

**Highlights of Extraordinary East Asia Hydrographic Commission
(EAHC) Meeting - 22-24 FEB 05, Seoul, Korea**

- Member attendees: China, Indonesia, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Philippines, Singapore, Thailand
- Non-member Observers: IHO reps, Brunei Darussalam, UK, US

Tsunami Discussion

- Indonesia needs hydro surveys of 15 ports, channels, and associated new charts. Priority is along the west coast of Aceh Province (bathy, coastline, and AtoN's). Total estimated cost to complete ~ \$2.8M (US).
- Malaysia has already done substantial investigations in the Straits of Malacca (SOM). Noted that they have not received any shipping complaints wrt depths in the straits, there are no reports of tidal abnormalities, and no indications of damage or shift of navaids in the straits. They reported that overall, depths in the SOM have changed, but have mainly deepened and that the Tsunami may not be the reason for the sediment transport. They proposed reactivation of the 4 Nations Joint Survey (Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Japan) to resurvey the SOM.
- Thailand briefed that much of their hydrographic resources were destroyed in the Tsunami, and that the areas most heavily damaged were Phang-Na and Phuket. They are planning a 3-year hydrographic plan in S. Thailand as follows: 2005 - resurvey/chart 16 major areas in support of safety of navigation and tourism, 2006 - coastline survey from Ranong to Phuket, 2007 - coastline survey from Phuket to Satun. Additionally, they are installing 9 digital tide gages in the Andaman Sea for both tides and tsunami early warning. They have purchased a new multibeam (MB) sonar and made a request for a MB training course by a country with MB experience.
- VADM Maratos (IHB) formally announced a special session on 16 APR in Monaco, behind the 3rd EIHC, to discuss Tsunami issues and coordinate needed support from IHO. Note: recommend CAPT Best or Barb Reed present the brief given by Tom Cuff at EAHC re US-Indonesia Post-Tsunami Surveys at this special session in APR.
- UK briefed that HMS Scott has checked and disproved the 4 reported shoal soundings in the SOM.
- VADM Maratos briefed an IOC project to establish an Indian Ocean Tsunami Warning System like that in the Pacific. This would be a 3-year program with technical coordination by IOC and IHO but with regional country participation. Phase 1 will

be to gather all available data, and phase 2 will be the execution of needed surveys. Noted that there was less than enthusiastic response from Australia (CAPT Ward), Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand. VADM Maratos will brief this initiative at NIOHC and will put out more detail after that.

- Singapore made a proposal for a disaster coordination mechanism/reporting structure for EAHC members that received very favorable comments from meeting participants. Singapore will add more details and budget figures and submit to the EAHC Chair for forwarding to IHB for discussion at the APR special session.

SPWG Discussion

- After initial discussion, the Chairman (Korea) announced that the EAHC will, as a commission, support the SPWG Proposal in full. However, he did not poll each country individually.
- China and Singapore both made strong statements in support of adopting the whole SPWG package.
- Japan said that while his country/government has listed some recommended modifications within the Red Book, they are too detail oriented and that Japan supports the overall direction of the SPWG proposals.
- Malaysia voiced overall support, but also some concerns re how Council members are selected and associated roles. They want some council members to be allowed in on a voluntary basis, and those volunteers be allowed a say in Council issues, vice observer status only - said they may make a small recommended amendment during the APR conference. The chairman re-emphasized wanting to present a united EAHC "support" position for the SPWG proposals.
- While they made no public comment, Indonesia and Philippines were approached individually, and both indicated they would support the SPWG proposal.
- In sidebar discussion with CAPT Ward of Australia, he indicated that AUS will fully support. However, he mentioned that New Zealand will likely voice some objections - no detail as to the nature of the objections.
- Overall impression - strong support for SPWG proposals from this region.
- Note: VADM Maratos and RDML Barbor both expressed enthusiasm and optimism following the letter from RDML McGee outlining US support for SPWG proposals. Said it was very timely and that many countries have held back their inputs awaiting the US position.

EAHC New Membership Discussion

- Pitched full US membership within the EAHC - due to US being an IHO member state in good standing with sovereign territory within the region. Was told that we would have to submit a formal letter of application to the Chairman for circulation around to all the members. While there is nothing in the present EAHC Statutes re a membership application letter, this is the process that was followed by N. Korea. The commission is soon to circulate the N. Korean letter for membership to all the members for comment/inputs and we need to ensure our letter is circulated at the same time. Note: I will be circulating our draft letter to NOAA, NGA, and State for comment this week, with the intent of getting it signed out by RDML McGee ASAP.
- Overall impression: There were no open comments/objections wrt US membership, and it was the Chairman's opinion that more members are better for EAHC and that US should be admitted. We now have a stated path to follow for membership whereas there was none before this meeting - we should act quickly.

EAHC Statutes Revision

- While revision of statutes has been in the works for ~ 5 years, it was decided to have the WG (Singapore-led) defer recommended changes until the next ordinary EAHC conference, with the idea that they may be able to better match the revised statutes to changes in the IHO convention discussed at the 3rd EIHC in April.

South China Sea ENC Task Group (SET)

- First EAHC joint project (PRC/HK led) where all member states actively participated.
- Small-scale South China Sea ENC (4 cells) has been developed.
- Copyright will rest with EAHC.
- "Everyone can have access to the data - no charge". Release date no later than 31 MAR 05.
- Ongoing Sea Trial until final version released - positive feedback thus far from 8 ships with ECDIS of different makes. Now there is a need for medium-scale ENCs.
- Planning for a monthly NTM update service (eNTMs).
- EAHC chair approved the following recs:
 - Approve official release (31 MAR 05); free of charge; copyright with EAHC; 3rd party access & distro.

- Approve updating mechanism - SET lead to assume role as ENC administrator - collect NTMs from EAHC MSs; issue of eNTMs; maintain the website; fine tune/issue new editions.
- EAHC Chair to inform IHB on release of SCS ENCs (IHB to further report to IMO)
- EAHC Chair to follow-up on any request for distributing the SCS ENCs (i.e. allows EAHC to retain control & prevent data use for other purposes or being sold).

IHO Capacity Building Committee (CBC)

- CAPT Barritt (UK) - CBC, gave an overview of the purpose and status of the CBC, and made a request for all MSs to provide inputs for potential projects for the CBC to consider by the next CBC meeting in June.
- CBC seems steered toward training (both formal and OJT) to help developing countries. A common theme briefed by CAPT Barritt, based on inputs thus far, is a need for MB training.
- Note: the efforts of the CBC seem to make sense - why is it counter to US policy - need clarification on this? Could NAVOCEANOs HYCOOP/MTT group be a tool to execute Capacity Building funds? If viable, need to provide an info brief to the CBC at the June meeting.

Next Conference

- Next EAHC ordinary conference to be held SEP 2006 in Korea.