

Comment from the Secretariat on the proposal of the application of ISO9001:2015 Quality Management Principles to the IHO Structure

1. The Secretariat supports in general the need for tasking the Council for the next three years with a new theme of general relevance which still needs to be defined.
2. The proposal to apply the „plan-do-check-act“ cycle to evaluate and improve operational performance of the IHO organs and its subsidiaries appears to be an option. However, in view of the running revision process of the IHO Strategic Plan, the Secretariat considers the Organization as currently still being in the “plan” phase.
3. The Secretariat has got so far no indication for imbalances between the roles and responsibilities of the Council and its subsidiary organs in the coordination of the activities of the Organization during the inter-Assembly period within the framework of the strategy, work programme and financial arrangements as decided by the Assembly (IHO Convention Article VI (g) (iii) refers).
4. The Council has already discussed its effectiveness under the regime of the renewed IHO Convention. The identified uncertainties are in view of the Rules of Procedures of the Council concerning the timing of the election of the Chair and Vice Chair (C3-03.2A refers) and the interpretation of the Council relating to Member States` proposals to the Council (C3-03.7A refers) Both items are on the agenda of the third Council to endorse the proposed solutions for approval by the 2nd Assembly.
5. The Secretariat therefore believes that the application of the full „plan-do-check-act“ cycle will be premature before the adoption and application (“do”) of the proposed revision of the Strategic Plan through the 2nd Assembly for the period from 2021 to 2026 and the application of the aforementioned adaptations the Rules of Procedures of the Council. The Secretariat also believes that tasking the Council on this new “organizational” theme might be confusing and counter-productive when there is so much to do on the operational side.
6. The Secretariat is therefore of the opinion that the new theme of general relevance for the forthcoming intersessional period should address a core item of the reviewed Strategic Plan. The implementation of all aspects of S-100 based data production including their provision, the effects to IMO’s legal framework of carriage requirements for nautical information in combination with the future of paper charts is regarded as the most complex and relevant items.