



REPORT

Technical Visit

to

THE STATE OF QATAR

28-29 March 2007

Technical Visits to the State of Qatar
(IHO Work Program 2007, Tasks 2.1.7 and 2.1.10)
28 - 29 March 2007

I.- General Information.

One of the strategic issues identified in the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) Strategic Plan is Capacity Building, which is essentially the building of effective national organizations where needed or the improvement of existing capabilities. Therefore advisory visits to assess requirements and shortcomings, as well as the promotion and coordination of technical cooperation are very important.

The IHO Program 2 “Capacity Building” addresses principally the requirements for Member States to fulfil their roles. Nevertheless there are still several other States that do not have yet any hydrographic capability, and therefore IHO needs to support and encourage those countries to establish such capability. Raising global awareness of the importance of hydrography and encouraging the establishment of new Hydrographic Offices are vital to achieve a global coverage of effective hydrographic services, which is the role of the IHO.

In this line, Program 2 “Capacity Building” of the IHO Work Program 2007, has included the following Tasks:

a) Task 2.1.7. Carry out visits of Technical Cooperation to the following countries and organizations: ROPME Sea Area Hydrographic Commission (RSAHC) & North Indian Ocean Hydrographic Commission (NIOHC) including Egypt, Sudan and Djibouti and others to be determined (with the participation of the International Hydrographic Bureau (IHB) the IHO Secretariat).

b) Task 2.1.10 Technical Visits to be paid by IHB to the RSAHC and NIOHC Technical visits including Egypt, Sudan, Djibouti, Iran, Kuwait and **Qatar**. Possible also Saudi Arabia, Eritrea and Yemen (if not executed in 2006) to include contact with PERSGA national representatives and IMO regional representative), first quarter 2007.

The inclusion of these technical visits in the IHO Work Program was due to a decision of the 2nd RSAHC and the approved IHO Capacity Building Work Program for 2007.

In November 2006, the IHB started organizing these Technical Visits. Due to the complexity of the coordination required, the IHB decided to prepare various travel options and it was planned to undertake the visit to the State of Qatar from the 28 to 29 March 2007. The Council of Ministers of the State of Qatar have recently approved full membership of Qatar to the International Hydrographic Organization and therefore this visit has been considered as an initial event for a further long and successful cooperation between the two parties. The main objective of the visit was to raise governmental authorities, agencies, corporations and other customers and users of hydrographic data awareness on the importance of hydrography for the State of Qatar, and the presentation was prepared with this objective in mind.

II.- Participant and Program

The participant was Capt. Hugo GORZIGLIA, IHB Director in charge of Capacity Building (CB) matters and coordinator of the ROPME Sea Area Hydrographic Commission activities (RSAHC). The visit program is provided in **Annex A**.

III.- The Technical Visit

1. Status of the State of Qatar

The State of Qatar is not yet an IHO Member State, but its authorities have agreed to access the IHO and the deposit of the instrument of accession is imminent. The focal point for Qatar is the Urban Planning & Development Authority, established in March 2005, that with its General Survey Department represents the country at the IHO. The Hydrographic Section (HS) is within the General Survey Department. Qatar participates as Associate Member in the ROPME Sea Area Hydrographic Commission.

Qatar has completed two LIDAR survey projects and more than 80% of Qatari coastal waters, which is approximately 10% of sea area under Qatar national responsibility, are covered with survey that complies with the IHO Order 1 Standards for Hydrographic Surveys.

The Hydrographic Section does not produce any form of navigational charts or nautical publication at this time and it is the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office (UKHO) who produces the charts for the Qatari sea area. The Customs and Ports General Authority is the representative to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and responsible for the MSI in Qatari sea area and liaises with the Middle East Navigation Aids Service (MENAS) and the UKHO where publications for Qatari waters are produced. The HS is running a tide gauge network that consists of 5 tidal stations around Qatari coast.

Two main goals constitute the current focus of the HS: capacity building and organizing a National Hydrographic Programme. The capacity building elements consist of purchasing a new survey vessel, hydrographic equipment and recruiting and training of staff, and in a second phase to establishing a Cartographic Unit for producing nautical charts. Efforts are being made to establish a National Hydrographic Committee (NHC), aiming as a matter of priority, at defining a National Hydrographic Programme.

For the benefit of the IHO representative the Hydrographic Section of the State of Qatar prepared and provided a very comprehensive National Hydrographic Report for the Round Table Meeting, expanding on the existing hydrographic capabilities and needs.

