



IHB File N° S1/0910

CIRCULAR LETTER 31/2016

11 July 2016

RESPONSES TO THE CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS TO UPDATE THE IHO STRATEGIC PLAN

References:

- A. IHO Resolution 12/2002, as amended – *Planning Cycle*
- B. IHO CL 17/2016 dated 31 March – *Call for Submissions to Update the IHO Strategic Plan*
- C. Conference Circular Letter No. 1 dated 21 April 2016 - *Announcement and General Arrangements*
- D. Conference Circular Letter No. 2 dated 22 April 2016 - *Submission of proposals to the Conference / Assembly*

Dear Hydrographer,

1. IHO Resolution 12/2002 (Reference A) sets out the timetable for the review of the IHO Strategic Plan. In accordance with the Resolution, Member States and the two programme committees – the Inter-Regional Coordination Committee (IRCC) and the Hydrographic Standards and Services Committee (HSSC), were invited to submit any proposals to update the Strategic Plan (see Reference B).
2. Four Member States: Chile, Italy, Spain, United Kingdom, and the Chair of the HSSC have provided input. The discussion on input to the Strategic Plan recorded as part of the draft minutes of the most recent session of the IRCC has also been used as input. Copies of these contributions are provided in Annex A.
3. The Directing Committee observes that only a small number of Member States have provided input. The Directing Committee further notes that five of the six contributions received could be accommodated through a modest revision of the current edition of the Strategic Plan and/or considered when preparing the draft IHO Work Programme 2018-2020. This would indicate that the Member States are generally satisfied with the overall aims and objectives of the Organization as set out in the current Strategic Plan. The Directing Committee acknowledges that one Member State proposes that a significant editorial and organizational overhaul, in effect a new edition, of the Strategic Plan is warranted.
4. In the circumstances, the Directing Committee proposes to prepare a draft revised version of the existing Strategic Plan and the draft IHO Work Programme 2018-2020, taking in to account the input received so far and collated in Annex A (including additional feedback expected from the IRCC). The drafts would be circulated by early February 2017, together with the other documents to be considered by the 19th International Hydrographic Conference / 1st Session of the IHO Assembly, in accordance with the timetable set out in Reference C (see Annex B).
5. Member States are now invited to consider any alternative or additional proposal related to the Strategic Plan and its implementation that they may wish to include in their response to Reference D, expected no later than **15 August 2016**.

6. The outcome will be circulated together with all the other proposals received, for further comments by **23 November 2016**, in accordance with the timetable set out in References A and C.

On behalf of the Directing Committee
Yours sincerely,



Robert WARD

President

Annex A: Update of the Strategic Plan - Submissions from Member States, HSSC and IRCC

Copy to:

- Chair, HSSC
- Chair, IRCC

UPDATE OF THE STRATEGIC PLAN
SUBMISSIONS FROM MEMBER STATES, HSSC AND IRCC

CHILE

Our first comment is that we consider that “hydrographic surveys” is a crucial and basic activity that requires to be specifically highlighted in the Plan, but there is no mention at all with the exception of WPI 19. In order to overcome this situation, Chile proposes the following changes:

Paragraph 3.2 that reads:

3.2 supporting and promoting the benefits of national Hydrographic Offices and hydrographic programmes;

we suggest it should read:

3.2 supporting and promoting the benefits of national Hydrographic Offices and hydrographic **surveys** programmes;

Also, in paragraph 4.2 that reads:

4.2 supporting national initiatives aimed at developing and enhancing hydrographic infrastructure;

we suggest it should read:

4.2 supporting national initiatives aimed at conducting hydrographic surveys and developing and enhancing hydrographic infrastructure;

Examining the text in Sections 5 and 6, we find it is confusing. We would prefer to make a clear separation and distinction between the Strategic Plan and the Work Program.

The Strategic Plan could have been built considering the strategic assumptions and strategic directions identified by the IHO, in line with IHO’s mission and functions.

The Work Program could be in line with the Strategic Plan and constitute the collection of the activities to be executed, considering the “real” needs and capabilities of the IHO bodies. The monitoring of both is different and should follow a different reviewing cycle.

- Being the Strategic Plan a set of “concepts/principles/wishes”, the assessment of its validity might be performed at each Conference or Assembly, triggered by proposals made by the IHB (Council when established). We think it’s worth reviewing from time to time the concept under which the Strategic Plan was developed.

