

FIFTH MEETING OF THE IHO INTER REGIONAL COORDINATION
COMMITTEE
IHO-IRCC5

Wollongong, Australia, 3-4 June 2013

REPORT OF THE ARCTIC REGIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION
By Director Evert Flier (NO), Chair of ARHC

1. **Chair:** Evert FLIER, Norway (from October 2012)
Vice-Chair: Capt. Alexander SHEMETOV, Russian Federation (from October 2012)
2. **Membership:** Canada, Denmark, Norway, Russian Federation, USA
Observers: Finland, Iceland, IHB
3. **Meetings:** The ARHC has met once since the IRCC4. The 3rd meeting was held in Tromsø, Norway, 10-11 October 2012. A one day Scientific Forum was arranged 09 October. Next meeting of the ARHC is hosted by USA in October 2013.

The ARHC runs several groups that work mainly by correspondence:

- The Strategic Planning Working Group. A Strategic Plan to be presented at the next ARHC Conference
- The Arctic International Charting Coordination Working Group. Formally established in 2012
- The Operational and Technical Working Group
- The Arctic Voyage Planning Guide Working Group (renaming of the former Arctic Routing Guide WG)

4. **Agenda Items:**

Task numbers refer to IHO WP for 2012 (see CL 77/2011)

IHO Work Programme 1 – "Corporate Affairs"

Element 1.1 Co-operation with International Organizations and participation in relevant meetings.

Task 1.1.5b: Arctic Coordination

ARHC: Some of the ARHC representatives are involved in relevant IMO, IOC and/or IALA committees with focus on the Arctic region such as Polar Code, Northern infrastructure related to

AToN and climate change discussions.

Task 1.1.17D European Union

ARHC: Several Member States are closely involved with the efforts in the EU related to INSPIRE, BLAST and e-Nav Underway Conference deliberations as they pertain to national and Arctic waters

Task 1.3.2 World Hydrography Day

ARHC: Most Member States participate actively in their national context to World Hydrography events

Task 1.3.3 Outreach Activities

ARHC: The 2012 Canadian Hydrographic Conference was co-sponsored by the Canadian Hydrographic Service. The theme ‘The Arctic, Old Challenges, New Approaches’ was a direct effort to outreach to the international community on the hydrographic needs in the Arctic region

IHO Work Programme 2 - "Hydrographic Services and Standards"

Task 2.2 to 2.12 HSSC Working Group Participation

ARHC: The ARHC MS’ are highly involved in the Working Groups under the umbrella of HSSC. Totally 4 working groups (DIPWG, MSDI, TWLWG, HDWG) are chaired by representatives from MS within the Arctic geographical area.

Task 2.13 ENC Quality

ARHC: Through the association between Primar and the Norwegian Hydrographic Office there is significant involvement with the joint technical work regarding ENC quality assurance undertaken through the cooperation of RENCs

IHO Work Programme 3 – " Inter Regional Coordination and Support"

Element 3.1 Co-operation with Member States and attendance at relevant meetings.

Task 3.1.1: Arctic Regional Hydrographic Commission

ARHC: The Commission has met once since the XVIIIth IHC with inter-sessional work being done by correspondence. The next ARHC meeting is scheduled for October 2013 to be held in New Hampshire, USA.

Task 3.1.8: North Sea Hydrographic Commission

ARHC: All remaining issues related to NSHC are solved. The border limit for the ARHC area of charting responsibility is accepted by both Commissions and the formal establishment of INT chart region “N” is finalized.

Task 3.1.15: Industry Participation in RHC meetings

ARHC: ARHC is engaging with industry through two primary channels. The first channel is the adoption of a Scientific Forum, held the day in advance of the Commission meeting. This has been established to permit several local agencies and academia dealing with Arctic issues to

highlight their work on a regional or circumpolar basis as a means to inform the Member States of the variance of issues, requirements and science initiatives for the Arctic region as a whole. The ARHC leverages the Scientific Forum concept as a “best practices” opportunity for identifying partners and user requirements. The second channel is to recognize the opportunity to leverage hydrographic/bathymetric data obtained through non-conventional means. The remoteness and the extent of the Arctic is so demanding that traditional official hydrographic data collection strategies and coverage experienced in southern waters cannot reasonably be achieved in a timely manner for Arctic waters. As such, it is necessary to look for willing parties, outside the HOs, to participate in data gathering and data sharing activities . ARHC has an action to assess this opportunity data to determine its suitability for use either for planning or for nautical products. Liaison with marine science research institutes, Arctic tour operators, industry etc., has potential to be beneficial to ARHC MS’ to expand access to various forms of bathymetric data to assist in closing data gaps in the vast Arctic region. The ARHC has initiated pilots to test the viability of this opportunity and will report internally and also to IHO on results.

Task 3.2.10 RHCs to encourage the approval of pending application for IHO membership

ARHC: The Hydrographic Offices of ARHC Member States are cognizant of the attention to be given to new applications for IHO membership. Based on the results presented via IHO Circular Letter CL01-2013 this attention is evident but not yet to the level that all ARHC Members have responded to all applications.

Element 3.6 Coordination of Global Surveying and Charting

Tasks 3.6.1 WENDWG

ARHC: ARHC has been active in the work of the WENDWG including over 50% participation at the 2nd meeting of WENDWG in London 21-22 September 2012. ARHC MS’ have worked with the WENDWG drafting team for the revised WEND Guidelines. Work is underway by individual Members and the ARHC collectively to eliminate overlaps and to assess priorities for the closing of gaps in ENC coverage in Region ‘N’.

3.6.2: RHCs to coordinate ENC consistency and quality

ARCH: The ARHC has established a Charting Coordination Working Group to deal with the coverage of paper charts and ENCs. Additionally, the close association of the Norwegian Hydrographic Office with PRIMAR and the overall RENC efforts to ensure quality and consistency of global ENCs is to be noted.

3.6.3 C-55 Status of Hydrographic Surveying and Nautical Charting Worldwide

ARHC: ARHC Member States are cognizant of the requirements to maintain C-55 in its current form and are willing participants to the IHO efforts to seek means to make the C-55 status reporting more relevant to the requirements of the IHO.

Element 3.8 Ocean Mapping Programme

Task 3.8.11: Maintain GEBCO publications

ARHC: A contact to the organization operating IBCAO (The International Bathymetric Chart of the Arctic) is established. A presentation of IBCAO work was given at the Scientific Forum in

2011. Some MS' have recently contributed with additional data. This effort will be ongoing.

5. ARHC initiatives of note:

- The IHB, following a recommendation from ARHC3, is investigating the possibility of IHO obtaining Observer status to the Arctic Council. The application process is in progress.
- Less than 10% of the Arctic is systematically surveyed. As the area is partly difficult to access, a cooperation with third parties/ships of opportunity is foreseen. The challenges related to the use of third party bathymetric data need to be discussed. This item will be addressed at IRCC5.
- Satellite derived vertical reference surfaces for surveying is gaining attention. The ARHC will gather the know-how among the Member States with experiences on this issue.
- The ARHC has sought the expertise within TSMAD with respect to the development of polar projections suitable for ENC application in the Arctic. This item will be addressed at IRCC5
- With reference to CL 51/2012, continuous provision of ENC to IHB, the ARHC will suggest a “pull” instead of “push” approach. This item will be addressed at IRCC5
- Based on the work initiated by the Arctic Routing Guide WG a prototype Arctic Voyage Planning Guide will be developed based on single Member State geographical area to gain user experience in order to consider next steps for further coverage of Arctic waters.