



IHB File N° CBC-1

CIRCULAR LETTER 51/2008
18 June 2008

REPORT ON DECISION N° 17 OF THE XVIIth INTERNATIONAL
HYDROGRAPHIC CONFERENCE

“Provision of Regional Staff Officers for Capacity Building Effort”

Dear Hydrographer,

1. As you are aware, the XVIIth International Hydrographic Conference adopted PRO 18 - “Provision of Regional Staff Officers for Capacity Building Effort” by Conference Decision N° 17 which reads as follow:

*“ The Conference agreed to ask the CBC, **in consultation with RHCs**, to consider the part-time allocation of personnel to act as Regional Staff Officers to assist those Chairmen of Regional Hydrographic Commissions (RHCs) who have limited human resources with which to sustain the capacity building effort in their regions. It is suggested that the priorities for provision of such a post should be EAHC, MACHC, NIOHC, SAIHC and SWPHC.”*

2. This matter was discussed at the 5th Capacity Building Committee meeting and the CBC Chairman was tasked to study the XVII I.H. Conference Decision as regards Proposal 18 and provide CBC Members with some recommendations as to how the subject could be handled. The CBC Chairman issued a letter providing background information on the subject, some recommendations concerning the way forward, seeking the Members’ views and position with regard to a proposal to be submitted to the IHO - to insert a 2bis under Administrative Resolution T1.3 ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSIONS (RHC), with the following wording:

2 bis.- RHCs are recommended to establish an internal body to deal with CB matters and to designate a focal point to ensure continuity in the CB process. This part-time allocation to assist RHCs should come primarily and ideally from an HO within the region. If that is not possible then the RHC might agree to request support to a neighbouring RHC that might wish to take that responsibility in the provision of assistance. These regional contact points, the responsibilities of which should be given directly and in detail by the concerned RHC, shall have the support of the RHCs; shall be nominated having in mind the importance of continuity; shall be in permanent contact with the corresponding RHC Chairman as well as with the CBC Chairman. Ideally should be a CBC member with access to the RHCs meetings. In the absence of any other viable alternative and despite its limited human resources availability a request of support could be requested to the IHB.

3. The CBC Members widely supported this proposal and the CBC Chairman then sent a letter, on 23 January 2008, to all RHC Chairmen seeking their comments on this proposal to insert a 2bis under AR T 1.3. before consulting all the Member States. The replies received from the RHC are provided in Annex A.

4. The replies received generally support the proposal with some suggestions to improve the wording; one response does not support the proposal and the grounds for this position can be summarized as follows:

- It does not encompass the diversity of the RHC situation and the capacity building mechanism;
- Places an additional burden on all RHCs;

- The matter can be considered on a case by case basis following the principles outlined in the existing 1.3 of TR K2.6 ;
- There are five out of fourteen RHCs which require sustained capacity building efforts;
- The situation varies immensely within the five targeted RHCs;
- Each RHC should consider and implement a mechanism that fits its specific situation.

5. The CBC Chairman submitted the replies to the 6th CBC Meeting for consideration in May 2008. Following lengthy discussions the CBC unanimously agreed to a more flexible text that broadly takes into account the comments received from the RHCs.

The final agreed text reads as follows:

2 bis.- Where Capacity Building is required in a region, RHCs are recommended to establish an internal body to deal with CB matters and to designate a focal point to ensure continuity in the CB process. This part-time allocation to assist RHCs should come primarily and ideally from an HO within the region. If that is not possible then the RHC might agree to request support from another RHC or an HO that might wish to take that responsibility.

These regional contact points, the responsibilities of which should be given directly and in detail by the RHC concerned, shall have the support of the RHCs; shall be nominated having in mind the importance of continuity; shall be in permanent contact with the corresponding RHC Chairman as well as with the CBC Chairman. Ideally should be a CBC member with access to RHC meetings.

In the absence of any other viable alternative and despite its limited human resources availability a request of support could be requested to the IHB.

The CBC also agreed to request the IHB to submit this proposal to the IHO Member States for approval.

6. The IHB therefore invites Member States to express their views with regard to the proposed new paragraph 2 bis that, if approved, will be inserted under A.R. T 1.3. We would appreciate receiving your position by **20 August 2008**. The Voting Paper is provided in Annex B.

