



IHB File No. S3/8151/CHRIS

**CIRCULAR LETTER 31/2008
28 March 2008**

**CLARIFICATION OF THE TERM "INLAND WATERS"
IN RELATION TO THE HYDROGRAPHY AND CARTOGRAPHY OF INLAND WATERS
WORKING GROUP (HCIWWG)**

Reference A: CL62/2007 dated 10 July - Establishment of Working Groups on Hydrography and Cartography on Inland Waters and on Hydrographic Community Inputs to National Spatial Data Infrastructures.

Dear Hydrographer,

1. Reference A announced the establishment of a Working Group to analyse and recommend the level and nature of IHO involvement in the hydrography and cartography of inland waterways. The Working Group is presently undertaking its work.
2. In the meantime, the Directing Committee has become aware that the translation of the English term "inland waters" in the French and Spanish versions of Circular Letter 62/2007 and relevant HCIWWG documentation may have introduced ambiguity concerning whether the term "inland waters" was meant to refer in particular to any of the various non-IHO definitions that are in use in some States or in various international codes or statutes such as UNCLOS. These definitions vary widely and range from "waters not connected to the sea" to "waters landward of the baselines which are established in accordance with international law". There is presently no definition for "inland waters" in the IHO Hydrographic Dictionary.
3. For the purposes of the work of the HCIWWG, the use of the English term "inland waters" is intended to refer to all those navigable areas of water, such as rivers and lakes, and upon which vessels need to navigate and for which nautical hydrography and cartography may therefore be required. One of the outcomes of the HCIWWG Report will undoubtedly assist in providing an appropriate definition for the IHO to adopt in the future.

On behalf of the Directing Committee
Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Robert Ward', is written over a white background.

Captain Robert WARD
Director