

MINUTES OF THE MBSHC XIVTH MEETING

MONACO, 4-5 OCT 2005

The 14th Meeting of the MBSHC took place at the IHB, Monaco, from 4 to 5 October 2005, under the Chairmanship of the Director of the French Hydrographic Office (SHOM), Ingénieur Général de l'Armement Gilles Bessero.

Representatives from twelve members (Croatia, Cyprus, France, Greece, Italy, Monaco, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, Tunisia, Turkey and Ukraine), four associated members (Israel, Malta, Romania and United Kingdom) and four observers (Germany, IOC, IMA and the IHB) attended the meeting.

The IHB hosted the meeting and was represented by VAdm A. Maratos, Captain F. Bermejo and Capt Mike Barritt as IHO CBC Vice-Chairman.

1. CHAIRMAN'S OPENING.

The Chairman welcomed the participants, regretting the absence of some members and encouraging participation in the future.

(See complete speech in enclosure)

2. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA, TIMETABLE AND DOCUMENTATION.

Nothing significant to report, minor changes were made.

3. CHAIRMAN'S REPORT.

The Chairman tabled his report addressing the following principal subjects:

- The 3rd Extraordinary IH Conference
- The WEND principles and the ENC growing demand.
- The State agreement legally binding France and Monaco with respect to SOLAS, Chap V . Reg 9.
- The IHO initiatives concerning tsunamis.
- The SHOM and IGN joint seamless data base.

(See complete speech in enclosure)

4. DESIGNATION OF THE VICE-CHAIRMAN OF THE CONFERENCE

Spain rep. kindly offered to act as vice-chairman of the 14th MBSHC conference.

5. STATUS OF THE ACTION LIST FROM THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Status report was presented at the conference (see in enclosure, list of actions arising from MBSHC13).

Most of the decisions and recommendations were discussed under the appropriate agenda items.

Decision MBSHC13-2 was discussed under AOB. Considering :

- that no nation volunteered to manage the development of ownership matrix,
- that this development is a very demanding and challenging activity,

the MBSHC decided not to go further.

6. IHB REPORT ON STATUS OF THE IHO WORKING PROGRAM

Major issues were presented by the IHB's President : Convention amendments ratification process, SPWG progress and way forward, procedures and representation at the Council, WEND principles, IHO's disaster response, cooperation and liaison with IMO, IOC, IALA and other International organisations. Most of these issues were discussed under the relevant agenda items.

7. STATUS OF THE SPWG.

MS were invited to provide comments on SPWG's documents (Decision MBSHC14-1), and IT, representing the Commission at the SPWG, will report at the next SPWG meeting that MBSHC supports "IHB's new Convention strategy" – option 1 (Decision MBSHC14-2).

a. PROCEDURE FOR MBSHC TO DESIGNATE THEIR REPRESENTATIVES IN THE COUNCIL

As far as Article XVI is concerned, the IHB's President explained that it was not an easy task to establish the list of criteria to define the IHO's "major contributors" who could get a right to seat in the Council. As a number of nations would like to get a seat, the IHO CBC Vice-Chairman pointed out that a number of countries are very aware of their rights, but they also should take into consideration their responsibilities and related commitments. However, it is agreed that "small" countries can be of very high value as member of the Council as they can reflect major concerns. Finally, after a fruitful discussion, the Commission made the decision to designate the representatives in a 2 steps process : call for candidates and then election of the MBSHC'Reps by the MS (Decision MBSHC14-3).

b. STATUS OF THE ADOPTION PROCESS OF THE NEW CONVENTION

The MS reported on the progress made in their country to ratify the amendments to the Convention. Documents have been sent by the Principality of Monaco to the ministries of Foreign Affairs. In most cases, ratification is a slow process due to the difficulty of identifying the right people in charge, in the various departments and services. Spain informed that the documents sent by Monaco by diplomatic channels had not been yet received by the Spanish Ministry of Foreign Affairs. The rest of the members informed about the status of the ratification of the amended IHO Convention in their countries. Prior to the next SPWG meeting, MS are invited to update IT on the situation (Decision MBSHC14-4).

8. PROPOSED AMENDMENTS TO THE MBSHC STATUTES.

In order to give the possibility to AMS to host MBSHC conferences (Note : Georgia volunteered to host the XIVth conference), the Commission agreed to review the statutes, making a distinction between 3 main functions : chairmanship, vice-chairmanship, and hosting. Chairman and vice-chairmanship will remain restricted to MS. The MBSHC statutes will be reviewed accordingly (Decisions MBSHC14-5 and MBSHC14-6).

9. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SCHEMES AND NEW DEMANDS OF INT CHARTS : MEDINTCHART – REPORT BY FRANCE.

FR reported on the last edition of the MEDINTCHART catalogue and indicated that some comments were received during the very few days prior to the conference and were not incorporated. TU and Croatia also reported some discrepancies during the conference. A new edition will be distributed in due course.

After fruitful debates and official statements given by the national representatives, GR/TR on one hand, and RU/UA on the other hand, agreed on the way forward. These nations will provide their proposals to amend and correct the catalogue as soon as they have reached an agreement (process described in Decisions MBSHC14-7 to 14-10). If there were disputed problems with regard to INT charts production, nations were invited to comply with M-11 procedures, and to solve the problems in the first place, through the MEDINTCHART Coordinator (Recommendation MBSHC14-1).

As a conclusion, and from a sole navigation point of view, the Chairman stated that it was not acceptable in the MBS, and within the MBSHC, to have areas not covered by INT chart because of political considerations on maritime limits and boundaries. In these challenging cases, it is our collective responsibility to define, support and implement co-production chart schemes and programmes in order to solve such issues.

10. a. PROGRESS IN NATIONAL ENC PRODUCTION, TRAINING, TESTING AND DISTRIBUTION. SPECIFIC PROBLEMS THAT MS FACE FOR IMPLEMENTING THE PRODUCTION OF ENC, ESTABLISHMENT OF ENC PRODUCTION BOUNDARIES . (REPORT BY MS).

Some inconsistencies have been identified during the last months by RENCs and MS. Most of these issues concern overlapping on ENC data coverage produced and distributed by 2 neighbouring countries, or disputes about ENC boundaries. Sooner or later, these problems will affect safety of navigation, and will threaten confidence in ENC itself. In addition, it was noted that most of these difficulties occur because WEND principles and guidelines on ENC production are not respected. It is therefore not acceptable and these issues must be solved under bilateral technical agreements.

Regarding ENC co-production, FR gave an example of the excellent level of cooperation established with ES, where 2 large scale ENC cells cover both the national waters of Spain and France, however one cell is produced by one country, when the second cell is done by the other.

b. REPORTS FROM THE EXISTING RENCs.

Nothing significant to report.

c. V_RENC SITUATION.

IT gave a short status report on V-RENC developments and the links with MEDCHARTNET project. Following discussions and interrogations on the commercial availability, and updating procedures of the ENC produced under this project, IMA was invited to provide MBSHC with a progress report, including ENC production status and availability (Decision MBSHC14-14).

d. PRESENTATION OF THE REVISED WEND PRINCIPLES

The revised edition of the WEND principles was re-distributed by the Bureau (ref. CL39/2005, 18 April 2005). The IHB's President drew the attention of the MS, as they have supported the new edition of WEND principles, that their related activities on ENC production, must be compliant with the WEND principles and should especially take into account the Guidance for the Establishment of ENC Production Boundaries.

e. DEVELOPMENT OF A MBSHC ENC SCHEME

Due to the rapid development of ENC production capabilities in MBS, and in order to prevent conflicts in the distribution of ENC production responsibilities or disputes on ENC boundaries, the Commission made the decision to develop an ENC scheme covering MBS. This scheme will be based on WEND principles, and in accordance with these principles, proposals will be made by the MEDINTCHART Coord. taking into account, as a first step, existing INT chart schemes. In a second phase, production (or co-production) responsibilities will be addressed (Decision MBSHC14-11 and 14-12).

11. REVIEW OF S55 AND DEFINITION OF CANDIDATE ITEMS FOR SUBMISSION TO THE IHO CAPACITY BUILDING COMMITTEE

a. HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEY STATUS IN THE MBSHC AREA: REPORT BY SPAIN.

MS are invited to report on the current status of their surveys on a yearly basis and HO's should liaise with research organisations to complement these reports (Decision MBSHC14-13 and Recommendation MBSHC 14-2).

The IHO CBC Vice-Chairman requests to those MS that keep in contact with countries in the South East region of the Mediterranean Sea, to ask those countries to send the required information in order to update S-55.

b. PROMULGATION OF RADIONAVIGATIONAL WARNINGS WITHIN NAVAREA III AREA.

c. MSI IN NAVAREA III AREA.

