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CIRCULAR LETTER 41/2014
27 May 2014

**PREPARATION FOR THE 1st SESSION OF
THE IMO SUB-COMMITTEE ON NAVIGATION, COMMUNICATIONS
AND SEARCH AND RESCUE (NCSR)
30 June to 4 July 2014, London, United Kingdom**

References:

- A. IHO CL 10/2008 dated 24 January - *IHO online chart catalogue, coastal States' recommended paper charts*
- B. IHO CL 54/2013 dated 24 September - *Report on the 59th session of the IMO Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation*
- C. IHO CL 28/2014 dated 25 March - *IHO Contribution to the Development of a Mandatory Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters (Polar Code)*

Dear Hydrographer,

1. As announced in Reference B, the 1st session of the new IMO Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR 1) will take place from 30 June to 4 July 2014 at the IMO Headquarters in London, United Kingdom.
2. The provisional agenda for NCSR 1 (NCSR 1/1) includes a significant number of items of interest to IHO Member States, namely:
 3. *Routeing of ships, ship reporting and related matters*
 4. *Consideration of ECDIS matters related to the implementation of the carriage requirements in SOLAS Regulations V/19.2.10 and V/19.2.11*
 5. *Consolidation of ECDIS-related IMO Circulars*
 7. *Development of explanatory footnotes to SOLAS Regulations V/15, V/18, V/19 and V/27*
 9. *Development of an e-navigation strategy implementation plan*
 13. *Review and modernization of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS)*
 15. *Consideration of operational and technical coordination provisions of maritime safety information (MSI) services, including the development and review of related documents*
 23. *Development of a mandatory Code for ships operating in polar waters*
3. On behalf of the IHO, the Directing Committee has submitted or co-sponsored papers related to items 4, 5, 13 and 15. The list of these submissions is provided in Annex A. As a participant in the IMO Correspondence Group (CG) on e-navigation, the Directing Committee has also contributed to the CG Report to the Sub-Committee (agenda item 9).

4. The Directing Committee regrets that the timeline for the submission of papers to the IMO Secretariat and the late posting on the IMO website of various related papers of interest to the IHO did not allow an opportunity to consult Member States on the inputs prepared by the Directing Committee.

5. The Directing Committee observed that some submissions (later withdrawn) for consideration under agenda item 3 - *Routeing of ships, ship reporting and related matters* did not appear to provide the levels of information required by the IMO on the adequacy of the state of hydrographic surveys and nautical charts in the area of proposed routeing systems. In this context, Member States may wish to ensure with their National Maritime Administration that it is fully aware of the relevant provisions of the IMO Guidance Note on the Preparation of Proposals on Ships Routeing Systems and Ship Reporting Systems (MSC/Circ.1060 as amended) and seek appropriate advice before making any proposals for new or amended ships routeing systems. The relevant extract of the Guidance Note is attached at Annex B for ease of reference.

6. The submission coordinated by Australia on the consolidation of ECDIS related IMO Circulars (agenda item 5 - paper NCSR 1/5) proposes a consolidated IMO guidance document called "ECDIS - Guidance for Good Practice" which confirms the reference status of IHO standards and associated online services mentioned in current IMO Circulars.

7. In particular, the reference to the IHO online ENC catalogue includes reference to the provision of coastal State guidance on any requirements for back-up arrangements using paper charts (Reference A). The Directing Committee takes this opportunity to remind Member States to ensure that the relevant information (www.iho.int > Home > ENCs & ECDIS > ENC Availability > Backup Paper Charts) is kept current and to provide the IHB with updates as appropriate.

8. Concerning item 23 - *Polar Code*, the Directing Committee has not presented a new submission on the topic. This is based on the assumption that the IHO submission to the 93rd session of the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) reported in Reference C will be either endorsed by the MSC or referred to the Sub-Committee. The outcome of MSC 93 is being reported to Member States separately.

9. According to the arrangements approved by the MSC at its 92nd session, the Sub-Committee will establish three working groups and up to two drafting groups. Two working groups may be relevant to the activities of the IHO:

- *WG 2 Ships' Routeing Working Group,*
- *WG 3 Technical Working Group.*

10. There is no clear indication yet on how the work of the IMO Correspondence Groups on e-navigation on the development of a mandatory code for ships operating in polar waters and on the review of the GMDSS respectively will be progressed during the session. The Sub-Committee may decide to establish a drafting group to finalize the e-navigation Strategy Implementation Plan and associated guidelines. It is anticipated that much of the work will be undertaken in plenary and it has already been confirmed that translation services will be provided for all five days.

11. Considering the number of items of interest to the IHO, the Directing Committee intends that the IHB delegation to NCSR 1 will comprise the Director and Assistant Director who represent the IHO and oversee the NCSR activities and a second Assistant Director, in order to facilitate participation in the parallel meetings that will take place in support of the NCSR agenda. The IHB delegation will also coordinate with the representatives of IHO Member States attending NCSR1 as appropriate.

12. Member States are encouraged to liaise with and brief their national delegations at NCSR 1 on issues of relevance to the IHO.

On behalf of the Directing Committee
Yours sincerely,



Gilles BESSERO
Director

Annexes:

- A. List of submissions to NCSR 1 submitted or co-sponsored by the IHO.
- B. Extract from the Guidance Note on the Preparation of Proposals on Ships Routing Systems and Ship Reporting Systems (MSC/Circ.1060 as amended).

List of submissions to NCSR 1 submitted or co-sponsored by the IHO

Agenda Item 4 - Consideration of ECDIS matters related to the implementation of the carriage requirements in SOLAS Regulations V/19.2.10 and V/19.2.11

NCSR 1/4 - Preparation and implementation of revised ECDIS standards

NCSR 1/4/1 - Report on monitoring of ECDIS issues by the IHO

Agenda Item 5 - Consolidation of ECDIS-related IMO circulars

NCSR 1/5 - Consolidation of ECDIS-related IMO circulars

Agenda Item 13 - Review and modernization of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS)

NCSR 1/13/xx - Comment on the Reports of the Correspondence Group

Agenda Item 15 - Consideration of operational and technical coordination provisions of maritime safety information (MSI) services, including the development and review of related documents

NCSR 1/15 - Outcome of the fifth session of the IHO Worldwide Navigational Warning Service Sub-Committee (WWNWS-SC)

NCSR 1/15/1 - Proposed amendments to the Joint IMO/IHO/WMO Manual of Maritime Safety Information

Extract from the Guidance Note on the Preparation of Proposals on Ships Routing Systems and Ship Reporting Systems (MSC/Circ.1060 as amended)

3.4 Traffic Considerations

(...)

3.4.2 The proposed routing system should aim to provide safe passage for ships and thus the proposal should include the following information:

(...)

- .3 adequacy of the state of hydrographic surveys and nautical charts in the area of the proposed routing system. Governments, who do not have the necessary hydrographic information may, at a very early stage in the formulation of the routing system, seek the assistance of the IHO in obtaining such information.

(...)