- Being the Work Program a set of “tasks/commitments/actions”, the assessment of its accomplishment must be performed annually, triggered by evaluations made by the IHB (Programme 1); HSSC (Programme 2) and the IRCC (Programme 3), and comments by MSs. We think that it’s worth knowing, on an annual basis, if the Work Program was or was not achieved, and why, and experiences we can get from such exercise.

For the assessment of the validity of the Strategic Plan and of the accomplishment of the Work Program, two different approaches are required. One at the strategic level (conceptual) and one at a tactical level (to identify the level of achievement). Annex A refers to “Risk management framework”. In our opinion, the Risks Management Policy and Process are mechanisms to be used in the analysis made during the preparation/update of the Strategic Plan. This analysis should not involve the Work Program as it must follow a different management. With regard to the Performance Indicators, we are of the opinion that it is good to have two levels. The strategic level related to the IHO’s objectives, as it is nowadays and the working level, based on the Work Programme, but not based on the Table 2 of Annex C.

We are of the opinion that for each activity identified in the Work Program, at the end of the period (annually) an indication on the status of achievement must be given: completed, not completed or completed in a certain %. This will give a clear indication on the level of completeness of the overall Annual Work Program.

Finally we would like to express that in our opinion, the following WPIs do not allow to get an impression on the degree of satisfaction of the level of accomplishment of the Work Program and could be re-analysed or subject to change or optimize.

For example:

WPI 1= In the case of the conference/assembly this assessment only will be possible to make it each three years. In the case of the council, why should all MSs be expected to attend its meetings?

WPI 2= Not all CLs require a response.

WPI 3= and if there is no need for changes, what are we measuring?

WPI 4= what do we intend to measure by this PI?

WPI 5= what do we mean by “reactive CLs”? on the contrary, it is a plus to have as much as possible interaction between the IHB and MSs.

WPI 6= is there any target? Signing agreements is not an indication of success, but to achieve commitments under these agreements is what we need to measure.

WPI 9 and 11= if there is not an annual target, it is meaningless to have a number

WPI 17= seems very similar to WPI 26 and 27.

WPI 23= is there any annual target? If not what is the importance of knowing this percentage?

WPI 24= if there is not an annual target, it is meaningless to have a number

WPI 25= if there is not an annual target, it is meaningless to have a number

WPI 26 and 27= it sounds important to know these achievements, but why in percentage and also in numbers? It looks redundant.

WPI 28= does it matter how ENC's are provided? Does the coverage refer to the waters under Coastal State responsibility?

WPI 29= what do we intend to measure?

WPI 31 to WPI40 = what do we intend to measure? If there is not an annual target it is meaningless to get these numbers as they need to be compared with a reference.

WPI 41 to 43= If there is not an annual target it is meaningless to get these numbers as they need to be compared with a reference.

Finally we would like to reiterate our opinion expressed in previous responses to the IHB, in relation to the periodicity of the status reports. We are of the opinion that at the end of the calendar year, the accomplishment of the corresponding Work Programme needs to be assessed. No need for extra or midterm assessments.

ITALY

Italy suggests:

Chapter 2 – Vision, Mission and objects:

insert words as highlighted in yellow

2. VISION, MISSION AND OBJECT

*The **vision** of the IHO is to be the authoritative worldwide hydrographic body which actively engages all coastal and interested States **and involves international organizations** to advance maritime safety and efficiency and which supports the protection and sustainable use of the marine environment.*

*The **mission** of the IHO is to create a global environment in which States provide adequate and timely hydrographic data, products and services and ensure their widest possible use.*

The **object** of the IHO is proposed in Article II of the amended Convention. *It shall be the object of the Organization:*

- (a) To promote the use of hydrography for the safety of navigation and all other marine purposes and to raise global awareness of the importance of hydrography;*
- (b) To improve global coverage, availability, **and quality and consistency** of hydrographic data, information, products and services and to facilitate access to such data, information, products and services;*
- (c) To improve global hydrographic capability, capacity, training, science and techniques;*
- (d) To establish and enhance the development of international standards for hydrographic data, information, products, services and techniques and to achieve the greatest possible uniformity in the use of these standards;*
- (e) To give authoritative and timely guidance on all hydrographic matters to States and international organizations;*
- (f) To facilitate coordination of hydrographic activities among the Member States; and*
- (g) To enhance cooperation on hydrographic activities among States on a regional basis.*

Chapter 3 – Strategic Assumptions

Add points 1.3 and 3.4 as follows:

1.3 Training standards and regulations must keep up with technological developments

3.4 Multinational projects are a fundamental resource (O)

Change item 4 as follows:

4. Technological trends

4.1 Technological developments (digital era, **ENC**, high rate communication systems and precise positioning systems) are a major driving force for changes (O).