As NAVAREA III Coordinator, Spain will check the MSI entries recently updated in S-55 publication.

d. THE IMPLEMENTATION OF GMDSS

The need of harmonizing and optimizing MSI activities within MBS, such as NAVTEX coverage, was recognised.

Spain informed that, in their role of NAVAREA III regional co-ordinator, they will try to organize a meeting with the participation of IMO NAVTEX CONTROL PANEL and NAVAREA representatives, in order to establish a new scheme of MBS NAVTEX Service Areas, looking for the best service for mariners possible and at the same time trying to accept national proposals.

A recommendation was made to NAVAREA III Coordinator to investigate the need and the possibility of organising an MSI workshop (Rec. MBSHC14-6) as made last year, prior to the EAHC Conference.

12. ENTRY OF NEW MEMBER STATES, CO-OPERATION WITH NON-MEMBER STATES.

Nothing significant to report.

13. TRAINING AND EDUCATION.

The Bureau announced the 1st IHO seminar on capacity building to be held in Trieste, 10-14 Oct. 05. Following the last EAHC and an audit made by the Western African Action Team (WAAT), the IHO CBC decided to set up this seminar in order to provide the representatives of the West African country national hydrographic committees, with an overview of hydrography, cartography, and MSI, related responsibilities, requirements and recent developments.

Many countries also highlighted their current actions on training and education, in cooperation with other MBS countries.

14. NEW TECHNIQUES AND EQUIPMENT IN HYDROGRAPHY AND OCEANOGRAPHY.

Some MS informed the attendance on new developments achieved or in progress, and new vessels recently commissioned (see relevant chapters in national reports).

15. TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND COOPERATIONS:

a. MEDA MEDCHARTNET AND OTHER HYDROGRAPHY SUPPORT PROJECTS (Task 2.1.3 IHO WP).

RA Spanio from IMA provided the MBSHC participants with a report on MEDA MEDCHARTNET. After some debate, and a strong support from countries which are in the process of developing their own hydrographic and cartographic capabilities, and which have been supported through MEDA, it was decided to investigate the best ways of providing sustainable support to the project partners (Decision MBSHC14-14 and Rec. MBSHC14-4).

b BILATERAL AND MULTILATERAL PROJECTS. PROPOSALS FOR FURTHER CO-OPERATION.

Some co-operative projects were presented by the nations. Slovenia announced its willingness to get assistance from neighbouring countries in order to carry out an hydrographic survey. Italy and Croatia will consider the request in liaison with the IHO CBC (Rec. MBSHC14-7). Check national reports of Slovenia, Turkey and Croatia.

c. STATUS OF A CO-ORDINATED MARITIME GIS OF THE MBSHC (INTERADRIATIC PROJECT, RAMOGE)

Nothing significant to report.

16. STATUS OF BILATERAL ARRANGEMENTS BETWEEN THE MBSHC MEMBERS.

France highlighted the International agreement signed with Monaco, legally binding the two countries in accordance with the 2002 revised SOLAS Convention (see also Chairman's report). This type of agreement can be made available to other nations on demand.

17. DISCUSSION OF KEY POINTS ARISING FROM NATIONAL REPORTS AND NOT ALREADY DEALT WITH

National reports are provided in enclosure. It was noted that national reports had to be made available to the Bureau and to the Chairman about 2 months in advance, so key points and relevant issues could be included in the agenda of the conference (Decision MBSHC14-15).

CBC representative pointed out the necessity for MS needing help to include their proposals in their national reports in a standardized format. Moreover, as all members agreed on the standardized format and found it convenient, even across other HCs, the Bureau will issue a CL, and this format will become mandatory, both for the Agendas and for national reports, as it was suggested by Slovenia.

18. STATUS AND REPORT OF THE WORKING GROUP FOR THE SAFETY OF NAVIGATION IN THE BLACK SEA. (Task 2.1.5 IHO WP).

Turkey gave a short report in which they exposed that TN-DNHO presented the draft ENC production scheme for the Black Sea region for medium scale as the Chairman of the WG, which can also be connected with the Mediterranean Region scheme. One of the action items raised in the 7th BASWG Meeting was "The Member States will study and inform the Chairmanship with their comments on the draft ENC scheme which is prepared by TN-DNHO. The final draft will be discussed during the next meeting of the working group in order to be agreed on. The business will be carried out by correspondence." BASWG Chairman will report to the next MBSHC Conference the BASWG Medium Scale ENC Scheme which can be connected to the Mediterranean Region in the future.

