of the content, and confirmation of the "*effective date*".
  7. At the "*effective date*", the revised standard becomes the effective standard. The "*superseded*" standard will usually remain available concurrently with the revised standard for a suitable transition period.
  8. A "*superseded*" standard may be "*retired*" as an available standard when it is no longer appropriate for use, subject to Member State approval.

Annex to Principles and Procedures for Making Changes to IHO Technical Standards

**Typical Lifecycle of an IHO Standard**



**VOTING PAPER**

*(to be returned to the IHB by 31 May 2007  
E-mail: [info@ihb.mc](mailto:info@ihb.mc) - Fax: +377 93 10 81 40)*

**PRINCIPLES AND PROCEDURES  
for  
MAKING CHANGES TO IHO TECHNICAL STANDARDS AND SPECIFICATIONS**

**Member State:** .....

Do you agree that the 'Principles and Procedures for making Changes to IHO Technical Standards and Specifications', as contained in Annex A to IHB CL 30/2007, be made a new IHO Technical Resolution A1.21?

YES

NO

Comments: .....  
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Name/Signature .....

Date: .....