



IHO File No S3/8151/HSSC

CIRCULAR LETTER 02/2024
09 January 2024

**ADOPTION OF AMENDMENTS
TO THE TERMS OF REFERENCE AND RULES OF PROCEDURE OF
THE HYDROGRAPHIC SERVICES AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE (HSSC)**

Reference: IHO CL 37/2023 dated 31 October 2023 – *Call for Approval of Amendments to the Terms of Reference and Rules of Procedure of the HSSC.*

Dear Hydrographer,

1. The Circular Letter in Reference proposed the revision of the Terms of Reference (TORs) and Rules of Procedure (ROPs) of the Hydrographic Services and Standards Committee (HSSC), as endorsed by the IHO Council in October 2023.
2. The Secretariat of the IHO thanks the 50 Member States who replied to the Circular Letter in Reference: Algeria, Australia, Bangladesh, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Denmark, Dominican Republic, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, India, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Ireland, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Kenya, Latvia, Lebanon, Malaysia, Monaco, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Norway, Oman, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Sri Lanka, Suriname, Sweden, Türkiye, Ukraine, United Kingdom and the United States of America.
3. All the Member States, except one, supported the adoption of the amendments and four Member States offered comments in addition to their vote. These comments and the outcome of their review by the Chair of HSSC and the IHO Secretariat are provided in Annex A to this Circular Letter.
4. When the Circular Letter in Reference was issued, there were 98 Member States of the IHO with two States suspended. In accordance with the provisions of the Convention on the IHO as amended, the minimum number of affirmative votes required was 32. As a result, the amendments of the TORs and ROPs of the HSSC have been adopted.
5. The revised TORs and ROPs of the HSSC will be posted on the IHO website www.iho.int > Services and Standards > ... > HSSC > Basic Committee Documents.

On behalf of the Secretary-General
Yours sincerely,

Dr John NYBERG
Director

Annex A: Member States' responses to IHO CL 37/2023 and comments from the HSSC Chair/IHO Secretariat.

**MEMBER STATES' RESPONSES TO IHO CL 37/2023
AND COMMENTS FROM THE HSSC CHAIR/IHO SECRETARIAT**

AMENDMENTS TO THE TORs and ROPs of the HSSC

CUBA (Vote = YES)

We consider that it will make it possible the integration of IHO technical staff producing standards and guidelines regarding the S-100 family of standards with the staff that will market those products.

Comment from the HSSC Chair/IHO Secretariat:

This support is welcome.

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SPAIN (Vote = YES)

IHM approves the adoption of amendments to the TORs and ROPs of HSSC, considering the benefits of inviting those key contributors in the S-100 standardisation and services under development.

Comment from the HSSC Chair/IHO Secretariat:

This support is welcome.

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TÜRKIYE (Vote = NO)

It is not needed to add any article/statement to the Rules of Procedures on giving any additional or extra responsibility/right to any position (Chair, Vice-Chair, etc.). If, the Committee decides to invite anyone /expert to participate in meetings, the decisions can be taken in accordance with article 2.5 of RoP which says "Decisions shall generally be made by consensus. If votes are required on issues or to endorse proposals presented to the Committee, decisions shall be taken by a simple majority of Committee Members present and voting When dealing with inter-sessional matters by correspondence, a simple majority of all Committee Members shall be required.". Any additional responsibility/authority beyond the Committee decision shall not be given to the any person. If there is a need to invite an expert to the meetings, decision can be taken by the Committee.

Comment from the HSSC Chair/IHO Secretariat:

The HSSC Chair/IHO Secretariat thank Türkiye for their comment which is noted. However, the relevant amendments in Art. 2.1 do not aim to provide the Chair an extra responsibility/right compared to the existing power and duties, but simply to implement a more effective and non-procedural mechanism to reinforce the strength of the HSSC, bringing around the table in a flexible way, those contributing effectively to the development of standards and services, without the support of whom the IHO would certainly miss critical skills and expertise in complex domains. Art. 2.5 remains applicable to all matters and decisions in particular, but is not relevant for inviting experts, on a case-by-case basis, prior to HSSC meetings. See also the complementary note below.

UNITED KINGDOM (Vote = YES)

Caveat: The UK supports the proposed amendments with one caveat, that the Chair should reserve the right to withdraw attendance from parts of the meeting for ECs if sensitive topics related directly to HOs are to be discussed. MS should have the right to request the Chair enacts this clause.

Comment from the HSSC Chair/IHO Secretariat:

The HSSC Chair/IHO Secretariat thank the United Kingdom for their comment which is agreed on the principles. As it happens already in some IHO Working Groups and Sub-Committees meetings, the Chair, when establishing the provisional agenda and timetable, can always set up closed sessions open to full Members only (Member States representatives or designated Members depending on the WG/SC Membership ROPs). If a request is made in session by a full Member, for whatever reason, then Art. 2.5 can and should be applied.