

**INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC
ORGANIZATION**



**ORGANISATION HYDROGRAPHIQUE
INTERNATIONALE**

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**CIRCULAR LETTER 85/2008
29 October 2008**

REVIEW OF IHO TECHNICAL RESOLUTIONS BY THE GEBCO GUIDING COMMITTEE (GGC)

Reference: IHB CL 62/2008 dated 24 July

Dear Hydrographer,

1 The IHB would like to thank the following 41 Member States who replied to the Reference: Algeria, Argentina, Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, Colombia, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Iceland, India, Italy, Korea Rep of, Monaco, Morocco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Poland, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Tunisia, UK, USA and Uruguay. All replies supported the proposed revised Technical Resolutions.

2 Canada, France, Guatemala, Pakistan and Sweden commented or proposed amendments to the text and these are given at Annex A together with the actions taken by the IHB. The final text, including the corrections made to the Circular Letter at the reference, is at Annex B. These will be included in the next revision of Publication M-3.

On behalf of the Directing Committee
Yours sincerely,

Captain Hugo GORZIGLIA
Director

Canada:

A4.3 bullet a: amend to read ...Features” shown on (or which might be added to) GEBCO...

Comment by IHB: This typographical error has been corrected. (Only applies to the English text.)

A5.1 section 5: replace “take” with “collect” for consistency with the remainder of the document – soundings and bathymetry are “collected”

Comment by IHB. This change has been made.

France:

A5.1 and A 5.2 delete the references to resolution A1.5 at the foot of these resolutions.

Comment by IHB: It is agreed that these are no longer valid references given the new text and have been deleted.

France also proposed some changes to the French text of resolutions A5.1, A5.2 and A5.3 and these have been incorporated into the French version.

Guatemala:

Guatemala proposed some editorial corrections to the Spanish text of resolutions A5.1, A5.2 and A5.3 and these have been incorporated into the Spanish text.

A5.2 In the first paragraph the reference to position fixing has been deleted without inclusion elsewhere.

Comment by IHB: It is considered that this aspect is covered by A5.3 paragraph 1 where positional information is included in the data required by IHO Publication B-7.

Pakistan:

A5.1 Agreed, however areas which are critical and have not been ensonified yet, be prioritised for collection of sounding data through ship’s fitted with MBES / SBES rather than keeping it a general requirement for the merchant ships.

Comment by IHB: This Technical Resolution is aimed at “surveys of ocean areas beyond continental shelves” as set out in paragraph 1 which also encourages Member States to include such surveys in their programmes which of course should be prioritised. The words “and priorities” have been added at the end of A5.1 paragraph 3. Paragraph 5 seeks the collection of data by all available ships.

Sweden:

A5.1 The text “Sound velocity calibration in accordance with” in the 1st para is limiting and not needed. Missing reference to S-44.

Comment by the IHB: It is believed this refers to the 5th paragraph. Sound Velocity information is important and details must be provided with the data. The reference is made to

M-13 rather than S-44 because the resolution refers to “oceanic” soundings whereas S-44 is aimed specifically at navigational charts for the safety of “surface” navigation.

A5.2 The heading is obsolete. Propose “Data Attribution” It could be considered to replace the text (all) with a single reference to S-44, chapter 5.

Comment by the IHB: It is agreed that this title is obsolete given that the first sentence states “exchanged mainly in digital form”. However the reference to S-44 is not agreed for the reasons provided under A5.1 above. Given the title of A5.1 “Collecting Oceanic Soundings” and A5.3 “Centralization of Oceanic Soundings”, the IHB has amended the title to “Metadata for Oceanic Soundings”

A5.3 Should be examined the next time the S-44 is updated.

Comment by IHB: See comment under A5.1 above.

