



Dossier du BHI N° S3/3055

**LETTRE CIRCULAIRE 07/2013
21 janvier 2013**

**CONTRIBUTION DE L'OHI A L'ELABORATION D'UN CODE OBLIGATOIRE
POUR LES NAVIRES EXPLOITES DANS LES EAUX POLAIRES**

Madame la Directrice, Monsieur le Directeur,

1. Les navires exploités dans des environnements arctique et antarctique sont exposés à un certain nombre de risques particuliers qui incluent un manque relatif de cartes marines appropriées. En 2009, le Comité de la sécurité maritime (MSC) de l'OMI a approuvé des propositions relatives à l'élaboration d'un code de sécurité international pour les navires exploités dans les eaux polaires (Code polaire) qui couvrirait tout l'éventail des questions de conception, de construction, d'équipement, de fonctionnement, de formation, de recherche et de sauvetage et de protection environnementale relatives aux navires exploités dans les eaux inhospitalières qui entourent les deux pôles. Le sous-comité de la conception et de l'équipement du navire (DE) de l'OMI a été chargé de coordonner les travaux, et d'en rendre compte au MSC et au comité de la protection du milieu marin (MEPC).

2. Depuis 2010 (DE 53), les travaux d'élaboration du code polaire ont progressé essentiellement dans le cadre d'un groupe de correspondance (CG) présidé par la Norvège. Les points de vue du sous-comité de la sécurité de la navigation (NAV) ont été officiellement sollicités à la suite de DE 56 (février 2012). Toutefois, les conclusions de l'examen du groupe de travail technique effectué lors de NAV58 (juillet 2012) n'ont pas développé les questions hydrographiques (cf. documents NAV 58/14 – alinéas 13.10 à 13.18 - et NAV 58/WP.5 – alinéas 5.1 à 5.3 et annexe 5).

3. Suite aux considérations exprimées par la Commission hydrographique sur l'Antarctique et la Commission hydrographique régionale de l'Arctique, le président du Comité de direction du BHI a mis à profit les discussions tenues au MSC91 (novembre 2012) pour faire part de ses préoccupations quant au fait que les conséquences de l'insuffisance des levés hydrographiques dans les eaux polaires n'avaient pas été suffisamment soulignées lors de l'élaboration du Code polaire. La présidente du CG a invité l'OHI à rejoindre son groupe et à faire part de ses commentaires sur le rapport, lequel doit être soumis à la réunion du DE 57, en avril 2013. Un projet de rapport émanant du groupe de correspondance a ensuite été fourni au BHI.

4. Le projet de texte annexé au rapport du CG (DE 57/11/6) comporte une introduction suivie de deux parties principales traitant respectivement des prescriptions obligatoires (Partie A) et de directives additionnelles (Partie B). Le BHI a préparé une soumission pour le compte de l'OHI qui propose des commentaires et des contributions à l'Introduction et à la Partie B.

5. La soumission de l'OHI au DE 57 est jointe pour l'information des Etats membres. Malheureusement, en raison de l'enregistrement tardif du rapport du groupe de correspondance par le secrétariat de l'OMI (18 janvier 2013) et de la nécessité de respecter la date limite de présentation du document au DE 57 (25 janvier 2013), la soumission n'a pu être achevée à temps pour être examinée par les Etats membres de l'OHI.

6. En tenant compte de l'état actuel du projet de texte et du fait que l'année d'achèvement prévue est 2014, il est vraisemblable que l'élaboration du Code polaire donnera lieu à des discussions supplémentaires au cours du DE 57 et après. Par conséquent, le Comité de direction invite les Etats membres à tenir informée leur délégation au DE 57 sur la soumission de l'OHI et à rechercher son appui pour que les considérations hydrographiques soient prises en compte dans le Code polaire.

7. L'OHI sera représentée au DE 57, sous réserve d'autres engagements incompatibles. Les Etats membres qui souhaitent faire part de leurs commentaires sur la soumission de l'OHI avant la session du DE57 sont invités à adresser leur contribution au BHI (info@iho.int) **avant le 1^{er} mars 2013**.

Veillez agréer, Madame la Directrice, Monsieur le Directeur, l'assurance de ma haute considération,

Pour le Comité de direction,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Robert Ward', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Robert WARD
Président

Annexe : Soumission de l'OHI au DE 57 (DE 57/11/xx) (*en anglais seulement*).



SUB-COMMITTEE ON SHIP DESIGN
AND EQUIPMENT
57th session
Agenda item 11

DE 57/11/XX
18 January 2013
Original: ENGLISH

DEVELOPMENT OF A MANDATORY CODE FOR SHIPS OPERATING IN POLAR WATERS

Comment on the Report of the Correspondence Group

Submitted by the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO)

SUMMARY

<i>Executive summary:</i>	This document comments on the report of the Correspondence Group on Development of a mandatory Code for ships operating in Polar waters.
<i>Strategic direction:</i>	5.2
<i>High-level action:</i>	5.2.1
<i>Planned output:</i>	5.2.1.19
<i>Action to be taken:</i>	Paragraph 8
<i>Related documents:</i>	DE 57/11/6

Introduction

1. At DE 56 a correspondence group (GC) was established to work intersessionally to develop a mandatory Code for ships operating in Polar waters. During discussions at MSC 91, the IHO expressed concern that the consequences of poor hydrography in Polar waters had not been sufficiently highlighted in that work. The CG chair invited IHO to join the group and provide comment on the report, which was being submitted to DE 57.

