



IHO File N° S1/6200/C-1

**CIRCULAR LETTER 55/2017
31 October 2017**

OUTCOME OF THE 1st MEETING OF THE IHO COUNCIL

References:

- A. Council Circular Letter 03/2017 dated 9 June 2017 – *Announcement of the first meeting of the IHO Council (C-1) and provisional Agenda*
- B. Council Circular Letter 04/2017 dated 11 July – *Result of the election of the Chair and Vice-Chair of the IHO Council*
- C. Council Circular Letter 08/2017 dated 17 August - *Revised provisional Agenda of the 1st Meeting of the IHO Council*
- D. Council Circular Letter 09/2017 dated 27 September – *Election of the Vice Chair of the Council*
- E. 1st Session of the IHO Assembly P-6 – *Proceedings including List of Decisions*
- F. IHO Resolution 2/2007 as amended
- G. IHO Convention
- H. General Regulations of the IHO
- I. Rules of Procedure of the IHO Council
- J. Rules of Procedure of the IHO Assembly

Dear Hydrographer,

1. As announced in Reference D, the first meeting of the IHO Council (C-1) took place from 17 to 19 October 2017 at the IHO Secretariat in Monaco. The meeting was chaired by Rear Admiral Shepard M. SMITH (United States of America). Admiral (Retired) Luiz Fernando PALMER Fonseca (Brazil) served as Vice-Chair. The Meeting was attended by 65 representatives from 27 Council Members and representatives of Member States.
2. The summary report of C-1, together with the list of decisions and actions arising from the meeting as well as any other working documents associated with the meeting, are available from the Council page of the IHO website (www.iho.int > Committees & WG > Council), at section C-1.
3. The items considered by the meeting which require consideration and final approval from Member States are reviewed in the following paragraphs.

Role and Goals of the IHO Council

4. The Council Members reviewed the general tasks, responsibilities and scope of empowerment of this new body of the Organization according to the Basic Documents (References G, H, I and J).

5. The Council identified needs for clarification to be brought to the Assembly A-2 regarding the operational control of the subsidiaries, namely HSSC and IRCC in view of their routine approval process for their respective proposals. The Council decided to propose to the Member States to pursue, until A-2, the procedure that was in force before the establishment of the Council, for approving the recommendations made by HSSC and IRCC, at the appreciation of HSSC and IRCC Chairs. This applies in particular but is not limited to the standards and publications listed in Appendix 1 of IHO Resolution 2/2007 as amended (Reference F). As a result, the Secretary-General was tasked to issue an IHO Circular Letter to seek approval of the Member States for this Council decision.
6. In the context of the above paragraph 5, the Council encourages HSSC and IRCC via their respective Chairs present at the meeting to consider their TORs and IHO Resolution 2/2007 as amended, in the view that Council endorsement may not be required for routine maintenance of their respective standards and publications, and subsequently prepare amendments to their TORs as appropriate for being endorsed at C-3 before submission to A-2.
7. The TOR amendments should take into account that it is the prerogative of the HSSC & IRCC Chairs to appreciate and determine the need to obtain the approval of the Council for recommendations of possible strategic importance.
8. Considering the timelines between HSSC-10 and IRCC-10 meetings in 2018 and the countdown for submission of reports and proposals to C-2, the Council invited HSSC and IRCC Chairs to prepare their 2018 meetings minutes with the view that they will be used/submitted directly as reports and proposals to be considered at C-2.
9. The Council identified another possible conflict between the IHO Convention (Reference G) and the Council Rules of Procedure (Reference I) with regards to the functions of the Council because there is no statement within the applying paragraphs of the Convention that it is a function of the Council to review, to consider or to take any other action on proposals put to it by Member States or by the Secretary-General.
10. The discussion resulted in the joint interpretation of the intentions of Basic Documents of the Organization (References G, H, I and J refer) that the Council is empowered to accept and take actions on proposals put to it by Member States or by the Secretary-General. The Council decided to continue with this practice as applied in the course of C-1 but to seek final clarification on this issue from A-2 as well.

