

**THIRD MEETING OF THE IHO INTER REGIONAL COORDINATION COMMITTEE
IHO-IRCC3**

Niteroi, Brazil, 26-27 May 2011

IHO STAKEHOLDERS' FORUM

Submitted by the Chair of IRCC

1. Background

The provision of timely input from the industry on ECDIS matters was discussed at IRCC2 and the Committee agreed action IRCC02/15 inviting HSSC to consider the way forward for the ECDIS Stakeholders' Forum. Accordingly, the Chair of IRCC submitted a formal paper to HSSC2 (HSSC2-08.2A). The IHB informed HSSC2 of its plan to convene an IHO Stakeholders' Forum to be held at the IMO Headquarters in London-UK immediately prior to the 57th meeting of the IMO NAV Sub-Committee (NAV57 - 6-10 June 2011). The IHB proposal was fully supported by HSSC. However, further investigation by the IHB showed that the meeting could only be held on the Friday before the NAV session and that it would be difficult to attract a wide audience with few pressing issues needing to be addressed. Therefore the IHB Directing Committee informed the Chair of IRCC of its decision to consider alternative options for the Forum and elicit proposals for topics to be discussed and for appropriate venues (letter dated 8 February 2011). The Chair of IRCC informed the members of the Committee of this outcome and offered a review of the possible options (e-mail dated 12 February 2011). Noting that it appeared unrealistic to try to organize a meaningful alternative in the first semester of 2011 he proposed to revisit the issue at IRCC3. No dissent was expressed.

It is worth noting that following MSC88, the IHB organized in February 2011 a workshop on ECDIS software issues which attracted 37 representatives from stakeholder groups (IHO CL 19/2011 dated 24 February 2011). This workshop was centred on investigating possible procedural and organizational arrangements that might help overcome certain operating anomalies that had been identified within ECDIS. It was not intended as a full-fledged IHO Stakeholders' Forum.

2. Analysis

Three aspects must be considered when addressing the organization of the next IHO Stakeholders' Forum:

- purpose and contents,
- participation,
- time and venue.

2.1. Purpose and contents

Each strategic direction of the IHO Strategic Plan identifies one or more issues requiring some interaction with the IHO stakeholders. The associated interests can be outlined in five categories:

- improve the efficiency and coherence of the IHO activities,
- ensure that the decisions, standards and other products of the IHO are based on a robust and all inclusive approach,

- promote the existence, use and support of IHO standards,
- promote the use and provision of high quality hydrographic products and services,
- contribute to fostering a well-informed citizenry.

They involve both a “top down” approach (IHO towards its stakeholders) and a “bottom up” approach (stakeholders towards IHO).

In order to identify what could be the focus of the next Forum, it is proposed to:

- (i) invite both HSSC and IRCC Committees to identify which work items, if any, could benefit from discussion in a forum with the relevant stakeholders;**
- (ii) invite the IHB, as suggested in its letter of 8 February 2011, to canvas the stakeholder community about specific proposals for discussion topics.**

2.2. Participation

The IHB maintains three lists of stakeholders:

- the list of International Organizations which have signed a MOU or a Cooperative Agreement with the IHO;
- the list of Non-Governmental International Organizations (NGIOs) accredited as Observers;
- the list of ECDIS Stakeholders.

It is proposed to consider expanding and formalizing this inventory in other sectors such as industry (outside the ECDIS community), academia and the media, through inputs from IRCC, HSSC, and IHB as well as from individual Member States.

2.3. Time and venue

The early editions of the IHO “Industry Days” were stand-alone events until 2003. The following forums focused on ECDIS issues were associated with another meeting¹. Some specialized workshops have been organized as stand-alone events also².

A number of significant events involving IHO stakeholders are planned in the second semester of 2011:

- Conferences of the International Chamber of Shipping and the International Shipping Federation (Venue to be confirmed - 14-15 September)
- Hydro 2011 (Freemantle, Australia - 7-10 November)
- HSCC3 (IHB, Monaco - 8-10 November)
- 27th Session of the IMO Assembly (London, UK - 21-30 November)
- The ECDIS Revolution - 2nd Conference and Exhibition (London, UK - 23-24 November).

Although some events have a limited scope, they all offer an opportunity to interact with IHO stakeholders which might be worth considering.

¹ The 1st ECDIS Stakeholders Forum was held in conjunction with CHRIS-17, 2005, in Rostock, Germany. The 2nd Forum was held in conjunction with WEND-10, 2006, at the IHB in Monaco. The 3rd Forum was held in conjunction with CHRIS-19, 2007, in Rotterdam, The Netherlands. The 4th Forum was held in conjunction with WEND-11, 2008, in Tokyo, Japan. In 2009, the 3rd EDCIS Conference was held in conjunction with HSSC-1, in Singapore.

² See <http://www.iho-ohi.net/english/external-liaisons/industry-liaison-meetings.html>.

The next session of the IMO Assembly seems to offer an ideal occasion to interact with the IMO constituency, including the possibility to lobby for the effective implementation of IMO MSC Circular MSC.1/Circ.1373 about IHO membership! The conjunction with the ECDIS Revolution 2nd Conference and Exhibition offers a specific opportunity, although restricted to ECDIS issues and possibly interfering with the Assembly programme. A separate event convened right after the Assembly would either interfere with the IMO Council meeting on Thursday 1st December or require participants to prolong their stay in London until Friday 2 December. In all cases, the scope of the event would be limited to safety of navigation issues.

An obvious alternative in 2012 would be to convene a Forum in the frame of the next International Hydrographic Conference (or Assembly), taking advantage of the expected presence of a number of observers from varied organizations and background. The proximity of the 2012 milestone of the ECDIS carriage requirement implementation would also constitute a meaningful background. Looking at the provisional programme of the Conference/Assembly outlined in CCL1, it seems difficult to make time for more than half a day during the Conference/Assembly. The two options worth considering would then be a one or two day event on Thursday 19 April and/or Friday 20 April, before the Conference/Assembly, or a half-day event on the afternoon of Monday 23 April. The second option would probably be more attractive to non-IHO participation in conjunction with the opening ceremony and the opening of the chart and industry exhibitions but would need to focus on a very small number of issues.

It is proposed to:

- (i) invite the IHB to collate suggestions from IRCC, HSSC and individual Member States on the opportunities to interact with IHO stakeholders and on the associated inputs from the IHO side;**
- (ii) invite the IHB to consider organizing a Forum in conjunction with the IHO Conference/Assembly of 2012, depending on the assessment of the possible contents discussed in section 2.1 above.**

3. Action required of IRCC

The Committee is invited to consider the proposals in section 2 above and take actions as it deems appropriate, including the discussion of IRCC inputs to any proposal supported by the Committee.