

**ANNEX D TO EA_tHC WEST AFRICA ACTION TEAM REPORT
APRIL-MAY 2004**

COUNTRY REPORT: GUINEA-BISSAU

INTRODUCTION

International

1. Guinea-Bissau is not a member of IHO, but is an associate member of the EA_tHC, and participates regularly in the meetings of this regional hydrographic commission.
2. Although Guinea-Bissau is a member of IMO, it has not yet endorsed the SOLAS convention. Other conventions, such as IALA, SAR or UNCLOS, have also not been endorsed by Guinea-Bissau. Action was expected after the imminent change of government. Concerning African organizations, Guinea-Bissau is a member of PMAWCA, MOWCA and CEDA-AS (Central Dredging Association – African Association).

Preliminary Liason

3. The visit of the WAAT was coordinated and prepared by the Administração dos Portos da Guiné-Bissau (APGB).

Points of contact, updates to the IHO Yearbook :

Maritime Authority / Autorité Maritime : Ministry of Transport and Communications, former Ministry of Social Equipment.

- a) Direcção Geral da Marinha Mercante
C.P. 25
BISSAU
Guinea-Bissau
Tel. / Fax : +245 20 19 84.

Name and rank of the director or head / Nom et grade du Director : Commander Pedro Tipote.

Principal functions of service / Attributions principales du service : Safety of navigation, Lighthouse authority, hydrographic studies.

- b) Administração dos Portos da Guiné-Bissau
Avenida 3 de Agosto, C.P. 693
BISSAU
Guinée-Bissau
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Name and rank of the director or head / Nom et grade du Director : Dr. Fernando Gomes.

Principal functions of service / Attributions principales du service : Administration of the ports, hydrographic studies, safety of navigation, Pilot Service.

- c) Date of establishment and Relevant National Legislation – Date de fondation et législation nationale concernée : *No information obtained, though requested.*
- d) N° of charts published / Nombre de cartes publiées: 20 nautical charts, all published by Portugal, but only 2 INT charts (2800 and 2851).
- e) Staff employed – Effectives (personnel with hydrographic training) : Commander Alberto Tipote, Eng. Mário Musante.

Type of publications produced – Type de publications produites : Catalogue of charts, Tide Tables, Sailing Directions, List of Lights, all published by Portugal.

DESCRIPTION OF MARITIME ACTIVITIES

National Maritime Affairs

4. At the time of the WAAT visit, national maritime affairs were the responsibility of the Ministry of Social Equipment (Ministério do Equipamento Social). However, it is presently expected that this Ministry will split into two new ministries: the Ministry of Public Works and Ministry of Transports and Communications. The latter would be in charge of maritime affairs.
5. There are two organizations under the Ministry of Social Equipment with direct responsibility for maritime activities: the *Administração dos Portos da Guiné-Bissau* (APGB), i.e., Guinea-Bissau Ports Administration, and *Direcção Geral da Marinha Mercante* (DGMM), i.e. Merchant Navy General Direction. Both have regulatory responsibilities with respect to the ports and the boundary between the functions or jurisdictions of each other is not very well clarified.
6. According to the information given by Commander Pedro Tipote, general director of DGMM, this entity is responsible for hydrographic matters and for the safety of navigation. The maintenance and operation of lighthouses and buoys is also a responsibility of the DGMM, which, therefore, assumes the role of a Lighthouse Authority.
7. The APGB is responsible for the administration of the ports (as indicated by its own name) and for port operations. It also controls the Pilot Service¹ and a VHF radio station, which serve ships that call at Bissau harbour. There were indications of plans to privatize the port operations.