On behalf of the Directing Committee
Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be 'Hugo Gorziglia', written in a cursive style.

Captain Hugo GORZIGLIA
Director

Encls: - Annex A - Replies from RHC
- Annex B - Voting Form

REPLIES RECEIVED FROM REGIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC
COMMISSIONS (RHC)

a) **Nordic Hydrographic Commission (NHC)**

No reply.

b) **North Sea Hydrographic Commission (NSHC)**

No reply.

c) **East Asia Hydrographic Commission (EAHC)**

"The EAHC recognizes the importance of capacity building both nationally and as a region. Hence at the 9th EAHC Conference in September 2006, the EAHC established a permanent committee to address the issues of capacity building for the Commission. The Commission agreed that the Chair of the EAHC would also Chair the EAHC CBC.

As such, the EAHC supports the IHO CBC proposal as stated in para. IV of your letter. As the EAHC has already established its CBC, we propose that the IHO CBC liaise with the EAHC CBC as the regional contact point."

d) **US-Canada Hydrographic Commission (USCHC)**

No reply.

e) **Mediterranean and Black Seas Hydrographic Commission (MBSHC)**

" I strongly believe that the initiative you propose would enhance reflecting the needs for CB support in every RHC and would present a great support to every RHC Chairman in fulfilling his task, especially for those who lack human resources and where diversity of hydrographic capabilities exists and imposes experienced and adequate staff to deal with, the MBSHC for instance. Therefore I fully support this initiative."

f) **Baltic Sea Hydrographic Commission (BSHC)**

No reply.

g) **Eastern Atlantic Hydrographic Commission (EAHC)**

"Spain supports the idea of establishing mechanisms to facilitate the work of RHC Chairmen when dealing with CB issues. But it is our opinion that such a decision should be taken inside each RC in such a way that those RCs, who really think that nominating specific staff to deal with CB subjects can improve the situation in their respective RC, should be enabled to do so.

But maybe different RCs choose to work in a different way, in which their current Chairman is engaged with dealing with this topic and they are able to deal at the same time with other subjects in their role of RC Chairmen.

One important aspect in this subject is continuity. With the new Convention of the IHO, RHC Chairmen will be changing more frequently in the future, so it is easier to endorse specific staff to work on CBC issues that should have enough continuity in their position. Given their better knowledge of the problem in their region will probably help bringing forward projects to improve the development of Hydrography within their regions.

Therefore, Spain supports the proposal to insert a 2bis point under the Admin. Resolution T1.3 of the IHO, according to the text that appears in Paragraph IV of your letter dated on the 23rd January 2008."

h) **South East Pacific Hydrographic Commission (SEPHC)**

"The SEPHC shall have a focal point to deal with CB matters, ensuring continuity. This matter will be discussed at the next SEPHC Meeting in May 2008. It might also be convenient that each SEPHC country considers nominating a national focal point aiming at coordinating the

regional position with regard to CB matters. This shall also be discussed. It is necessary to request resources from the CBC to have the RHC representative attending the CBC meetings.

It is shared the proposal to have the RHC focal point attending the RHC meetings. After these comments, the SEPHC agrees to include the new paragraph 2bis to the AR T1.3 as proposed."

i) South West Pacific Hydrographic Commission (SWPHC)

"I have carefully reviewed your proposal to insert a provision about CBC management in Technical Resolution (TR) T1.3 dealing with the establishment of Regional Hydrographic Commissions, as Chair of the South West Pacific Hydrographic Commission.

Although I agree with most of the considerations outlined in your letter, I do not support your proposal because I do not think that it encompasses the diversity of RHC situations and capacity building mechanisms. Instead of an additional requirement placed on all RHCs through an amendment to TR T1.3, my suggestion would be to implement Decision 17 of the XVIIth International Hydrographic Conference on a case by case basis, following the principles outlined in existing clause 1.3 of TR K2.6 about the Capacity Building Committee.