The Turkish report on BASWG was followed by a long discussion about funding issues in the region. Finally, a recommendation was made for the BASWG (Rec. MBSHC14-8).

Ukraine informed that they have also prepared a scheme for ENC, connecting it with the Mediterranean Region.

19. INTERNATIONAL SEAPOWER SYMPOSIUM.

It was reminded to all participants that this symposium gives to the hydrographic community an excellent opportunity to make our activities more visible and tangible at the highest levels of decision makers. The next symposium is scheduled in Oct. 2006. If needed, nations are invited to present their cases to the Bureau or through the Italian Navy. Greece provided the group with an update of the hydrographic surveys conducted along the coasts of Albania (copy of the presentation is given in enclosure).

20.a. CO-OPERATION WITH INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS (Element 1.2, Task 1.2.1_IHO WP)

The IHB's President updated the group with the current working and active relations between IHO and various International organisations such as IMO, IALA, and IOC. Many issues are of interest for the MBSHC MS and AMS, such as ENC carriage requirements for HSC (and the appropriate back-up arrangements).

b. STATUS OF NAVIGATIONAL SYSTEMS IN MEDITERRANEAN LORAN, DGPS, AUTOMATIC IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM (AIS) AND ITS APPLICATION ON ENC, ETC (REPORT BY IALA REPRESENTATIVE AND OTHERS).

IALA is going to set up a working group for long-range Automated Information Systems.

c. CHAPTER V OF SOLAS, EFFECT THAT THEY HAVE ON THE CONTRACTING GOVERNMENTS TO SOLAS THAT THEY ARE NOT MEMBERS OF IHO (REPORT BY IHB).

The IHB's President gave a comprehensive report on SOLAS obligations and highlighted the key points about ECDIS requirements versus chart carriage.

d. CO-ORDINATION OF SEA LEVEL MEASUREMENT IN THE MEDITERRANEAN AND BLACK-SEA. PERSPECTIVE FROM MEDGLOSS AND ESEAS (REPORT BY IOC).

Greece and IOC gave 2 presentations, one dealing with the European Sea-Level Service project, the second on MedGLOSS (Global Sea Level Observing System). It was noted that the coverage of sea level measurements was not sufficient in particular along the Southern coasts of MBS. As a consequence, it is acknowledged that ESEAS and MedGLOSS are very complementary. Due to the importance of sea level observations for many applications (one of which is related to disaster-tsunami warning systems as mentioned in IHO CL 89/2005), nations were encouraged to contribute to regional sea level observation projects (Rec. MBSHC14-5).

21. STATUS OF THE INTERNATIONAL BATHYMETRIC CHART OF THE MEDITERRANEAN (IBCM) AND OTHER RELEVANT ISSUES.

Professor Morelli and Dr. John Hall reported on the geophysics and bathymetric surveys conducted in MBS by research organisations.

22. REPORTS FROM AND TO THE ADJACENT HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSIONS.

Nothing significant to report.

23. ANY OTHER ITEMS.

- Germany, whose delegate is a member of CHRIS gave an update on the current development of the next version of S-57 : evolution, timeframe, inclusion of a few new "small" objects, issues related to ECDIS, etc.

- The IHO CBC Vice-Chairman gave a comprehensive report on S-55 and explained how the database could be used to assess national hydrographic capacities, and influence the IHO CBC programme of work. In the MBSHC area of responsibility, it

was noted that GMDSS/MSI implementation was one of the main concerns. In order to complement S-55, the IHB will also coordinate with MS a visit to the countries which have not responded to the questionnaire yet (Rec. MBSHC14-3).

The IHO CBC Vice-Chairman also presented a draft paper giving the “assessment criteria for definition of appropriate hydrographic capability”. In a table, it shows the different levels of capacities required (from nothing to full), versus MSI, surveying and charting.

24. DECISIONS, RESOLUTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

See in enclosure

25. DATE AND PLACE OF THE NEXT CONFERENCE.

Decision was made to hold the XVth conference in the second half of 2007. Tunisia kindly offered to host the conference, and confirmation on the possibilities will be given by April 2006. If not possible, Malta, with UK support, is keen to host it. If none of these options is possible, Croatia will investigate the possibility of doing it (Decision MBSHC 14-16).

26. CLOSING.

The Chairman thanked MS, AMS, and observers for their active participation and the IHB for hosting the conference. On behalf of the Commission, he sent his best wishes to Spain which is taking over the chairmanship of the MBSHC.