

TECHNICAL VISIT FROM THE IHB REPRESENTATIVES TO LATVIA

6-7 JULY 2006

I.- General Information.

Program 2 “Capacity Building” of the IHO Work Program 2003/2007 included as Tasks 1.3.1. “Membership enlargement of the Baltic Sea H.C.” and 2. 1. 7 “Carry out visits of Technical Cooperation to the Baltic Countries”, as well as Objective 2. 2. 1, “Encourage entry of new Member States”.

In late 2005, the IHB sent letters to Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania, informing the authorities of these countries about the intention to pay a technical visit to them, in accordance with the Work Programme approved by the Member States. Positive replies were received from the three countries.

The IHB prepared the technical visits, which took place from 3 to 11 July 2006.

II.- Terms of Reference for the visits

1. IHB Visit Team:

Captain Hugo GORZIGLIA, IHB Director responsible of Capacity Building matters and Captain Federico BERMEJO, Professional Assistant in charge of Capacity Building and Training.

2. General Objective:

To discuss technical matters of common interest to the three countries and the IHO.

3. Specific Objectives

- a. Meet with the Hydrographic Authorities of the three countries and provide a presentation covering the following aspects:
 1. The International Hydrographic Organization. Structure and Membership. Present work program and budget, and its development.
 2. The International situation of hydrography.
 3. Capacity Building and Training & Education opportunities in Hydrography.
 4. Hydrographic application different from safety to navigation. Benefits of establishing a National Hydrographic Committee.

- b. Note the structure and development of the countries, especially in the following areas:
 1. The Hydrographic Services. Responsibilities and organization.
 2. Process in place to follow new Chapter V of SOLAS, Regulation 9. Identification of priority needs.
 3. Present situation concerning hydrographic surveys, nautical charts and MSI. Updating of the IHO publication S-55 “Status of Hydrographic Surveying and Nautical Charting Worldwide”.
 4. Experiences gained in the establishment of Hydrographic Services, cartographic production and distribution (including ENC’s), bilateral agreements with other countries and services provided to other organizations.

- c. Meet with other National related Authorities to whom the IHB could make a presentation about the IHO, aiming raising awareness on the importance of hydrography and its contribution to the development of initiatives of socio-economic impact; the requirements of SOLAS Chapter V Regulation 9 and the need to develop national plans to meet these obligations;

VISIT TO THE MARITIME ADMINISTRATION OF LATVIA



**Mr. Zeltins, Director Maritime Administration of Latvia and
Captain Gorziglia, IHB Director**

I. Programme of the visits

6 July

- Meeting in the Maritime Administration of Latvia
- Courtesy call to the Minister of Transportation
- Visit and meeting with Latvian Geospatial Information Agency

7 July

- Meeting with the Director of Maritime Administration and the Hydrographer of Latvia
- Visit to the facilities of the Hydrographic Office of Latvia

II. Authorities participating in the visits

Mr. Ansis ZELTINS	Director Maritime Administration
Capt. Aigars KRASTINS	Maritime Department of the Ministry of Transportation
Mr. Janis KRASTINS	Hydrographer of Latvia
Mr. Arturs BROKOVSKIS	Deputy Director Maritime Administration
Mr. Aivars RATKEVICS (LGIA)	Deputy Director Latvian Geospatial Information Agency
Mr. Janis MAMINSKIS	Director of the Department of Geodesy of the LGIA

A courtesy call was paid on 6 July to Dr. Krisjanis PETERS, Minister of Transportation of Latvia and to the Latvian Geospatial Information Agency. Dr. PETERS stressed the importance of safety to navigation for his country and recognized the important tasks that the International Hydrographic Organization is carrying out. He was also interested about joint projects relating to marine environment and especially those within the framework of the European Union. Capt. Gorziglia highlighted and thanked the high cooperation of Latvia in the Committees, Working Groups and tasks of the IHO.

A visit was also organized to the Latvian Geospatial Information Agency, where the Director conducted the IHB visitors to a guided tour of the facilities including the various sections and departments and the important printing rooms, where nautical charts produced by the Hydrographic Office are printed as well as other governmental and private works.

III. Presentations

Captain Gorziglia made a presentation stressing the importance of the latest resolutions of the U.N. and IMO, the new structuring of the organization, the new missions and challenges of the IHO and its Work Programme, and the initiatives of the IHO in Capacity Building matters. The Latvian Hydrographer provided a presentation on the Hydrographic Service of Latvia, its structure, duties and responsibilities. He also explained the background and history of the Service, the plan of hydrographic surveys, with especial emphasis on the survey vessel "Kristians Dals", and the cartographic production, both of paper charts and ENC's. He also explained other responsibilities of the Hydrographic Office.

IV. Organization of the Latvian Hydrographic Office

The Latvian Hydrographic Service (LHS) was created in 1920 and re-established on 28 October 1992 by Decree No.170 of the Ministry of Maritime Affairs of the Republic of Latvia, The Latvian Hydrographic Service is a civil service.

