

**TWELFTH MEETING OF THE CBSC (CBSC12)  
14-16 May 2014, Brest**

**Summary report of the  
South West Pacific Hydrographic Commission (SWPHC)**

1. **Chair:** CDRE Brett Brace (Hydrographer of Australia)  
**Vice Chair:** Mr Nicholas Pion (Hydrographer, Papua New Guinea)
2. **Membership**  
Members: Australia, Fiji, France, New Zealand, Papua New Guinea, Kingdom of Tonga, United Kingdom, United States of America  
Associate Members: Cook Islands, Kiribati, Niue, Palau, Solomon Islands, Vanuatu  
Observers: New Caledonia, Secretariat of the Pacific Community (SPC)  
IHB Representative: President Robert Ward
3. **Meetings**  
The 12<sup>th</sup> SWPHC Meeting held in Port Vila, Vanuatu on 12-14 November 2013 was attended by more than 40 participants.  
The next meeting is planned to be held in the Cook Islands in February 2015.
4. **Current SWPHC Working Groups**  
SWPHC International Charting Coordination Working Group (SWPHC-ICCWG)  
SWPHC Capacity Building Working Group (SWPHC-CBWG)
5. **Activities completed since CBSC11**  
The following CB activities, being part of the IHO CBWP 2013, were carried out since the last CBSC Meeting:
  - (i) Technical Visit to Cook Islands to facilitate National Hydrographic Requirements (7-18 Oct 2013)
  - (ii) Technical visit to the Kingdom of Tonga (18-28 Mar 2014)
  - (iii) Course in Hydrographic Data Processing and Marine Cartography, including specialism in Electronic Navigational Chart (UKHO, 2 Sep – 13 Dec 2013) - One candidate from Solomon Islands attended this Category B recognised course at UKHO. Three participants from Australia also attended Module 3 of the course (ENC Production).
6. **Cooperation with Other Organisations**  
The following activities were carried out as part of the AusAID funded project 'Capacity Building in Hydrography for Ocean and Coastal Development (SPC member countries)':
  - (i) Training of a SPC staff who attended the Category 'B' Course in Hydrographic Survey at the RAN Hydrographic School, Sydney during April-September 2013.
  - (ii) Funding the participation of 2 SPC staff members at the SWPHC12 Meeting.
 Activities planned for 2014 include procurement of sidescan sonar equipment and attachment of the Cat 'B' trained staff to the Australian Hydrographic Office.
7. **Risk Assessment Methodology**  
The hydrography risk assessment methodology is based on the IMO Formal Safety Assessment. This 5-step methodology is marine related, proactive, logical, structured and comprehensive.  
There are four key components – i.e. *risk, ship types & sizes, economic growth and environmental status* - that the methodology needs to take into account, that when combined provide the evidence required to prioritise areas for maritime safety chart improvements.

NZ has submitted an information paper to IRCC6 titled ‘Hydrography Risk Assessment – a novel approach to prioritising hydrographic surveys to improve maritime safety’. (IRCC6-12A)

**8. Vanuatu Charting Issues – case Study Example and Solution**

The Vanuatu risk assessment results identified the priority areas for chart improvements, enabling the Vanuatu Government to approach donors to discuss funding for hydrographic surveys and other mitigations to improve maritime safety. Further information in the information paper ‘IRCC6-12A’ submitted to IRCC6 by NZ.

**9. Role of Regional Inter-Governmental bodies in Provision of Hydrographic Services**

SPC presented an information paper 'Hydrographic Services: An International Obligation and Essential Component of National Transport Infrastructure' at the 'Regional Meeting of Heads of Transport (Aviation and Maritime) in Suva, Fiji, 4-6 March 2014. It provided an overview of the status of hydrographic services in the region, and highlighted the challenges faced by Pacific Island countries and territories (PICTs) in fulfilling their international obligations under international law, especially the SOLAS Convention.

Subsequently at the Regional Meeting of the Pacific Ministers of Energy and Transport (Nadi, Fiji, 2-4 April 2014) it was agreed that hydrographic services was one of the high priorities for implementation in the next 3 years, i.e.:

- *Acknowledged the critical importance of hydrographic services to enable maritime surveys that lead to production of maritime charts to aid shipping and developmental opportunities such as determining new ports for tourism or other economic development and new shipping routes.*
- *Supported PICTs becoming members of the International Hydrographic Organization and the South-West Pacific Hydrographic Commission.*
- *Agreed to the formation of a dedicated hydrographic unit at SPC to develop and further enhance regional hydrographic services to members.*

**10. Conclusions**

SWPHC is committed to carrying forward hydrographic, nautical cartographic and capacity building activities in close alignment with IHO objectives and goals.

**11. Actions Required from CBSC**

CBSC members are invited to note:

- this report
- the success of the NZ approach to Hydrographic Risk Assessment and the value to coastal states and the South-West Pacific region
- PICTs’ recognition of the value of hydrographic data for the development of the region
- PICTs’ recognition of the need to establish a regional hydrographic data gathering capability.

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