Items requested from the Council by the 1st IHO Assembly (A-1)

11. In response to a Proposal from the United Kingdom, Decision 3 of the first session of the Assembly tasked the Council to conduct a comprehensive review of the Strategic Plan and to provide a draft revised Plan, as appropriate, in time for the consideration of the 2nd ordinary meeting of the Assembly (A-2). The Council was empowered by the Assembly to establish a working group for this specific purpose.
12. The Council decided to establish the Strategic Plan Review Working Group (SPRWG), endorsed the draft TORs developed by the Council drafting group and proposed the future SPRWG to include communication strategies as part of the way and means of their anticipated results.
13. The Council endorsed the nomination of the office bearers of the SPRWG, namely Bruno FRACHON (France) for the position of Chair, Shigeru NAKABAYASHI (Japan) for the position of Vice-Chair and Douglas BRUNT (Canada) for the position of the Secretary.
14. As a result, the Secretary-General was tasked to seek approval of the Member States for this Council decision and the associated nomination of office bearers by Circular Letter.
15. In order to reflect the new structure of the IHO as defined in the amendments to the Convention on the IHO and the other Basic Documents of the IHO that entered in to force on 8 November 2016, Decision A-1/5 tasked the Secretary-General to draft revised texts for the affected IHO Resolutions.

16. The Council endorsed the proposals for the revision of the affected IHO Resolutions with minor amendments for some and tasked the Secretary-General to seek approval of the Member States for this Council decision.

17. A-1 acknowledged the preference that the Chair and Vice-Chair of the Council were appointed before the first meeting of the Council after the Assembly, in order that appropriate preparatory discussions could take place between the Chair, the Vice-Chair and the Secretary-General and instructed the Council to consider whether Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure for the Council requires permanent amendment and to make proposals accordingly and if required, for consideration by the Assembly at its next meeting (A-2).

18. The Council endorsed the proposal of the Secretary-General to amend Rule 12 of the Rules of Procedure of the Council to enable a postal ballot to take place shortly after the Council has been appointed by the Assembly and agreed to submit the proposed revised Rule 12 of the Council ROP to A-2.

19. A-1 acknowledged that the financial statements and any associated recommendations for each year's audited accounts are normally published in April of the following year, but the Council is not scheduled to meet until October, which is ten months after the audited accounts have been closed. As a result, Decision A-1/24.d directed the C-1 to consider an appropriate methodology and timetable to deal with each year's subsequent financial statements and to propose any adjustments to the relevant basic documents if required. C-1 agreed to endorse the new resolution on the procedure for considering the annual financial statement and the forthcoming budget estimate as proposed by the Secretary-General in principle, but to adapt to the suggestions made during the deliberations by the Council before seeking the approval of the Member States by Circular Letter.

Items related to the subsidiary organs

20. Prior to subsequent approval of the Member States by Circular Letter to be issued by the Secretary-General, C-1 endorsed the three proposals submitted by HSSC affecting:

- S-66 Ed. 1.1.0;
- S-57 Appendix B.1, Annex A, Ed. 4.1.0;
- S-11 Part A, Ed. 3.1.0;

and tasked HSSC to establish a prioritized list of work items that need to be supported by the Special Project Fund.

21. Prior to subsequent approval of the Member States by the same Circular Letter, C-1 endorsed

- the proposed new IHO Resolution to address issues related to the existence of overlapping ENC data;
- the proposed revocation of IHO Resolution 1/1992 – *Monitoring of INT Charts*;
- the proposed withdrawal of IHO Publication B-7 GEBCO Guidelines

22. Based on the report of the IRCC chair, C-1 endorsed the proposal for increasing the capacity building support at the IHO Secretariat and tasked the Secretary-General to further investigate and report on the feasibility of recruiting a new regular staff member at the Secretariat and to install an interim solution on short term as a matter of urgency.

23. C-1 invited IRCC to consider enlargement of the scope of the Crowd-Sourced Bathymetry Working Group to develop liaison strategies with potential professional crowd source contributors. In this context, Norway was encouraged to submit a proposal to the appropriate IRCC working groups for the contribution of sounding data extracted from ENC to the IHO Data Centre for Digital Bathymetry in support of the Seabed 2030 initiative.

IHO Annual work programme and budget

24. C-1 noted the information provided by the Secretary-General on the current financial status and the envisioned budget for 2018 in terms of absolute amount and percentage of the various shares allocated to earnings and debts. C-1 agreed to continue this method to report on the presented level of detail and emphasized it's desire to establish long-term statistics on budget developments.