Trade and Maritime Traffic

8. All international commercial trade of Guinea-Bissau passes along Geba Channel and through Bissau port. APGB assessed a figure of 260 to 280 ship calls per year.

a. Through Routes :

The main route is international and runs off the west Guinea-Bissau coast. Guinea-Bissau authorities have no means of monitoring this offshore shipping.

b. Transshipment and bulk Trades :

The exports of Guinea-Bissau mainly consist of cashew nut, which is shipped in the first place to Dakar and Casablanca, from where it is sent to other destinations. Imports by sea consist of food and oil products. Regarding these last products, recent national legislation forbids import by land in order to encourage sea transportation. Bissau lies on the W African route served from Lisbon.

c. Feeder, Coast and Local Trade :

The World Bank funded a port at Cacheu for pirogue traffic to Banjul, serving the sub-region, the Casamance region of Senegal, and part of the Gambia. Sea transport between the main land of Guinea-Bissau and the numerous islands, as well as between the islands, is mainly conducted by pirogues. An old ferry-boat runs once a week from Bissau to Bubaque harbour.

d. Offshore Supply and Support :

Two wells have been established in the Guinea-Bissau EEZ operated by *Premier Oil* and *Occidental Oil*. These are not shown on published charts. Licensing is underway for other blocks. Several prospecting works have been carried out, embracing seismic surveys and remote sensing technology.

e. Tourism-Cruise Liners :

No cruise liners enter Guinea-Bissau waters.

¹ with 5 pilots : they are currently looking for a new launch.

f. Tourism-Small craft :

Before the civil war of 1998, there were regular ferries to tourist facilities in insular Guinea-Bissau. This ferry activity almost disappeared after the war, though a tourist craft, belonging to a French owner, the “*Africa Queen*”, could be seen in Bissau Port. There are plans for expansion of tourist activity, especially fishing and diving, in the Bijagós archipelago.

g. Fisheries :

Though Guinea-Bissau has significant fishery resources, it has only an artisanal fleet of pirogues. There is a fish factory at Cacheu, but it is badly affected by siltation in the river and entrance. The resources are also exploited by foreign fishing vessels, of different countries, with whom Guinea-Bissau has concluded agreements. Presently, agreements with Italy, China and the European Union² are in force, enabling the operation of 205 foreign fishing boats within Guinea-Bissau jurisdictional waters per year. Guinea-Bissau recently sought reduction of the number of fishing licenses to 150, but there has been no positive income³.

Besides the licensed fishing boats, a recent international study established that 50 fishing boats operate illegally in Guinea-Bissau waters per year. Most of these illegal ships are from Asian and European countries, such as Korea, Spain, Italy or Russia. There have also been incidents with illegal fishing boats, in which casualties occurred among the Guinea-Bissau authority personnel, who carry out their task with a severe shortage of means. The Ministry of Fisheries identified their main hydrographic requirements as delimitation, and better knowledge of seabed morphology.

Responsibility for Safety of Navigation

9. DGMM and APGB share the responsibility for the safety of navigation and hydrographic matters, though the first entity claims a major role in both areas. However, according to Eng. Mário Musante da Silva, from APGB, the Pilot Service and VHF radio station operating at Bissau, which are apparently the only services or facilities providing effective assistance to the navigation at Guinea-Bissau, are under APGB control.
A clarification is said to have been asked for to the President.
10. DGMM, though responsible for lighthouses and buoyancy, has not the capacity to rebuild or maintain these navigational aids. There is a buoy-tender, “Sambuia”, but it was put out of action during the civil war of 1998, and remains as a wreck in Bissau port.
11. The direct responsibility for positioning, buoying and removal of wrecks is not well defined and there is no capacity for their removal.

Defence Force Responsibilities for Safety of Navigation

12. The Navy is not directly involved in hydrographic matters: after independence, the hydrographic office responsibility has even been transferred to the Port authority.
13. The Navy is responsible for SAR operations, though the available maritime radio stations are under control of other entities.
14. The control of fishery activity is done by co-operative action between the Fishery Ministry, which provides the inspectors, the Navy, which operates the naval means and provides the armed personnel, and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, which controls the budget. According to the Ministry of Fishery, all naval means were put out of action during the civil war of 1998. However, the Chief of Naval Staff stated that he had 3 patrol craft, 2 of them in operational condition - “Cacine” and “Cacheu”. Discussions were also taking place to obtain 2 more second-hand patrol craft from the United Kingdom. The Navy is also responsible for anti-smuggling patrols.