Status of nautical charting in Polar waters

2. Systematic and complete hydrographic surveys have not been carried out in many polar areas due to their extensive, remote and inhospitable nature. The presence of ice throughout much of the year limits the ability to conduct hydrographic surveys. Increasingly large unsurveyed areas may be becoming available for navigation due to the melting of glaciers and sea ice. The result assessed by the IHO is that 95% of the Antarctic Region is unsurveyed and appropriate scale chart coverage is generally inadequate for coastal navigation. The situation is similar in the Arctic Region (see for example NAV 55/INF.6 on the situation in Greenland) although consolidated figures are not available.

3. The geographical positions of features are often unreliable, and even those correctly placed relative to adjacent features may contain considerable errors if separated by large distances. Some modern charts are based on satellite imagery; however the lack of proper ground control means they

are unlikely to have the same accuracy as those covering lower latitudes. Soundings, topographic detail and all other navigational information are generally incomplete. The limited depth information available may be derived from passage soundings or from old and incomplete surveys and may be of poor quality. The seabed in many areas is very irregular, which means that interpolation between charted depths is generally unreliable.

4. Inadequately surveyed areas can be identified on paper charts (and Raster Navigational Charts) using chart source or zone of confidence (ZOC) diagrams.

5. The use of Electronic Chart Display and Information Systems (ECDIS) in Polar waters requires the availability of Electronic Navigational Charts (ENCs). These must use the WGS 84 positioning datum and therefore require the accurate positioning of topography, including the coastline, and hydrography based on this datum. At present, few ENCs are available for Polar waters in Navigation Purpose bands 3 to 6 (coastal, approach, harbour, and berthing). Although the IHO has been leading an effort to prioritize, encourage and monitor the conduct of hydrographic surveys in the Polar regions through its Hydrographic Commission on Antarctica (HCA) and through the Arctic Regional Hydrographic Commission (ARHC), it will take many years for the situation to improve as national priorities generally focus on charting deficiencies at lower latitudes (see MSC/Circ.1179).

Impact on navigation

6. Except in limited areas, the chart coverage of Polar waters is inadequate for coastal navigation. Therefore mariners should keep to the charted areas, except in case of absolute necessity. Even in charted areas extra vigilance should be exercised as unsurveyed and uncharted shoals may exist unless the chart is based on modern surveys that include a full search of the sea floor.

7. Based on the above considerations, the IHO proposes a number of comments and inputs to the amended draft text of the Polar Code submitted by the Correspondence Group. These are shown in the Annex.

Action requested of the Sub-Committee

8. The Sub-Committee is invited to note the information provided in this document, ensure that it is reflected in the development of the Polar Code and take any other action it considers appropriate.

Annex

**IHO comments and inputs to the amended draft text of the
Mandatory Code for Ships Operating in Polar Waters
attached as Annex 1 to document DE 57/11/6**

Preamble

Add the following new paragraph after 2:

The Code acknowledges that the Polar Regions impose additional navigational demands beyond those normally encountered. Except in limited areas, the chart coverage is inadequate for coastal navigation. Therefore mariners should keep to the charted areas, except in case of absolute necessity. Even in charted areas extra vigilance should be exercised as unsurveyed and uncharted shoals may exist unless the chart is based on modern surveys that include a full search of the sea floor.

Sources of hazards

In the initial wording of this section, merge and complement items .6 and .7 as follows:

.6 ~~remoteness and~~ possible lack of accurate and complete hydrographical data and information, reduced availability of navigational aids and seamarks with increased potential for groundings compounded by remoteness and limited readily deployable SAR facilities;

and renumber accordingly item .8.

In the alternative wording of this section, replace item .5 with the following text:

.5 *possible lack of accurate and complete hydrographical data and information, reduced availability of navigational aids with increased potential for groundings compounded by remoteness and limited readily deployable SAR facilities;*

PART B

Insert a new section as follows:

Additional guidance to Chapter 9

As the chart coverage of Polar waters is generally inadequate for coastal navigation, mariners should exercise extra care to plan and monitor their voyage accordingly, taking due account of the information and guidance in the appropriate nautical publications.

They should be familiar with the status of hydrographic surveys and the availability and quality of chart information for the areas in which they intend to operate. They should also be aware of potential chart datum discrepancies with GNSS positioning. They should plan their route through charted areas and well clear of known shoal depths.

Deviation from the planned route should be avoided and when operating on the continental shelf the echosounder should be working and monitored constantly to detect any sign of unexpected depth variation, especially when the chart is not based on a full search of the sea floor. Independent cross-checking of positioning information (i.e. radar and GNSS) should be undertaken at every opportunity.

Mariners should ensure to report to the relevant charting authority (Hydrographic Office) any information that might contribute to improving the nautical charts and publications.