

**International Hydrographic
Organization**



**United States - Canada
Hydrographic Commission**



Report of the Meeting of the
UNITED STATES - CANADA HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION

The 33rd meeting of the United States – Canada Hydrographic Commission was held in Ottawa, Canada, on May 17-18, 2010. The meeting was co-chaired by Capt. John Lowell (United States), who has assumed the Hydrographer position for the Office of Coast Survey after the retirement of Captain Steve Barnum, and Dr. Savi Narayanan (Canada). Captain Robert Ward attended on behalf of the International Hydrographic Bureau.

The main topics of discussion were:

- The development of consistent ENC's for the trans-boundary areas between Canada and the United States. Several technical and legal issues have been identified and progress is being made in finding solutions. Transboundary ENC's remain one of the principal areas of cooperation within the USCHC.
- The formation of an Arctic Regional Hydrographic Commission (ARHC), including a discussion of possible geographic limits for the Commission. Please see the attached [Report on the Status of the Proposed Arctic Regional Hydrographic Commission](#).

The USCHC Commission was fortunate to have a number of guests participate in the meeting as well.

- Dr. Siddika Mithani, the new Assistant Deputy Minister, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, joined the meeting for a discussion on the role of the USCHC in meeting mutual challenges faced in hydrography.
- Mark Aspden, UKHO Liaison Office, provided a brief report on the work of the UKHO relating to the UKHO international activities and the challenges facing the Admiralty Chart Service related to the upcoming mandated requirement for ECDIS.
- A representative of the Canadian Coast Guard briefed the USCHC on the progress to date on the concept of Virtual-AtoN, both at the international level through IALA and within CCG itself.

The next meeting of the United States- Canada Hydrographic Commission will be held in April or May, 2011, in the Washington DC area.

Report on the Status of the Proposed Arctic Regional Hydrographic Commission

This report is to inform the Regional Hydrographic Commissions of discussions and intentions of Arctic Ocean coastal Member States to initiate collaborative efforts in hydrography for the Arctic Ocean region.

In June 2009 at the International Hydrographic Conference in Monaco Canada, Denmark, Norway, Russian Federation and United States met for informal discussions to determine the level of interest in forming a RHC for the Arctic Ocean Region.

General interest was expressed at the scientific/hydrographic level and all five Member States acknowledged that approvals would be required from the respective governments.

Canada was asked to draft an initial set of Statutes which would be used by each Hydrographic Office to engage appropriate levels of government. These initial Statutes were circulated in August 2009.

In February 2010 the same five Arctic coastal Member States met at the IALA offices in Paris to evaluate and discuss the future marking of Arctic Polar routes. Each of the five Hydrographic Offices participated in this meeting and took the opportunity to again discuss progress on the draft Statutes of the Arctic Regional Hydrographic Commission. It was at this IALA meeting that a face to face meeting in Fall 2010 was proposed in order to advance discussions on this important initiative. Canada has extended an offer to host this meeting in Ottawa October 5-7, 2010.

It should be noted that the International Hydrographic Bureau and in particular the IHB President Admiral Maratos has been exceptionally supportive and encouraging throughout this process and for that we extend our heartfelt appreciation.

This concludes the report on the Status of the proposed ARHC.