

Statement of the Arctic Regional Hydrographic Commission

On October 6, 2010, the five Arctic Coastal States; Canada, Denmark, Norway, the Russian Federation and the United States, under the leadership of Canada established the Arctic Regional Hydrographic Commission (ARHC).

The establishment of the ARHC is a historic event. Since the establishment of the International Hydrographic Organization in 1921, fifteen Regional Hydrographic Commissions have been established worldwide. The Arctic Ocean remained without such a Commission until today.

The Arctic is undergoing extraordinary transformations facilitating increased natural resource development and marine traffic at a time when little reliable navigational and environmental data exists. At present, less than 10% of Arctic waters are charted to modern standards. To meet current and emerging challenges, the Arctic Coastal States represented by their Hydrographic Offices, have recognized the need for enhanced collaboration and coordination of their Arctic activities and established the ARHC.

By exchanging knowledge and information and by providing quality assured data, the Members of the ARHC aim to facilitate an environmentally responsible exploration of Arctic waters. The ARHC will thereby contribute in the development of the maritime infrastructure required for safe navigation and protection of the marine environment in the Arctic.

The ARHC is committed to enhancing cooperation with other intergovernmental organizations and the international hydrographic and maritime transportation community with a perspective towards advancing the much needed Arctic maritime infrastructure.