Coastal Management and Environment Protection

15. The Secretary of State for Natural Resources and Environment is responsible for coastal and environment protection. There is a national plan for environmental management, and a EU-

² about 10MM€ per year, 1 of which being devoted to fishing matters.

³ furthermore, controls are difficult because the catches are not landed in Guinea-Bissau.

funded project for Coastal and Biodiversity Management is currently under assessment by the World Bank.

16. There are significant problems of coastal erosion due mainly to deforestation, which is caused by intensive cashew nut cultivation, as well as by cutting of trees (wood is the only available energy source for the majority of the population, since gas or electric supply is very scarce). Problems with channel sedimentation and with over-exploitation of aquifers were also reported. The Minister for Fisheries stated that large tankers have been observed washing out their tanks in Guinea-Bissau waters.
17. Guinea-Bissau has been establishing several nature reserves; however, the limits or the areas of these reserves were never provided in order to be represented in cartography. The WAAT team requested the supply of this information for chart action.
18. The secretary general of the Ministry for Economic and Social Affairs outlined that hydrography is clearly seen as a basic investment for developing Guinea-Bissau, but for the time being there was a lack of means because trained experts have not practiced: this was indeed a crucial problem.

OUTLINE ANALYSIS

Status of Surveys within the National Maritime Zone

19. The Published Portuguese charts of Guinea-Bissau are based upon surveys done between 1948 and 1969. All these surveys were executed by the Portuguese Hydrographic Mission of Guinea (MHGH, Missão Geo-Hidrográfica da Guiné). After 1969, the hydrographic activity of which IHPT is aware was residual, did not result in charting action, and can be summarized as follows :
 - Surveys done by MHGH in Mansoa River and Bolama coastal area, during the period of 1970/73 ;
 - A hydrographic survey of an area of 26 km², at Cacheu harbour entrance, accomplished by a Portuguese hydrographic ship in 1984.
20. The hydrographic information from the aforesaid surveys does not represent current depths at some critical areas such as ports and navigational channels. In fact, Guinea-Bissau authorities reported considerable shoaling. For example, because there has been no dredging since 1972, depths at Bissau port have decreased by about 4 metres. Cacheu channel needs urgent dredging in order to open up access to Cacheu harbour, which was one of the most important ports in Guinea-Bissau several years ago. It was noticed that there are important phosphate mines near Cacheu harbour ; without sea access, it is very difficult to exploit these resources.
21. The Secretary for Natural Resources and Environment informed the WAAT that recent surveys had been conducted during the oil exploitation project. The WAAT requested that data from these surveys be provided for charting update purposes.

Status and analysis of observed tides, geodetic references, buoyage and lighthouses

22. None of the lighthouses operates. All buoys are unlit and out of station or have even disappeared. Status of observed tidal and geodetic references is unknown.

Collection and Circulation of Nautical Information

23. Updated information was regularly sent to IHPT until 1988. Since then no maritime safety information was provided to IHPT by Guinea-Bissau. After 1988, IHPT issued only six NtM: four regarding chart notes; two regarding navigation dangers, which were reported in 1998, one by a merchant ship and another by a Portuguese Warship.
24. The possibility of using the SafetyNet service of INMARSAT via the NAVAREA II coordinator, as an interim phase before NAVTEX capacity is locally implemented, has not yet taken up by Guinea-Bissau. Hence there is no dissemination of nautical information except via pilots, shipping agents or existing VHF maritime radio stations. APGB identified six radio stations:

- One in Bissau port, with a range of 12 nautical miles. This station, under control of APGB, provides assistance to navigation for vessels using Bissau harbour. However, it does not reach Caió islet, where the pilot station is implemented ;
 - Another in Bissau, at DGMM building, with a range of 50 nautical miles. This facility was recently acquired with funds provided by the European Union and is designed to provide meteorological and safety navigation information. No information was provided about the operational or implementation status of this station ;
 - Four local radio facilities, installed in the following ports: Buba, Bubaque, Cacine and Cacheu. These stations are intended to assist the pirogues operating locally.
25. No additional information about these radio stations, such as their operating channels, manning or periods of operation, was provided; hence, the effective contribution of the radio stations for the local collection or local circulation of maritime safety information is unknown.

Survey Capability

26. There is no hydrographic capability in Guinea-Bissau. It was clear that the authorities in Guinea-Bissau expected future surveys to be conducted by Senegal under the terms of a sub-regional cooperative agreement, and would like the IHPT to validate any surveys conducted in their waters.

Independent Chart Production Capability

27. There is no independent nautical chart production capability in Guinea-Bissau. IHPT assumes primary charting responsibility for Guinea-Bissau waters. IHPT can continue this task if nautical information is regularly made available. At this stage of development it is not considered feasible for Guinea-Bissau to set up its own marine cartographic unit.

PROPOSALS FOR CO-ORDINATION AND CAPABILITY BUILDING

National Hydrographic Committee

28. There is no high-level co-ordination body for hydrographic matters in Guinea-Bissau. At present, the Ministry of Social Equipment plays a central role and it should be easy to use this particular position in order to organize a regular meeting of all parties involved - APGB, DGMM and Navy (all of them having well received the possibility to create a national hydrographic committee). A first stage would be to organize the collection and dissemination of Maritime Safety Information. The MSI should meet the needs of mariners and shipping companies, and make a significant improvement in the safety of navigation in Guinea-Bissau waters.
29. The proposed terms of reference and the tasks of such a Committee were provided by the WAAT. The advantages of such a Committee being chaired at Cabinet level, as with the existing Presidential Technical committee, were stressed.

MSI, GMDSS

31. At the time of the visit, there was no MSI organization nor was GMDSS implemented in any of its components. The only method of passing information to ships is via pilots, shipping agents, or the existing VHF coastal stations. Within GMDSS several technical means are used for passing MSI to mariners. For ocean-going ships, the navigational warnings should be available on INMARSAT (Safetynet) via the NAVAREA II coordinator. The infrastructure for NAVTEX broadcast to ships sailing through Guinea-Bissau waters or approaching Guinea-Bissau harbours does not exist. Since most trade is carried by international shipping with INMARSAT facilities onboard, the same information could be passed on Safetynet via NAVAREA coordinator. This requires the MSI to be available to the NAVAREA II coordinator by Internet, e-mail or FAX.

Hydrographic Capability

32. It is desirable to create an embryonic hydrographic capacity, which could be achieved with a modest investment in training and equipment. With continued cooperation with Portugal, for instance, a much more effective capability could be developed.

33. There is potential for close technical cooperation between the authorities of Guinea-Bissau, Senegal and Gambia. A sub-regional technical project involving APGB, PAD (Port Autonome de Dakar) and GPA (Gambia Ports Authority) was indeed elaborated, in which Guinea-Bissau expected to benefit from GPA dredging capacity and from PAD hydrographic capacity. However, the project has not yet been implemented and no information was given about the way ahead. Meanwhile, Guinea-Bissau continues to see Portugal as the potential partner. In this sense, it has just requested for a hydrographic survey of a navigational channel of about 70 nautical mile length and 600 metres width, which embraces Bissau port and the deepest part of Geba Channel and Geba river mouth. It would also include surveys of the most significant adjacent banks to determine the positions for subsequent buoy-laying.

