



Hydrographic Services and Standards Committee

14 October 2011

To: Prospective Participants in the 3rd Meeting of the HSSC and all National Hydrographers

HSSC Chairman's Welcoming Comments

Ref: IHB Circular Letter CL27/2011 dated 24 March 2011 - *3rd Meeting of the IHO Hydrographic Services and Standards Committee (HSSC); 8-10 November 2011, IHB, Monaco.*

Dear Colleagues,

I am very much looking forward to our meeting at the International Hydrographic Bureau in Monaco next month. This third meeting of the IHO Hydrographic Services and Standards Committee (HSSC), has a significant amount of subject matter to cover and is especially important as it is our final meeting before the XVIIIth International Hydrographic Conference (IHC) in April 2012. For those who have not yet registered, details are available on the IHO website at:

http://www.iho.int/mtg_docs/com_wg/HSSC/HSSC3/HSSC3_Registration_Form.doc

As you are aware, all technical elements of the IHO work programme are allocated to the HSSC. A key role of the committee is to agree on how the IHO's technical programme can best be achieved, by allocating work to Working Groups as appropriate, monitoring progress and when work is completed, providing Member States with recommendations for adoption. The HSSC also has another important role of identifying technical initiatives which are necessary to underpin the future strategy of the Organisation. I consider that we are well placed to balance the strategic implications of new developments with practical guidance on their implementation. Since the establishment of HSSC, working groups have continued with their busy programmes and we will have the opportunity to review both their progress and future plans for standards development.

I would like to draw your attention to some papers that deserve special attention as they should provoke a degree of debate. Paper **4A** proposes some adjustments to the practical working and administrative arrangements for those HSSC groups dealing with S-100 related developments. The stated purpose is to facilitate better coordination, liaison and outreach. While this offers a more efficient model for taking this core programme forward, we must ensure that the interests of all working groups remain properly supported.

Several papers address the need to present standards affecting ENC's and ECDIS performance after minor anomalies have been discovered in certain ECDIS systems. Paper **7.1B** provides useful background information of action taken so far by the Organisation.

Paper **5.1B** proposes the restructure of S-58. The expectation is that adoption of a clearer “minimum quality standard” for all ENC’s will contribute to better and more consistent ECDIS implementation by manufacturers and actively promote the concept of ENC quality. A paper with similar intent (**5.3B**) proposes a revision of the S-52 presentation library.

In Paper **5.1C**, the proposed process provides a much more efficient method of maintaining S-100, while ensuring that larger packages of work (extensions) required for use in IHO controlled product specifications remain subject to the constraints of the HSSC work program. I consider that this is an important question for the HSSC to address and provide advice to Member States. Paper **5.7A** reports on progress in MSDI and I would invite delegates to think about suitable deliverables for the MSDIWG work programme to ensure its continuation. The IHB (Paper **8B**) have also invited delegates to consider whether S-44 could be revised to better assist Hydrographic Offices – particularly those that are engaged in surveying through contract support arrangements with commercial providers. Our sister committee, the IRCC, has also submitted a comprehensive proposal (paper **8A**) for the formal inclusion of biennial IHO Stakeholders’ Forum Meetings in the IHO Work Programme. HSSC gave support to the proposal for such a meeting last year, recognising that such interaction could help shape the IHO Strategic Plan, but the proposed dates proved unsuitable.

I would be very grateful if delegates could take time to study and understand the implications of the papers, in advance of the meeting. In order to enhance our ability to offer concise and clear recommendations to Member States, I hope that all delegates will be in a position to express constructive and authoritative opinions on behalf of the Member State or the organization that they represent, when this is appropriate. The IHB, as the committee secretariat, has already posted the committee papers on the IHB website in accordance with the timescales laid down in the *HSSC Instructions for the Submission of Reports and Proposals*. I think the HSSC is proving to be effective in meeting its mandate, but this has only been possible because delegates have been able to express opinions and participate actively, having prepared properly in advance of the meeting.

I look forward to see as many of you at the meeting as possible. Best wishes in your preparations,

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'V. Nail', with a large loop at the end.

Captain Vaughan NAIL
Chairman of HSSC