



IHB File N° S1/4719

CIRCULAR LETTER 15/2015
19 February 2015

**PROPOSED MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN
THE INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC ORGANIZATION AND
THE ORGANISATION OF EASTERN CARIBBEAN STATES**

Dear Hydrographer,

1. The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) is an intergovernmental organization established by the Treaty of Basseterre 1981, whose mission is to contribute to the sustainable development of its Member States, by contributing to policy and programme formulation and execution in respect of regional and international issues, and by facilitation of bilateral and multilateral co-operation.
2. The OECS is composed of Antigua and Barbuda, Commonwealth of Dominica, Grenada, Montserrat, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines. Anguilla and the British Virgin Islands are associate members. Antigua and Barbuda, Saint Lucia, St Kitts and Nevis, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines are associate members of the Meso American - Caribbean Sea Hydrographic Commission (MACHC).
3. Establishing closer ties with the OECS will consolidate and strengthen the process of regional cooperation and integration and ensure the efficient and effective development and coordination of hydrographic and nautical charting programmes in accordance with the obligations of international treaties. In this respect, the aims are very similar to those of the Memorandum of Understanding established between the IHO and the Secretariat of the Pacific Community that was concluded in 2011 as proposed in CL 16/2011 and reported in CL 35/2011.
4. Following recent discussions between the Director-General of OECS and the Directing Committee, a proposed text of a Memorandum of Understanding between the IHO and the OECS has been drawn up. It is shown at Annex A (*in English only*).
5. Subject to any comments received from IHO Member States and noting that the Director General of the OECS stands ready to sign on behalf of the OECS, the President of the Directing Committee will sign the Memorandum on behalf of the IHO at a mutually convenient date and venue.
6. You are kindly requested to review the proposed text at Annex A and to provide your comments, if any, to the IHB by **15 April 2015**.

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 circular stamp.

Robert WARD
President

Annex A: Draft text of a Memorandum of Understanding between the IHO and the OECS (*in English only*)

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



**MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
BETWEEN
THE INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC ORGANIZATION
AND
THE ORGANISATION OF EASTERN CARIBBEAN STATES**

The International Hydrographic Organization and the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States, being aware of the growing need for close-co-operation in activities of common interest to both Organizations and their Member States, agree to 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 facilitating the international coordination of the efforts of national hydrographic offices, 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 Meso American - Caribbean Sea Hydrographic Commission (MACHC) provides a regional focus on the IHO objectives in the region of Central America and the Caribbean.

The Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) is an intergovernmental organization established by the Treaty of Basseterre 1981, whose mission is to contribute to the sustainable development of its Member States by assisting them to maximize the benefits from their collective space by facilitating their intelligent integration with the global economy, by contributing to policy and programme formulation and execution in respect of regional and international issues, and by facilitation of bilateral and multilateral co-operation.

The OECS is determined to consolidate and strengthen the process of regional cooperation and integration with the aim of contributing to the future economic,

social and cultural development of its peoples and fulfilling the mandate emanating from the Treaty establishing the OECS Economic Union.

The OECS Commission is the principal organ responsible for the general administration of the Organisation.

Purpose

The purpose of this MoU is to provide a framework for active liaison and cooperation between the IHO and OECS to ensure the efficient and effective development and coordination of hydrographic and nautical charting programmes in accordance with the obligations of international treaties. In addition, this MoU seeks to promote the widespread use of hydrographic data collected by the two organizations or their members for the benefit of such themes as 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 preparedness, mitigation and management.

Scope of Activity

The IHO and the OECS, through their respective executing organs, which is the Commission on the part of the OECS and through the relevant subordinate, or associated bodies such as the Meso American and Caribbean Sea Hydrographic Commission on the part of the IHO, 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 OECS 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.

Confidentiality

The IHO and the OECS undertake to preserve the confidentiality of any document, information or other material communicated to them in confidence, disclosure of which could harm the other party, unless required by law or court order.

Legal Status

This MoU does not create a legal obligation between the two organizations which will maintain their mutual independence.

ENTRY INTO FORCE

1. This MoU shall enter into force on the date the last signature is affixed to this MoU and can be terminated by either Party giving three (3) months written notice to the other Party.
2. The Parties intend to periodically review the functioning and effectiveness of this MoU in light of, among other things, changes in relevant international instruments with a view to expanding or varying the scope of the operation of the MoU as appropriate.
3. The termination of this MoU shall not affect the validity, duration and completion of any project and/or contract made under it unless the Parties agree otherwise.

Signed on behalf of the IHO:

Robert Ward
President of the IHB Directing
Committee
*(the term President of the IHB Directing
Committee to be replaced by Secretary-
General of the IHO, in due course)*

DATE

Signed on behalf of the OECS:

Didacus Jules
Director General
Organisation of Eastern Caribbean
States

DATE

ANNEX

TO MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING BETWEEN THE INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC ORGANIZATION

AND

THE ORGANISATION OF EASTERN CARIBBEAN STATES

Scope of Activities

In pursuing the objectives of the MoU between the IHO and the OECS, 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, the relevant inter-organizational bodies to take the lead are: for IHO, the MACHC assisted by the secretariat of the IHO as required; and for OECS, the Ocean Governance Unit.
- OECS, with advice from members countries and other relevant regional bodies will liaise and cooperate with IHO, MACHC 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 for 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 MACHC.
- 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 Director General of the Commission of the OECS and the President (the term President to be replaced by Secretary-General, in due course) or other Director of the IHO Secretariat on the above matters.

DRAFT