2. Organization and staff

Eng. Ali Abdulla Al Abdullah is the Director General of the Urban Planning & Development Authority (UP&DA); Eng. Ahmed Bin Musaed Al Mohanadi is the Director of General Survey Department and Vladan Jankovic (B.Sc.) is the Head of the Hydrographic Section (HS).

3. The Round table Meeting

A Round Table Meeting took place with authorities of the State of Qatar responsible for maritime safety issues on the 29th March 2007. This meeting was held at the Urban Planning & Development Authority Headquarters with the participation of authorities from different national agencies. In **Annex B** can be found the complete List of Participants.

Eng. Ali Abdulla Al Abdullah, Director General of UP&DA opened the meeting welcoming all participants and referred to the objective and opportunity of the meeting, considering that the Council of Ministers of the State of Qatar has approved the full membership of Qatar to the IHO. Following the opening remarks he requested participants to identify themselves.

After having done so, the IHO representative thanked the opportunity to brief all attendees on hydrographic matters and initiated a presentation covering the following main points:

- a) Objective of the Technical Visit
- b) General concepts of Hydrography
- c) The international scenario related to Hydrography
- d) The IHO
- e) SOLAS V Regulations 4 and 9 States' general responsibilities
- f) Challenges and Conclusions
- g) Discussion

The presentation generated a very interesting and positive discussion. All participants were given the possibility to express their views from their perspective. In general it was felt that the idea of establishing a National Hydrographic Committee or similar coordination body had an unanimous support. It was suggested by some participants that those present would initially be considered as a starting point. It was made clear that all related national agencies should participate in this Committee, if established, with a national view rather than with its own agencies views. Finally it was recommended to undertake a study to identify the shortcomings, opportunities, threats and strengths, and the best way forward to improve the present situation, with a systematic national and strategic approach.

After the presentation and the discussion that followed, the Director General of UP&DA thanked the IHO for the technical visit paid and all attendees for their active participation in the round table. Before closing the event he anticipated that the initiatives discussed would be further considered and follow up actions would be identified aiming at improving national coordination and provision of hydrographic and cartographic products and services according to the national needs following international standards.

IV. Conclusions and Recommendations:

As a result of this technical visit, the IHB representative would like to offer the following conclusions and recommendations to the hydrographic authorities of the State of Qatar.

1.- The State of Qatar has a privileged geographic position from a maritime perspective with a huge and increasing maritime activity. Its hydrographic and related authorities seem to be fully aware of the importance of hydrography, but despite of the individual roles some of these national agencies play, Qatar does not have the capability to conduct hydrographic surveys and produce the associated nautical charts. This situation will very soon be solved, as Qatar will have a hydrographic platform capable of conducting hydrographic surveys at modern standards. It is recommended that high priority be given to define - quantitatively and qualitatively -, the staff required to man the survey vessel, process the data to be collected and produce nautical charts. This factor is extremely important as it could affect negative and seriously the project underway. It is strongly recommended that the project aiming at having a hydrographic platform continues "full speed ahead" monitored by the HS with the advice of the IHB and the IHO, if found necessary.

2.- The round table had during the technical visit should be considered as a starting point for further discussions on the way Qatar would like the IHO to provide advice in establishing a National Hydrographic Committee, if so decided. It is important to consider all national agencies, the academic and the private sector that benefit from the hydro-cartographic products and services. It is recommended to adopt some administrative measures to put in place a National Hydrographic Committee (NHC) to highlight its objective. One of the first recommended tasks to be assigned to the NHC, if established, should be to carry out a "Strength, Weakness, Threats and Opportunities" analysis having in mind that hydrographic development should be considered as a strategic national objective, guided by the real needs.

3.- It is a fact that the State of Qatar does not have the sufficient trained personnel to take advantage of the new and complex technologies used by modern hydrographic offices in the different phases of a hydrographic survey and production of nautical charts in the various formats of presentations. A national program aiming at having the minimum capabilities to provide the hydrographic services identified in SOLAS, regulation 9 seems recommended to be developed. Training can be obtained abroad in the short term, but it is also recommended to consider supporting any regional initiative to establish a formal hydrographic and nautical cartography training programs. Main training areas are ENC's, MultiBeam and Marine Safety Information (MSI) matters, for which the IHO coordinates through the Capacity Building Committee opportunities that could be considered by the HS. Capacity Building requirements should be clearly identified and passed to the Chairman of the RSAHC in order to have them considered at the annual meetings of the IHO Capacity Building Committee.

