

16th CHRIS MEETING
Ottawa, Canada, 28-31 May 2004

Report of 2003 Industry Workshop and Stakeholder Organizations
(by IHB)

SUMMARY

Executive summary:

For the fourth year the IHB organized a forum for representatives of activities associated with hydrographic and maritime operations to meet and discuss the impact of IHO actions and their role in furthering the objectives of the IHO. Approximately 50 representatives discussed mechanisms to enhance the interaction of industry with the IHO and highlighted their serious concerns about the current status of ENC availability.

Actions to be taken:

See Paragraph 3.

Related documents:

None

1. Background

For the fourth successive year, a varied group of concerned activities, termed "Industry", has been afforded the opportunity to meet and discuss how they may better interact with the IHO and influence to the mutual benefit of all the working of the IHO. To better describe this diverse group, they agreed that the term "Stakeholders" may more accurately convey their relationship to the Organization. This year's meeting focused on two distinct concerns:

- What is the perspective of the mariner with regard to ENCs and ECDIS,
- How can non-governmental activities effectively interact with the IHO.

2. Discussion

2.1 Strategic Planning Working Group: To provide a status on the current strategic direction of the Organization, the Chairman of the SPWG provided overview of the work and progress of the SPWG. Of particular interest to this forum was the desire of the SPWG to use industry relations to mutual benefit and to formalize how industry could officially interact with the IHO.

2.2 Liaison Mechanisms and Guidelines for Accredited Organizations: Based on a CHRIS paper two alternative methods for stakeholders to interact with the IHO were discussed. One alternative proposed that stakeholder form an advisory board that would develop consensus positions and present these positions before the organs of the IHO. A second alternative proposed that international non-governmental organizations be accredited to represent the positions of their constituents before the various organs of IHO. The accreditation process would mirror, as far as practical, that used by the IMO. The stakeholders present strongly endorsed the second alternative.

2.3 International Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs): To investigate how NGOs may represent the concerns of the stakeholders, the Deputy Secretary of the Comité International Radio Maritime (CIRM) provided an overview of its membership and how it represents these members before the IMO. Also discussed was the formation of an NGO specifically representing the concerns of the hydrographic industries. While the merits of such a specialized NGO was noted, the impetus to form such a body did not materialize at this meeting.

2.4 Concern from ECDIS Manufacturers: A representative of an ECDIS manufacturer provided his concerns for the financial viability of ECDIS. Changes in ECDIS specifications are costly. Differing interpretations of IMO electronic chart regulations amongst Flag States and Port States is confusing and unsettles the market. The lack of ENC coverage, the lack of integrated services for ENCs (outside Northern Europe), the confusing variety of pricing, updating, security and distribution schemes all combine to keep ENC sales and ECDIS use low.

2.5 Concern from the Shipping Industry: A Captain representing the shipping industry opined that there has been more money spent on ECDIS conferences than made from the product. He fully embraced the safety and efficiency gains that can be realized through ECDIS but they have not materialized due to low use of ECDIS. Although the speaker felt he was available to the ECDIS industry representatives, he believed he was “at the bottom of the food chain” with regard to understanding the status of ECDIS development. All that is clear to him is that the coverage is not in line with the requirements.

2.6 Partnerships with Hydrographic Offices: The advantages of and approached that lead to successful outsourcing data collection and/or chart production tasks were discussed.

2.7 Status of IHO ECDIS/ENC Initiatives: The attendees were provided several briefs on IHO initiatives related to ECDIS and ENCs. These briefs included:

- WEND Task Group activities,
- IHO Data Protection Scheme and Special Publication S-63,
- Status of Special Publication S-57, 4th edition.

3. Conclusion and Recommendations: This year's Industry Days Workshop was particularly upbeat despite the concern over the slow progress in the use of ECDIS primarily due to poor ENC availability. The attendees had raised expectations that they would be considered as part of the solution and a welcomed participant in the workings of the IHO. It is the recommendation of the IHB that the IHO proactively adopt procedures for the participation of non-governmental organizations as observers before the various organs of the IHO.