A4.3 NAMING OF UNDERSEA FEATURES

1.- It is agreed that Member States should strongly encourage marine scientists and other persons in their country wishing to name undersea features to:

- a) check their proposals with published Gazetteers of Undersea Feature Names, including the IHO/IOC publication B-8, "Gazetteer of Geographical Names of Undersea Features" shown on (or which might be added to) GEBCO graphical and digital products, on the IHO small scale International Chart Series and on the - Regional International Bathymetric Chart Series;
- b) take into account the guidelines contained in the IHO/IOC publication B-6 "Standardization of Undersea Feature Names", including the use of the Undersea Feature Name Proposal Form contained therein;
- c) submit all proposed new names for clearance either to their appropriate national authority or, where no such national authority exists, to the IHB or IOC for consideration by the GEBCO Sub-Committee on Undersea Feature Names, which may advise on any potential confusing duplication of names.

2.- It is agreed that Member States invite publishers of ocean maps and editors of scientific journals in their country to require compilers and authors to provide written evidence of such clearance before accepting for publication any maps or scientific articles containing new names for undersea features.

A5.1 COLLECTING OCEANIC SOUNDINGS

1.- It is strongly recommended that Hydrographic Offices include in their programmes regular and systematic surveys of ocean areas beyond the continental shelves.

2.- It is recommended that when Hydrographic Offices plan oceanic surveys they attach sufficient importance to obtaining data which will be useful not only for navigation purposes but also for promoting knowledge of the morphology of the sea floor.

3.- It is recommended that Hydrographic Offices interested in the same oceanic areas arrive at an understanding among themselves regarding a suitable division of their zones of activity and priorities.

4.- It is recommended that, as concerns oceanic soundings, Hydrographic Offices work in close cooperation with the oceanographic bodies of their respective countries and use a standard procedure for recording data.

5.- It is recommended that ships fitted with MBES or SBES be requested to collect bathymetric soundings and communicate the results of such soundings to the Hydrographic Offices of their respective countries with all information required to enable their accuracy to be estimated. The use of sound velocity calibration in accordance with the guidance set out in the IHO Manual on Hydrography (M-13) is recommended.

6.- It is recommended that newly-discovered topographic undersea features should be properly mapped and named following the "Standardization of Undersea Feature Names" IHO-IOC Publication B-6.

A5.2 METADATA FOR OCEANIC SOUNDINGS

1.- It is resolved that oceanic soundings, together with the metadata and potential additional supplementary information, shall be collected and exchanged mainly in digital form.

Metadata should comprise at least information on:

- the survey in general as e.g. date, area, equipment used, name of survey platform;
- the geodetic reference system used, i.e. horizontal and vertical datum; including ties to WGS 84 if a local datum is used;
- calibration procedures and results;
- sound velocity;
- positioning information e.g. GPS, RT-DGPS, GLONASS, GALILEO
- tidal datum and reduction (if applicable); and
- accuracies achieved and the respective confidence levels.

A5.3 CENTRALIZATION OF OCEANIC SOUNDINGS

1.- Full details of the information required to accompany data, and the criteria for its quality control, are contained in the GEBCO Guidelines (IHO Publication B-7).

2.- Data Storage and exchange of data.

Member States are requested to remind institutions and organizations within their own country of the desirability of collecting bathymetric data, whenever possible, in the course of oceanographic missions.

It is recommended that Member States inform the IHB of any details concerning recent bathymetric data collected by themselves or by other national institutions and organizations, about which they may have been notified. The standard format below should be used for this purpose:

- a) Country of origin.
- b) Institution or authority responsible for the mission.
- c) Name of vessel which carried out the soundings.
- d) Date (month and year).
- e) Location (general sea area or significant points along track).
- f) Terms under which data may be obtained (address for requests, method of ordering, price , or whether free on a mutual data exchange basis, etc.).

The IHB will issue an annual CL requesting such information.

All bathymetric data collected should be forwarded by HOs to the IHO Data Centre for Digital Bathymetry (DCDB). Any format convenient to the individual HO may be used; but the data must be accompanied by comprehensive format documentation and metadata. The IHO DCDB should be notified of digital data that have been found to be in error; if possible, a corrected version should be submitted as well.

3.- Information concerning Recent Bathymetric Data IHO Publication B-4

At the beginning of each calendar year, the IHB shall make available an updated version of the online publication B-4 showing all bathymetric data received during the preceding year. These data will be available for download from the IHO DCDB in several digital formats, which include MGD 77, HYD 93 and delimited xyz ASCII.