4.2 Crowd-sourcing has high potential.

Chapter 4 – Strategic Directions

Item 1.4 – insert words highlighted in yellow as follows:

1.4 developing, improving, promulgating and promoting clear, uniform, global hydrographic standards to enhance safety of navigation at sea, protection of the marine environment, maritime security, port and coastal management and economic development;

Finally, in annex C we think that PI should be assessed in the individual WGs for suggestion and assessment in HSSC and IRCC.

SPAIN

This Institute has noted that there is an increasing demand of S-57 data from the companies producing the various nautical programmes and applications for mobile devices. Many of these companies make misleading advertising for the products they are commercializing, selling them as substitutes of the official cartography, either paper charts or electronic ones.

The applications for mobile devices are a very good help for the navigation, but those devices lack of the features which are required from official ECDIS equipment.

Likewise, not all the companies ensure that the chart maintenance be made by means of Notices to Mariners. So, the quality and the veracity of the data shown in the cartography available onboard are not guaranteed for the owners of leisure boats, who are usually the users of such applications.

This Institute has no doubt about the goodness and the quality of these products. However, he considers that, in the development of the next IHO Strategic Plan, should be taken into account the review of international regulations which apply to electronic charting, specially for smaller crafts, in which are mostly used the mobile devices as substitutes of the official cartography, so that the safety of navigation can be ensured at all times.

UNITED KINGDOM

In accordance with Circular Letter (CL) 17/2016, please find attached broad UK comments on the review of the 2009 IHO Strategic Plan for the Directing Committee to consider. Notwithstanding these comments as set out below the UK considers that a complete re-write of the Strategic Plan to reflect the many changes that have taken place over the last 7 years and the coming in to force of the new IHO constitution would be the most appropriate way ahead.

Since the implementation of the IHO Strategic Plan in 2009, we know that the hydrographic domain has changed dramatically, particularly with the updated International Convention for Safety Of Life At Sea (SOLAS) to allow for the carriage of electronic navigational charts. The pivotal role of the IHO in this area over the last seven years or so has been a key tenet to the successful uptake of ECDIS and ENC's. Similarly, the focus on hydrographic Capacity Building has contributed towards the drive for quality hydrographic data, and is, in our view, something which should be continued and invested in further.

In light of the above, and the comments in the attached document, the UK recommends a full rewrite of the Strategic Plan, to ensure it not only takes in account of the changes which have occurred since it was written, but also reflects and sets new priorities to enable progress against our limited resource levels.

The work plan should clearly identify IHO strategic priorities and be flexible to deal with emerging requirements over the duration of the plan. With this in mind, and if a rewrite of the Strategic Plan is endorsed, we would like to offer our support to taking forward this work.

Extract of the IHO Strategic Plan with UK comments

1. PREAMBLE

2. VISION, MISSION AND OBJECT

3. STRATEGIC ASSUMPTIONS

UK COMMENT:

- The strategic assumptions should be factors which are *assumed* in terms of supporting delivery of the objectives, whereas a SWOT analysis should be a separate assessment of what helps or hinders the delivery of the objectives. It is therefore recommended that the SWOT analysis and the assumptions be separated into two sections;
- There is currently only one strength (5.1) and one threat (5.2) listed, which is unlikely to be the case today, appreciating that this plan was written in 2009. It is recommended a new SWOT analysis is undertaken;
- Some content in Section 3 still stands and some has been superseded, therefore a review is required to ensure that assumptions are relevant today, and what we anticipate for the future;
- Certain assumptions would benefit from being curtailed, to avoid providing lists which may be superseded as time passes (for example list contained in 4.1)

4. STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS

UK COMMENT:

- These strategic directions are very important but the bullet points which follow them do not serve to deliver the direction they relate to;
- The remit as described in the strategic directions is very broad, and therefore difficult, if not impossible, to deliver progress against through the Work Programme;