25. C-1 endorsed the proposals made by the Secretary-General and two Directors on the key priorities in the IHO 2018 work programme, namely:

Corporate Affairs	Hydrographic Services and Standards	Inter Regional Cooperation and Support
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contribute to IMO-IHO Harmonization Group on Data Modelling HDGM • Assess range and efficiency of participation on events outside the core of hydrographic interest • Plan and start a complete overhaul of the IHO website including incorporation of GIS-services • Manage the announced wave of new IHO membership • Assist the Council in its phase of operational consolidation and contribute to the revision process of the strategic plan (A1/03) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an S-100 Interoperability Specification • Develop all the components needed to make S-101 a reality • Develop S-121 Product Spec for Maritime Limits and Boundaries • Consolidation and clarification of standards in relation to ECDIS/ENC • Consider data quality aspects in an appropriate and harmonized way for all S-100 based product spec. • Prepare Ed. 6.0.0 of S-44 • Develop initial guidance on definition and harmonization of Maritime Service Portfolios 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Increase in the provision of capacity building requests and follow up activities by existing and new IHO member states • Extended fundraising activities • Continued development and maintenance of ENC and INT Schemes • Development of Crowd Sourced Bathymetry Guidelines • Seabed 2030 Project Management Plan • Concept Development Study (CDS) for Marine Spatial Data Infrastructures

26. On reflection of the presented key priorities and budget deliberations, C-1:

- encouraged the Member States and the Secretariat to consider the engagement with the UN-GGIM Working Group on Marine Geospatial Information as a relevant priority;
- invited the Secretariat to provide its proposed annual work programme key priorities in time with other supporting documents for future meetings of the Council;
- supported the aspirations of the Secretariat to earn savings from the operational costs in favour of the special project fund for contract support;

Items proposed by a Member State or by the Secretary-General

27. C-1 confirmed the established practice for the adoption of the theme of the World Hydrography Day (IHO CL inviting comment on a proposed theme, followed by IHO CL for announcing the theme) in general and supported the proposed theme for WHD 2018 "*Bathymetry - the foundation for sustainable seas, oceans and waterways*" for subsequent approval by the Member States.

28. The proposal of the Secretary-General to amend the General Regulations to address the medical fitness of candidates for election to the positions of Secretary-General or Director, and the conditions of service of Directors was endorsed by C-1. The Council Chair was invited to include the proposed amendment in its report and proposals of A-2.

29. Responding to the request of Clause (c) of Article 16 of the General Regulations, which requires A-2 to reconsider the definition of what constitutes an interest in hydrographic matters, C-1 undertook a survey amongst the Council members present whether the Council should adopt this item into its scope of work. C-1 finally decided against and will wait on further guidance from A-2 on this subject.

30. Based on the submission of Canada, C-1 discussed needs and possibilities to amend the General Regulations concerning the election process for electing the Secretary-General and the Directors. C-1 thanked Canada, supported by Australia, Brazil, France and Norway and any other interested MS, for

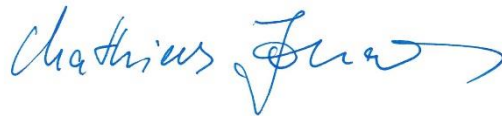
offering to pursue informal discussions on possible improvements of the General Regulations with regard to the election process.

Next Meeting of the IHO Council and conclusive remarks

31. Member States are invited to note, for planning purposes, that the next Council meeting (C-2) will be held from 9 to 11 October 2018 in London, United Kingdom.

32. The conduct of the meeting as well as discussions and decisions made by this new body of the Organization were collectively regarded by the Council Members and Member States representatives present as fully meeting the expectations and objectives placed on the Council within the framework of the revised IHO convention. The Council-Chair highlighted the fact that the Secretariat delivered valuable input to focus the discussions on strategic aspects of the Organization. He likewise emphasized the clear guidance which resulted from the considerations of the Council to establish itself as the body who directs the activities of the Organization inter-sessionally as envisaged by the amendments to the IHO Convention.

Yours sincerely,



Dr Mathias JONAS
Secretary-General