

1st HSSC Meeting
Singapore, 22-24 October 2009

Report on Activities of the Open ECDIS Forum (OEF)

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Executive Summary:	This report summarizes the actions of Open ECDIS Forum during the period November 2008 – September 2009; Final report.
Actions to be taken	Note the transfer of IHO-related functions to IHB; For “orphan” S-57 objects/attributes, place in “Miscellaneous” (not OEF) Register.
Related Documents:	none
Related Projects:	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 overall 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, and an open-source content management system called “Joomla” (www.joomla.org).

b. Discussion Forums

During 2009, only two discussion forums were semi-active: Inland ENC Harmonization Group (IEHG), and the Harmonization Group on MIOs (HGMIO). The IEHG Discussion forum has been transferred to iehg.openecdis.org. An new MIO Discussion Forum is under development.

c. Registration Service

1) S-57 Data Producer Codes

IHO S-62 (ENC Producer Codes) lists the HOs who produce ‘maritime’ ENCs. In contrast, the OEF is the site for registering both International Organizations and Private Companies who produce other types of S-57 data (e.g., Inland ENCs, MIOs, and AMLs). Currently, 90 agencies, organizations and private companies are registered on the OEF. This includes six (6) who registered during November 2008 – August 2009. Of these, four (4) were for producing Inland ENCs, one (1) for MIOs, and one (1) for coastal waters.

As agreed at CHRIS-20, the Registration Service for the S-57 Data Producer Codes was transferred from the OEF to IHB on 29 April 2009. This 'migration' included all the files that enabled the operation of the Registration Service on the OEF. These primarily consisted of HTML-formatted tables and a software code for generating a hexadecimal number. Potentially, the S-57 Data Producer Code Registration Service could continue to be operated as on the OEF. However, it is recommended that a future Register be based on a Relational Data Management System.

For continuity purposes, the OEF will operate the S-57 Data Producer Code Register until 31 December 2009. When the S-57 Data Producer Code Register under the new IHO GII Registry becomes fully operational, a link will be provided from the OEF to the new site.

2) Miscellaneous (Orphan) S-57 Objects/Attributes

There exists some uncertainty regarding the fate of "orphan" S-57 objects/attributes not contained in the IHO S-57 Object Catalogue that were previously registered on the OEF. As decided at CHRIS-20, they 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/), it is still an "OEF" rather than a "Miscellaneous" register. This Register should be named: **Miscellaneous** (-- not OEF).

Since there is no Miscellaneous Register Manager or Control Body, it is not clear who has "ownership" of these "orphan" S-57 objects/attributes, nor how a determination can be made about which are still valid or required. Potentially, some could be transferred to the other established registers (e.g., Hydro, Ice, IENC, NPub). In June 2009, several S-57 software producers and electronic chart manufacturers were contacted about this matter. Specifically, three possibilities were given in terms of how to deal with these "orphan" features, attributes and enumerates (i.e., move, retain, or delete)

1) Decide if valid or required. If so,

a) **Move** to another Register (but, which one?)

b) **Retain** in a re-named "Miscellaneous" Register.

2) For those that are not valid, superseded, or of questionable value -- **Delete** altogether.

Unfortunately, there was little interest expressed in conducting this process.

3. **Future Operation of the OEF**

While IHO use of the OEF has ended, the OEF will continue to exist for the foreseeable future. Now that mandatory carriage of ECDIS onboard SOLAS vessels will occur, use of the OEF to facilitate this implementation process could increase substantially. In addition, S-57 related data (maritime ENCs, Inland ENCs, Port ENCs, bathymetric ENCs, dynamic, ENCs, 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.

This is the final report to CHRIS/HSSC.

Action Required of CHRIS

- Note the transfer of IHO-related functions to the IHO website.

- For "orphan" S-57 objects/attributes, place in "Miscellaneous" (not OEF) Register.