PROPOSALS FOR ASSISTANCE AND CO-ORDINATION

34. Training. The first aim should be to achieve efficient arrangements for MSI and provision of timely information to the NAVAREA co-ordinator and IHPT. This role could be undertaken by one of the pilots. There is then an urgent need for the few people in Guinea-Bissau who attended Hydrographic Courses in Portugal and United States (four in Portugal, one in United States) to gain experience through on-the-job training. Subject to co-operative agreements with neighbouring states, a small team capable of routine re-surveys in the port and access channel should be established.
35. Equipment. Guinea-Bissau has no equipment for survey purposes. Hence, it should acquire the minimum necessary basic material with prior advice from IHPT or IHB. This should be done within the context of a sub-regional project submission.
36. Funding. No specific proposals for assistance were made. However, the Guinea-Bissau authorities, with advice from IHPT, have developed a detailed and sound plan for the surveys needed to rehabilitate the entrance channel and port of Bissau. This should be an early priority for EAthC and IHOBCB championship, especially if it can be linked with the requirements of sub-regional partners e.g. the replacement of Senegal's multi-purpose buoy tender.

FOLLOW UP ACTIONS

37. Formation of a NHC. The formation of a National Hydrographic Committee has been proposed. This proposal was well received in particular by the Secretary of State for Social Equipment. A priority for this committee will be the pursuit of national legislation to give effect to international obligations. The WAAT also urged the importance of signature of international conventions, and of membership of the IHO, all of which would help to support a strong case for a hydrographic project. Guinea-Bissau's application for IHO membership is currently being processed by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Action : Guinea-Bissau

38. Development of national Hydrographic services in accordance with the SOLAS Convention. Portugal can continue to issue nautical publications, charts and up-dates on behalf of Guinea-Bissau. The provision of MSI and the capacity to conduct surveys will constitute the very first steps for the safety of navigation in Guinea-Bissau, together with the rehabilitation or reconstruction of the navigational lights.

Action : Guinea-Bissau and Portugal

39. Encouragement of effective and timely collection and promulgation of Hydrographic Information. Guinea-Bissau should send an appropriate person, possibly one of the pilots, to attend the Technical Workshop which will precede the next EAthC meeting in Brest (25-27 Oct 04). This will be a valuable first step to obtain help to address the following priorities:

- a. It is urgent to report the existing known dangers to navigation, such as the numerous wrecks lying at the ports, port accesses and navigational channels. All such dangers should be reported to IHPT for immediate assessment of the need for NtM or chart action.

Action : Guinea-Bissau

- b. An organization for the collection and dissemination of MSI needs to be instituted as soon as possible, with a link being established with NAVAREA II co-ordinator at EPSHOM, Brest, for the distribution of urgent MSI on INMARSAT SafetyNET.

Action : Guinea-Bissau

40. Encouragement of Development of Hydrographic Capability. As a first step, Guinea-Bissau should send appropriate representatives to the EAthC conference and associated workshop. Any requirements for funding assistance to enable attendance should be clearly identified at an early stage, so that they can be assessed by EAthC and IHB.

Action : Guinea-Bissau, EAthC Chairman, IHB

- a. The EAthC and IHOCBC should afford high priority to the assessment of a sub-regional project to embrace Guinea-Bissau's plan for the rehabilitation of Geba Channel and Bissau port (including surveying, dredging, wreck removal, buoyage restoration, ..), and the upgrading of resources for future collaboration and resource sharing by the Gambia, Guinea-Bissau, Mauritania and Senegal.

Action : EAthC, IHOCBC

- b. The training and acquisition of equipment for a port survey team should be assessed within this project. Portugal/IHB may provide advice about necessary equipment as well as training packages, including on-the-job training.

Action : Guinea-Bissau, IHB, Portugal

- c. With a minimum hydrographic capability rebuilt, the priority should be a routine re-survey programme in the main ports and their approaches, such as Cacheu and Bissau.

Action : Guinea-Bissau