

**20<sup>th</sup> CHRIS Meeting  
Niteroi, RJ, Brazil, 3-7 November 2008**

**Report on Activities of the Open ECDIS Forum (OEF)**

<b>Submitted by:</b>	Lee Alexander (Univ. of New Hampshire) and the OEF Board of Advisors
<b>Executive Summary:</b>	This report summarizes the activities of Open ECDIS Forum during the period November 2007 – October 2008.
<b>Actions to be taken</b>	Note the current level of activity; Note the transfer of IHO-related functions to the IHO website; Re-confirm the need for a “Miscellaneous” (not OEF) Register for the “orphan” S-57 objects/attributes.
<b>Related Documents:</b>	none
<b>Related Projects:</b>	IHO S-57 → IHO S-100

## 1. Background

The Open ECDIS Forum (OEF) was established in 1997 to facilitate the international development and implementation of ECDIS. The objectives of the OEF are to:

- encourage and support the development of ECDIS and its extensions
- provide lines of communication between IMO, IHO, & IEC standards developers and users
- promote the S-57 data model in the marine environment, and monitor its use
- examine new development proposals, and advise on their validity
- promote world-wide ENC production

Specific OEF activities include:

- establish discussion forums on issues related to ECDIS
- review and register “user-defined” S-57 objects
- register non-HO S-57 data producer codes
- distribute ECDIS-related freeware/shareware software and S-57 datasets
- organize workshops on ECDIS-related matters
- provide a link with the IHO website, and to other organizations involved in ECDIS

## 2. Operation and Management

a. Hardware/software - During the past year, the OEF continued to be operated by the University of New Hampshire using a dedicated OEF server (hardware), and an open-source content management system called “Joomla” ([www.joomla.org](http://www.joomla.org)). “Joomla” provides necessary functionality to ensure required security, and has flexible web-based Discussion Forum system.

### b. Discussion Forums

Now in its 11<sup>th</sup> year of operation, the number of discussion forums and the level of activity have significantly decreased from past years. Currently, only two discussion forums are active: North & South American – European – Russian Federation Inland ENC Harmonization Group (**IEHG**), and the Harmonization Group on MIOs (**HGMIO**). As decided at CHRIS-19, the OEF Discussion Forums for CSMWG, DSPWG, SNPWG, and TSMAD have been discontinued.

### c. Registration Service

#### 1) Non-HO S-57 Data Producer Codes

IHO S-62 (ENC Producer Codes) is a publication that lists the HOs who produce “maritime” ENCs. In contrast, the OEF is the site for registering both “International Organizations” and “Private Companies” involved in

producing other type of S-57 data (e.g., Inland ENCs, MIOs, and AMLs). Currently, 85 agencies, organizations and private companies are registered on the OEF. This includes six (6) new agencies/organizations/companies who registered during November 2007 – October 2008. Of these six (6), three (3) were for producing inland ENCs, one (1) for MIOs, and one (1) for ship simulator facility.

As agreed at CHRIS-19, the Registration Service for the non-HO S-57 Data Producer Codes will be transferred to the IHO Website on or before 31 December 2008.

#### 2) New Object Classes/Attributes

There exists some uncertainty regarding the fate of “orphan” S-57 objects/attributes that were previously registered on the OEF. As decided at CHRIS-19, the various S-57 objects, attributes and attribute values not contained in the S-57 object catalogue that were previously registered on the OEF, were to be moved to a “Miscellaneous” Register under the new IHO Registry. However, as currently implemented on the IHO Hydrographic Registry site ([http://195.217.61.120/iho\\_registry/](http://195.217.61.120/iho_registry/)), there is an “OEF” rather than a “Miscellaneous” register. This “OEF” Register contains a wide variety of S-57 objects/attributes – some of which appear to be no longer relevant. Since there is no OEF Register Manager or OEF Control Body, it is not clear who has “ownership” of these “orphan” S-57 objects/attributes, nor how a determination can be made regarding their usefulness. Potentially, some (but not all) could be transferred to the other established registers (e.g., Hydro, Ice, IENC, NPub). Since some are clearly MIO-related, another register could be established for MIOs.

It is requested that CHRIS re-confirm the establishment of a “Miscellaneous” (not OEF) Register for the “orphan” S-57 objects/attributes.

#### d. Management/Administration at UNH

OEF Manager – Lee Alexander

OEF Administrators - Nathan Paquin and Jason Greenlaw

d. Board of Advisors (BOA) - Previously called Board of Patrons, the BOA was established to oversee and advise on OEF activities.

Director, IHB	Capt. Robert Ward
Chair, IHO CHRIS	Capt. Vaughn Nail, UKHO
Chair IHO TSMAD	Barrie Greenslade, UKHO

Dr. Lee Alexander	CCOM-JHC, University of New Hampshire, USA
Gert Buttgenbach	SevenCs, Germany
Mizuho Katayama	Marine Counselor, Japan
Peter Kluytenaar	Serendipity Unltd. (Nautical Consultant), Technical Advisor - European Inland ECDIS Committee, & European Technical Coordinator - IEHG

Technical Advisors:

Michel Huet, IHB

Tony Pharaoh, IHB

### 3. **Funding for OEF Operation/Management**

Based on the current level of operation, approximately \$5,000US is needed annually to support the operation/management of the OEF. As confirmed at CHRIS-19, all IHO-related functions on the OEF will be transferred to an appropriate IHO website. Although, no further funding support will be provided by IHB, other organizations and companies have expressed an interest to fund the continued operation of the OEF at the University of New Hampshire.

### 4. **Future Operation of the OEF**

While IHO support for the operation of the OEF may end, the OEF will continue to exist for the foreseeable future. Both IEHG and HGMIO currently use the OEF. Now that mandatory carriage of ECDIS onboard SOLAS vessels is likely to occur, use of the OEF to facilitate this implementation process could increase substantially. In addition, S-57 related data (ENCs, IENCs, AMLs, and MIOs) will continue to be produced and used for many

years to come. The OEF can also contribute to a broader understanding of the transition from S-57 to S-100 related products and services.

**Action Required of CHRIS**

- Note the current level of activity.
  - Note the transfer of IHO-related functions to IHO website(s).
  - Re-confirm the need for a “Miscellaneous” (not OEF) Register for the “orphan” S-57 objects/attributes.
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