More specifically, as noted in your letter, there are five out of fourteen RHCs which require sustained capacity building efforts. I do not think that the approach to their specific situations would adequately fit "more-developed" RHCs such as the Baltic Sea Hydrographic Commission, the Nordic Hydrographic Commission, the North Sea Hydrographic Commission or the US-Canada Hydrographic Commission. Although I acknowledge the important role that IHO Member States in these regions play, or should play, in providing assistance to other regions, it should be recognized that the coordination of various national, bilateral and multilateral assistance mechanisms is more efficient through the Capacity Building Committee than through individual "more-developed" RHCs.

On the other hand, it should be recognized that the situation varies immensely among the five targeted RHCs, depending on specific geographic and political conditions and on the number and situation of IHO Member States in each RHC. As a consequence, each RHC should be encouraged to consider and implement whatever the most appropriate capacity building mechanism that fits its specific situation. In that respect, for example, requesting assistance from a neighbouring RHC may be inapplicable in some regions.

I support your continuous effort to promote capacity building and its importance for the IHO and I remain at your disposal for any additional clarification."

j) Meso-American-Caribbean Sea Hydrographic Commission (MACHC)

No reply.

k) Southern Africa and Islands Hydrographic Commission (SAIHC)

" The original proposal as presented to the XVII International Hydrographic Conference was supported and welcomed by South Africa. The Southern Africa and Islands Hydrographic Commission (SAIHC) has indeed very limited resources to manage the Capacity Building process and over the last couple of years it was really an over-and-above function of the Chair of SAIHC to steer the process within the RHC. I therefore fully support the proposal that the Capacity Building process be formalised within Resolution T1.3.

I do however feel that the text of the second sentence should be changed to read as follows; "This part-time allocation to assist RHCs should come from the members of the RHC and ideally, but not necessarily, from an HO within the region". The reason for this subtle change is that the majority of the RHCs requiring assistance consist of limited in-region members and more associate members and the member HOs that are not within the region are those with the spare capacity. I do not agree that a neighbouring RHC should be requested to provide assistance and therefore would suggest that the last sentence of the first paragraph be deleted."

l) ROPME Sea Area Hydrographic Commission (RSAHC)

"The proposed amendment in Admin. Resolution T1.3 regarding "Establishment of Regional Hydrographic Commission" is supported. However, if CB contact point is from neighbouring

RHC, then he/she should have access to the respective RHCs meeting which he/she is representing.”

m) North Indian Ocean Hydrographic Commission (NIOHC)

“As Chair of NIOHC, I support the proposal to include an additional paragraph 2 bis in the Administrative Resolution T1.3. I will provide any comments on the proposed wording in UK’s response to the IHB when they seek Member States’ views. I am planning to raise the matter of regional staff officers during the forthcoming meeting of the NIOHC. ”

n) South West Atlantic Hydrographic Commission (SWAtHC)

“ The SWAtHC Chairman agrees with your proposal to submit to IHO Member States a revision of Adm. Resolution T1.3 in order to foresee RHCs persons nominated to function as a Capacity Building Manager and as a link with IHO CBC.”

"PROVISION OF REGIONAL STAFF OFFICERS FOR CAPACITY BUILDING EFFORT"

Proposed insertion of 2bis under A.R. T1.3

VOTING FORM

(to be returned to the IHB by 20 August 2008

E-mail: info@ihb.mc - Fax: +377 93 10 81 40)

Member State:

Contact:..... **E-mail:**

Do you approve the insertion of the following paragraph 2bis under A.R. T1.3 - ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSIONS (RHC)?

2 bis.- Where Capacity Building is required in a region, RHCs are recommended to establish an internal body to deal with Capacity Building matters and to designate a focal point to ensure continuity in the CB process. This part-time allocation to assist RHCs should come primarily and ideally from an HO within the region. If that is not possible then the RHC might agree to request support from another RHC or an HO that might wish to take that responsibility.

These regional contact points, the responsibilities of which should be given directly and in detail by the RHC concerned, shall have the support of the RHCs; shall be nominated having in mind the importance of continuity; shall be in permanent contact with the corresponding RHC Chairman as well as with the CBC Chairman. Ideally should be a CBC member with access to RHC meetings.

In the absence of any other viable alternative and despite its limited human resources availability a request of support could be requested to the IHB.

YES

NO

Comments:.....

.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....
.....

Name/Signature:

Date: