



IHB File N° S1/5065

CIRCULAR LETTER 16/2011  
11 February 2011

**PROPOSED MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN  
THE INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC ORGANIZATION AND  
THE SECRETARIAT OF THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY**

Dear Hydrographer,

- 1 The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC) assists the States of the Pacific region by delivering a wide range of technical, research, educational and planning services to its 26 Members: American Samoa, Australia, Cook Islands, Federated States of Micronesia, Fiji Islands, France, French Polynesia, Guam, Kiribati, Marshall Islands, Nauru, New Caledonia, New Zealand, Niue, Northern Mariana Islands, Palau, Papua New Guinea, Pitcairn Islands, Samoa, Solomon Islands, Tokelau, Tonga, Tuvalu, United States of America, Vanuatu and Wallis and Futuna.
- 2 Establishing closer ties with the SPC has been a goal of the South West Pacific Hydrographic Commission (SWPHC) for some time. One of the actions from the 10th meeting of the SWPHC, held in the Solomon Islands in November 2010, is to pursue the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) between the IHO and the SPC. Such an MoU will provide a useful mechanism under which the aims, roles and mechanisms for improving regional hydrographic capability are described. In particular, the MoU would signify the acknowledgment of the importance of hydrography and nautical charting at regional governmental levels and provide a single, high-level point of reference for any practical initiatives that would follow.
- 3 Following recent discussions between the Director-General of SPC and the Directing Committee, a proposed text of a Memorandum of Understanding between the IHO and the SPC has been drawn up. It is shown at Annex A.
- 4 Subject to any comments received from IHO Member States and to the subsequent agreement of Member States of SPC, the President of the Directing Committee will sign the Memorandum on behalf of the IHO towards the end of 2011.
- 5 You are kindly requested to review this proposed text at Annex A and to provide your comments, if any, to the IHB by **31 March 2011**.

On behalf of the Directing Committee  
Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Robert Ward", is written over a light blue horizontal line.

Robert WARD  
Director

**DRAFT TEXT OF A MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
BETWEEN THE IHO AND THE SPC**

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**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING  
BETWEEN  
THE INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC ORGANIZATION  
AND  
THE SECRETARIAT OF THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY**

The International Hydrographic Organization and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community, being aware of the growing need for close-co-operation in activities of common interest to both Organizations and their Member States, agree this Memorandum of Understanding (MoU).

**Parties**

**The International Hydrographic Organization (IHO)** is an intergovernmental organization of a consultative and technical nature established in 1921 and comprising over 80 Member States represented by their respective national hydrographic offices. IHO objectives include the coordination of national hydrographic offices' activities, standardization of nautical charts and publications and the adoption of reliable and efficient methods to conduct hydrographic surveys, all aiming to contribute to safety of navigation and the protection of the marine environment. The IHO has several Committees and Working Groups to deal with particular technical and policy topics. The IHO has also encouraged the establishment of Regional Hydrographic Commissions (RHCs) to provide focus on regional issues. The RHCs comprise Full Members who are IHO Member States within a region and Associate Members who are non-IHO Member States within the Region or IHO Member States outside the region that contribute to the aims of the IHO programmes through their activities in the fields of hydrography, nautical charting or nautical information in the region. The South West Pacific Hydrographic Commission (SWPHC) provides a regional focus on the IHO objectives in the region of the Central and South West Pacific Ocean. Other RHCs covering parts of the Pacific region are the East Asia Hydrographic Commission (EAHC), the US Canada Hydrographic Commission (USCHC), the Meso-American and Caribbean Hydrographic Commission (MACHC), and the South East Pacific Hydrographic Commission (SEPHC).

**The Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)** is an intergovernmental organization that provides technical and policy advice and assistance to its Pacific Island members. SPC was established in 1947 and has 26 member countries and territories. SPC's vision for the region is a secure and prosperous Pacific Community, whose people are educated and healthy and manage their resources in an economically, environmentally and socially sustainable way. SPC provides services primarily in the form of technical assistance, training and research. The focus of SPC's work changes over time in response to evolving regional needs and regional collaborative arrangements with other organizations. Amongst its current organizational structure SPC has two Divisions that are relevant in relation to this MoU. Firstly, the Economic Development Division (EDD), which pulls together the four key drivers of economic growth – transport, energy, infrastructure and communication. The EDD includes the Regional Maritime Programme. As resources become available, the division will expand to cover infrastructure issues including ports. Secondly, the Applied Geoscience and Technology Division (SOPAC). This division focuses on issues such as water and sanitation, disaster management, seabed resources, maritime boundary delimitation and monitoring of ocean processes.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of this MoU is to provide a framework for active liaison and cooperation between the IHO and SPC to ensure the efficient and effective development and coordination of hydrographic and nautical charting programmes in accordance with the requirements of international treaty obligations and to promote the widespread use of hydrographic data collected by the two organizations or their members for the benefit of safety of navigation and life at sea, protection of the marine environment, national infrastructure development, coastal zone management, marine exploration and resource exploitation, maritime boundary delimitation and policing, maritime defence and security, and natural disaster management.

## **Scope of Activity**

The IHO and the SPC, through their respective secretariats and through their relevant subordinate, or associated bodies such as RHCs, shall coordinate their activities as far as is possible to address those topics set out in the Annex to this MoU and any others that may be mutually agreed from time to time.

## **Recognition and Status**

Representatives of IHO and SPC may attend as Observers and actively participate without the right to vote in meetings of each other's respective governing bodies and of those subsidiary bodies at which subjects of specific interest to both organizations are being discussed.

## **Financial Commitment**

It is understood that neither organization can commit the other to any expenditure, save that from administering this MoU, without the specific written consent of both organizations.

## **Legal Status**

This MoU does not create a legal link between the two organizations which will maintain their mutual independence. This MoU is valid until IHO or SPC proposes changes to it. Each organization has the right to propose changes to this MoU at any time. Any changes shall be subject to the consent of both organizations. This MoU can be terminated at any time for any reason by one party writing to the other party, signifying its intention to withdraw from the terms of the MoU.

Signed on behalf of IHO:

Vice Admiral Alexander Maratos  
President of the Directing Committee

Date:

Signed on behalf of SPC:

Dr. Jimmie Rodgers  
Director-General, SPC

Date:

**ANNEX**  
**TO MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN**  
**THE INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC ORGANIZATION**  
**AND**  
**THE SECRETARIAT OF THE PACIFIC COMMUNITY**

**Scope of Activities**

In pursuing the objectives of the MoU between the IHO and the SPC, the following steps will be taken, among others:

- Maintain regular contact between the two organizations in order to ensure a continuing liaison to address matters of common interest.
- Each organization to ensure that the other is aware of its activities that may be of common interest and invite representation from the other where it is agreed that it would be appropriate.
- Each organization to identify opportunities to maximize the efficient collection of hydrographic data by furthering the understanding of data requirements, data holdings and future data collection plans. In this regard, in SPC the SOPAC Division will take the lead; for IHO the RHCs are the relevant inter-organizational bodies, assisted by the IHO secretariat as required.
- SPC, with advice from members countries and other relevant regional bodies will liaise and cooperate with IHO and national hydrographic offices and authorities with regard to hydrographic and nautical charting requirements and priorities including regional capacity building, hydrographic surveying and charting requirements, the introduction of electronic charting and e-Navigation, and the promulgation of Maritime Safety Information.
- Strengthen and broaden reciprocal co-operation, particularly with respect to individual State obligations and requirements resulting from the provisions of the UN Convention on the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) and the UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS).
- Encourage all States in the region to join and actively participate in the appropriate Regional Hydrographic Commission.
- Actively encourage all States in the region to join the IHO.
- Co-operate in the formulation of proposals for, and the execution of, technical cooperation projects having components which fall within the competence and the expertise of the respective Organizations, including advance exchange of relevant information and the formulation of other measures required to implement the projects.
- Promote training, education and capacity building in all spheres of surveys, mapping and charting of mutual interests by enhancing the awareness of the Member States of both Organizations to the importance of co-operation in the use of training facilities, research institutions,

vessels, data, and the expertise and experience of personnel, especially to the benefit of developing States.

- Consider the possibility of temporary exchange of personnel.
- Hold periodic meetings between the SPC Director General and the IHB Directing Committee on the above matters.

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