



IHB File No. S3/3084

CIRCULAR LETTER 54/2015
22 July 2015

**REVISION OF THE PROCEDURE FOR SUBMISSION OF
MARITIME SAFETY INFORMATION DOCUMENTATION TO IMO**

References:

- A. IMO Resolution 705(17), as amended - *Promulgation of Maritime Safety Information*
- B. IRCC7-08B2 - *Revision of the Approval Process by IHO Member States for Maritime Safety Information (MSI) Documents*
- C. IRCC Decision 7/14- *Submitting proposed revised texts to MSI documents directly to IMO by the IHB*

Dear Hydrographer,

1. The requirements and specifications for the provision of Maritime Safety Information (MSI) services are governed by the International Maritime Organization (IMO).
2. The World-Wide Navigational Warning Service Sub-Committee (WWNWS-SC) is a subordinate body of the IRCC whose primary objective is to maintain, in close collaboration with the IMO and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the guidance documentation for the provision of MSI on behalf of the IMO. Clause 5.1 of IMO Resolution 705(17), as amended (see Reference A), directs all States Parties to the Convention of the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) that *...navigational warnings should be provided in accordance with the standards, organization and procedures of the WWNWS under the functional guidance of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) through its World-Wide Navigational Warning Service Sub-Committee (WWNWS[-SC]).*
3. The current documentation approval process for the work of the WWNWS-SC to be submitted to the IMO involves three separate Member State approval processes (IHO, WMO and finally IMO).
4. At the 7th meeting of the Inter-Regional Coordination Committee (IRCC7) held in June, the Sub-Committee presented a proposal to amend the current IHO process for submitting its proposed revisions to the relevant IMO documentation (see Reference B) to the IMO. This is because the Sub-Committee, which is hosted by the IHO, acts, in effect, as an expert group of the IMO where the subsequent discussion and final approval of its proposals are made. As such, it will be more efficient and logical for the Sub-Committee to continue to seek input from IHO Member States in formulating its proposals, but to present its work directly to the relevant IMO organs where any proposals will be discussed and finally adopted by the IMO Member States.
5. The WWNWS-SC proposes that documentation that it produces that is intended for IMO consideration be submitted directly to the IMO Secretariat, via the IHO Secretariat, without formal circulation to the IHO Member States via Circular Letter, as has been the case in the past.
6. In order that those IHO Member States that are directly involved in the delivery of MSI can continue to monitor, contribute and comment on the work of the Sub-Committee, all the proposed draft revisions generated by the WWNWS-SC Document Review Working Group (DRWG) will be available for review and comment by IHO Member States throughout the development and review process. The relevant documentation is posted in the WWNWS-SC section of the IHO website at least one month prior to a WWNWS-SC meeting. Non-attending members may submit comments to the WWNWS-SC meeting through the Chair or the Secretary of the WWNWS-SC or the Secretary of the DRWG at any time prior to the meeting.

7. After the finalisation of any submissions to the IMO, IHO Member State representatives should then provide their comments or views to their national delegations to the IMO Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR) and the IMO Maritime Safety Committee (MSC), or to the IHB that will represent the IHO at the relevant IMO meetings.

8. Any WWNWS-SC proposals to the IMO will be prepared by the IHB and submitted by the Secretariat of the IHO in liaison with and on behalf of the WWNWS-SC.

9. In agreeing to the new procedure proposed by the WWNWS-SC (see Decision in Reference C), the IRCC took note that the NAVAREA Coordinators, and the Secretariats of the WMO and the IMO had all previously endorsed the revised scheme.

10. Member States are invited to consider the decision of the IRCC and to provide any additional comments that they may have, if any, to the IHB **no later than 31 October 2015**, which is the effective deadline for compiling the next submission from the WWNWS-SC to the IMO.

On behalf of the Directing Committee

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Miptes', is centered on the page. The signature is written in a cursive style with a prominent initial 'M'.

Mustafa IPTES
Director