- The IHO adds a great deal of value in providing the 'framework and forums' to enable Member States to improve their hydrography, with particular reference to the capacity building element of its work. This is an area the IHO can add significant value to in coming years;
- Having consideration for the points above, UK recommends and requests that the Strategic Directions are reviewed, prioritised and linked to an amended and updated Work Programme to ensure progress and ultimately delivery. We further recommend that the cycle of the Strategic Plan is aligned with that of the Assembly, and receives a substantial review every 6 years, with a refresh at the midpoint (3 years in between)

5. WAYS AND MEANS

UK COMMENT:

- It is unusual for a risk management process to be set out in a strategic plan. This section should refer to the fact there is a risk management process, and where it is documented. Risks themselves should only refer to the ability to deliver the work programme and should be contained in separate documents, alongside mitigating actions and constraints;
- We are not aware of any analysis conducted during the preparation of the Work Programme, referred to in section 5.2, having taken place;
- Section 5.3 contains too much detail for a Strategic Plan. It should simply refer to the fact that a Work Programme exists, and refer to the relevant documentation for example, 'Work Programme Terms of Reference' which would contain the detail currently in Section 5.3.

6. PROGRESS MONITORING

UK COMMENT:

- The detail on progress monitoring in this section, while important, is too much detail to be contained in the Strategic Plan. It should instead be contained in the Work Programme and should always confirm whether the Strategic Directions are being met. There should be opportunity to review the progress of the Work Programme, at regular intervals, including whether there is continued relevance of the Work Programme to the Strategic Directions.

Annex A Risk management framework

UK COMMENT:

- The risk management framework should be a document in its own right, referred to in the Strategic Plan. This will reduce the need for the Strategic Plan to be updated if the Risk management Policy needs amendment. In light of this, we would be willing to offer assistance in producing a risk management framework separate to the Strategic Plan.

Annex B
Responsibilities of IHO organs

UK COMMENT:

- We recommend this annex, Responsibilities of the IHO organs, is removed, because it contains extracts from other documents, which if updated, would mean the strategic plan would need to be updated. We recommend that a list of 'related documents' is provided instead, which readers can refer to if necessary.

Annex C
PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

Table 1
Strategic Performance Indicators

UK COMMENT:

- These Strategic Performance Indicators should be listed in the work programme, rather than the strategic plan, so that they can be updated and amended without the need for amending the strategic plan.

Table 2
Assignment of the strategic directions to the appropriate organs and suggested working level performance indicators

UK COMMENT:

- This section should be moved to a separate document or to the Work Programme, which is then referred to in the strategic plan, in order to enable updating.

HSSC

This document provides the input of the HSSC Chair Group¹ [on behalf of the HSSC] to the revision of the current Strategic Plan adopted by the 4th Extraordinary International Hydrographic Conference (2009).

Overview of the Strategic Plan

The Chair Group is of the opinion that a full-scale revision of the current Strategic Plan is not required. It offers the following comments as regard the structure of the Plan:

- The Chair Group considers that it would be helpful to include in the Preamble a flow diagram linking the Strategic Directions to the definition of the Elements and Tasks of the IHO Work Programme and to the designation of the associated Performance Indicators.
- The Chair Group considers that the classification of the strategic assumptions as “strengths” (S), “weaknesses” (W) “opportunities” (O) or “threats” (T) does not serve any valuable purposes.
- The Chair Group is not aware that the risk management framework referred to in section 5.2 of the Plan and described in Annex A has ever been implemented, noting that currently no targets are associated to the performance indicators. The Chair Group recommends that Chapter 5 of the Strategic Plan be retained, subject to implementing it when preparing the next edition of the IHO Work Programme (WP) and suggests that both Annexes A and C be revisited and inserted in the Work Programme rather than in the Strategic Plan itself.

Proposed amendments to the Strategic Plan

1. The amendments proposed by the Chair Group to update the Strategic Plan are shown below as addition and deletion.

Vision, Mission and Object

...

*The **mission** of the IHO is to create a global environment in which States provide adequate, standardized and timely hydrographic data, products and services and ensure their widest possible use.*

...

Strategic assumptions

...

1.1 An adequate data-centric hydrographic infrastructure is an essential geospatial foundation layer to support the move to an open data environment.

...