In 1994, the LHS was included within the Maritime Administration of Latvia under the Ministry of Transportation.

Latvia became an IHO member on 17 March 2005.

The main functions of Hydrographic service are:

- To provide safe navigation in the territorial waters of Latvia and in the vicinity of the coast, equipping the coast and ship routes with lighthouses, buoys and other aids to navigation, to maintain the equipment and control its operation.
- To organize publishing and distribution of nautical charts, plans, Pilot book and other nautical publications and seafaring-related normative acts around the world.
- To collect navigational information, publication of navigational warnings and notices basing on the batched information.
- To carry out hydrographic surveys and researches.
- To follow the activities of other similar organizations in the country, aiming to provide Hydrographic surveys according to international requirements.
- To provide working of NAVTEX system in collaboration with other countries, according to the special publication SP-53 of IHO/IMO/WMO in year 1996.
- To co-operate with similar organizations in neighboring states in order to exchange information.
- To represent the Republic of Latvia in international organizations and other activities.

Hydrographic division

The Hydrographic division carries out accurate hydrographic surveys mainly with the Hydrographic vessel “Kristiāns Dāls”, built in Finland for the Maritime Administration of Latvia, equipped with precise multibeam echo sounder system and high accuracy positioning system.

Cartographic Division

Among its duties, the LHS issues both paper and electronic navigational charts (ENC) and the publications “Pilot of Baltic Sea. Latvian coast”, “List of Aids to Navigation in the Waters of the Republic of Latvia”, “Symbols and Abbreviations of Latvian Navigational Charts”, “Catalogue of Navigational Chart and Publications”, “Notices to Mariners”, “Set of Latvian Yacht Charts”, as well as other publications, plans, schemes and charts depending on demands.

The LHS portfolio has 24 paper charts and an average of four charts is published every year, along with other re-editions.

At present the collection of LHS ENCs, includes 21 cells that meet the requirements of the IHO standard S-57 3.1 and are regularly updated. The LHS has also fulfilled the requirement of supplement 9 of the HELCOM Recommendation 22 E/5 “*A full coverage of the main ports and ship routes must be provided in electronic navigational charts till the year 2004*”.

The Latvian Hydrographic Service has issued charts covering all the territorial waters of the Republic of Latvia and the Exclusive Economical Zone.. “Notices to Mariners” are being prepared and issued every month. It also ensures the distribution of the prepared material both in Latvia and abroad. A Bilateral Agreement has been signed with the Hydrographic Service of the United Kingdom concerning the publication and distribution of the charts produced by the LHS. Similar Bilateral Agreement has been recently signed with Hydrographic Service of Germany.

On October 21, 2002 in Copenhagen, the Maritime Administration of Latvia signed a co-operation agreement with the Norwegian Hydrographic Service for the distribution of ENCs participating in the activities of regional distribution center of electronic navigational charts PRIMAR Stavanger.

The ENCs produced by LHS are distributed not only by PRIMAR Stavanger but also by other companies that have signed distribution contracts.

Services.

The LHS offers very wide exposure of services:

- All kinds of hydrographic surveys;
- Geodesic surveys;
- Work-out of different specialized plans and charts
- Navigation publications;
- Maintenance of aids to navigations;
- Project work-out for aids to navigation;
- Different kind of counting connected with changes in depth;
- Corrections in navigation publications.

V. Subjects of special consideration

The establishment of a major hydrographic and cartographic data base and the development of a long-term planning for training of staff in Hydrography and Cartography were the two principal subjects considered.

VI. Conclusions and Recommendations

- 1) The Hydrographic Service of Latvia is organized to fulfil national requests and needs in hydrography and cartography, with modern technology incorporated. It has an important sustainable funding and priorities clearly established. Modern equipment is largely used with excellent results. The experience of the development of the Hydrographic Office of Latvia can be a model for other nations and it is recommended to present this experience during the “Seminar for Heads of National Hydrographic Committees of the MACHC countries” to be held in Mexico, in October 06. The IHB will explore this possibility with the Hydrographer of Latvia and the Chairman of the Meso-American Hydrographic Commission.



Mr. Janis Krastins, Hydrographer of Latvia

- 2) The Hydrographic Office of Latvia is well prepared and a high degree of development and aims at increasing as far as possible its level of participation in the work of the IHO. The IHB will be grateful to receive future communications of participation of Latvia in other IHO Committees, Working Groups or Boards.
- 3) It is recommended to schedule long-term training through the international training institutions available and also to continue organizing internal short refreshment courses. It is recommended to make use of the support offered by the IHO Capacity Building Committee to fund the establishment of some of these short courses.
- 4) In its capability of Chairman of the BSHC, the Hydrographer of Latvia has significant tasks to fulfil and the relations with the other countries of the area are of special importance.

The IHB is grateful to the authorities of the Minister of Transportation of Latvia and the authorities of the Maritime Administration for the excellent organization of the visit and the kind hospitality offered to the IHB representatives.