2.2 GrowingThe development of the Blue Economy and environmental concerns, related in particular to climate change, awareness will generate increasing demands and wider uses for hydrographic information beyond solely core navigational safety use.

...

¹ Comprised of the Chairs of HSSC Working Groups (WGs), the Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary and Assistant Secretary of HSSC

4.1 Technological developments (digital era, high rate communication systems, sensor technology and integrated services and precise positioning systems) are a major driving force for changes and require interoperable data management and portrayal.

...

Strategic Directions

...

2.6 promoting the use of new technologies and the opportunities offered by globalization, and international cooperation and crowd-sourcing.

...

2. In addition, the Chair Group suggest inserting sub-headings in Chapter 6 - *Progress Monitoring* as follow:

6. Progress monitoring

6.1 Monitoring mechanism

The mechanism to monitor the implementation of the Strategic Plan and identify any needs for revision includes the following elements:

...

6.2 Implementation

The implementation of performance indicators is based on a two level approach:

...

6.3 Assessment and review

Accordingly, the assessment of the working level PIs and the review of progress with the strategic directions ...

3. Considering that the six-month reporting mechanism put in place by the EIHC-5 provides little added value, the Chair Group recommends returning to an annual reporting mechanism, in accordance with the provision of Chapter 6 of the current Strategic Plan and with the annual cycle of the Committees and of the Council (when established). A common report template would be welcome. The Council or the Committees could decide that some specific critical tasks require more frequent reporting but this should not be systematic.

IRCC

IRCC8 participants discussed the need to highlight MSDI, CSB and CB in a revision of SP2009 and to take account of the input provided by the CBSC Chair (Appendix 1). They also identified the need to enlarge the Vision in order to contain more details on the international and intergovernmental dimension, and the importance of IT and digital services in the way the IHO is doing business (Strategic Assumption 4 on Technological Trends).

The meeting also considered the need to identify the constraints that can cap the ambitions and the plans, in particular those related to Capacity Building, to identify the gaps between the RHCs and the way to reduce these gaps, to explore industry's capacity rather than only request its engagement and to highlight that hydrographic services cover the whole range from survey to data processing to products to the end users (whole value chain). The emphasis should change from the “importance” of hydrography to the “value” of hydrography. The Chair stressed that the success stories need to be brought to the attention of the international arena.

The meeting discussed the current PIs, experiences gained and lessons learned from RHCs and IRCC Bodies, the revision requirements of the PIs and the existing progress monitoring and risk management framework in relation to the IRCC. After a statement made by the NSHC/MACHC Chair that those PIs where no data is available should be deleted, the IHB President highlighted the fact that despite the availability of the performance monitoring mechanism, it had not been used to steer any of the work of the IRCC8.

The meeting also considered the input received by the MBSHC Chair (see doc. IRCC8-11.2B) and then agreed on the following decisions:

- to support a significant revision of the performance monitoring process;
- to endorse the deletion of the PIs that do not have data or that serve no purpose (Appendix 2) [*Currently under the consideration of the IRCC and will be reported back to the IHB by 15 August 2016*].

Proposed amendments to the IHO Strategic Plan:

1. Change the number of the clause (4.4) of the Article 4 (Assist Member States to fulfil their roles) of the STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS as 4.5 and add a new clause (4.4) as shown below:

4.4 promoting Capacity Building in Hydrography on a regional and international level;

2. Change the number of the Article (5.3) (Work Programme) of the WAYS AND MEANS as 5.4 and add a new Article (5.3) as shown below:

5.3. Capacity Building Programme

A CB Programme with an underlying CB Strategy is in place and is further developed;

In the IHO, capacity building is defined as the process by which the organization assesses the status of current arrangements and assists States to achieve sustainable development and improvement in their ability to meet hydrographic, cartographic and maritime safety obligations with particular reference to recommendations in UNCLOS, SOLAS, and other international instruments;

Member States are encouraged to support the CB efforts with contributions according to their ability;

A CB Fund is being operated by the IHO.

Proposed amendments to Annex C (Performance Indicators) of the IHO Strategic Plan:
(related to the IRCC, CBSC and WENDWG) (see Note)

Proposed deletions of Strategic PIs that do not have data or that serve no purpose:

SP1, SP2, SP4, SP4bis, SP7, SP8

Note: Currently under the consideration of the IRCC and will be reported back to the IHB by 15 August 2016