4.- It is evident that hydrographic data is being captured by several parties, nevertheless a national entity tasked to archive all these data does not seem to exist, and data is disperse and not ready for further studies by other national agencies. It is recommended to consider the convenience to have a national Hydrographic/Oceanographic Data Center, probably as part of an existing national agency, if not with the HS. Also it is strongly recommended to define the scope of this Center, from a national and international perspective, as all data and information generated constitute a valuable national asset. The establishment of a national data centre to effectively archive this information and to make a much extended use of it is highly recommended, especially nowadays that there is an increasing interest in developing national, regional and global spatial data infrastructure, where different data bases should be able to be combined in an attempt to offer products and services for a better decision making.

5.- Recognizing its imminent the entry of Qatar as an IHO full member it is recommended that an evaluation be made by the HS in order to identify eventual representation of Qatar at any of the IHO technical bodies. The closer Qatar becomes involved in some IHO bodies; greater would be the benefits for the State of Qatar.

6.- Finally I would like to share my concern after having seen in a newspaper on the 29th of March, in Doha, a "Navigational Warning" reminding the Mariners that the Ras Laffan Port Expansion continues with extensive dredging and constructions activities taking place off the Port. The advertisement provides a plan, coordinates of several points and an indication on the liability arising for not observing the instructions promulgated by the notice. I did not have the opportunity to check if such "Navigation Warning" has also been issued through a Notice to Mariners and included in the Marine Safety Information system managed by the Customs & Ports General Authority. I hope this is a warning on top of the internationally standardized ones; otherwise some urgent actions need to be taken to improve the existing system. (See Annex C).

Monaco, 23 April 2007.



Hugo Gorziglia
Captain – Chilean Navy
IHB Director

Annexes:

"A" IHB Technical Visit Program.

"B" List of Participants.

"C" Newspaper Navigation Warning.

ANNEX A

IHB TECHNICAL VISIT PROGRAM

Wednesday 28 March 2007

Time	Event
1910	Arrive to Doha International Air Port. Transport to Hotel.

Thursday 29 March 2007

Time	Event
0730	Depart from Hotel to Urban Planning & Development Authority facilities.
0800-0830	Courtesy visit to Mr. Ali Abdulla Al Abdullah, Director General of Urban Planning & Development Authority.
0830- 1100	Round table Meeting <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Remarks by the Director General• Introduction of Participants• Presentation by Captain Gorziglia, IHB Director• Discussion
1100-1130	Transport to the Hydrographic Section of the General Survey Department of the Urban Planning & Development Authority.
1130-1230	Technical Discussion with the Head of the Hydrographic Section, Mr. Vladan Jankovic.
1230-1245	Courtesy visit to Mr. Ahmed Bin Musaed Al Mohanadi, Director of General Survey Department.
1230-1400	Lunch offered by the Urban Planning & Development Authority
1400-1500	Technical Discussion with the Head of the Hydrographic Section, Mr. Vladan Jankovic. End of Technical Visit.
2100	Depart to Airport to take flight at 0020 back to the IHB.

ANNEX B

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

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| 1.- | Eng. Ali Al Abdulla | UPDA Director |
| 2.- | Mr. Hugo Gorziglia | IHB Director |
| 3.- | Mr. Ahmed Mussad Al Mohanadi | Director of General Survey |
| 4.- | Mr. Vladan Jankovic | Head of Hydrographic Section |
| 5.- | Mr. Manaf Al Sada | GIS Director |
| 6.- | Mr. Adel Al Khal | Director International. Organizations Department
Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| 7.- | Dr. Ahmed Al Hamadi | Director of Legal Affairs Department
Ministry of Foreign Affairs |
| 8.- | Mr. Nasser Al Kuwari | Head of Engineering Info Systems Section
Technical Service Dept. Public Works Authority |
| 9.- | Mr. Abdulaziz Al Daleel | Head of Ports Projects Section – Buildings Affairs
Public Work Authority |
| 10.- | Mr. Abdulla Al Khangi | Director of Marine Services Department
Customs & Ports General Authority |
| 11.- | Colonel Ali Ahmed Al Badeed | Director of Coasts Security Department
Ministry of Interior |
| 12.- | Captain Nael Mohamed Al Khaldi | Coast Security Department
Ministry of Interior |
| 13.- | Mr. Salem Al Waheeby | Director of Mesaieed Port |
| 14.- | Mr. Essa Al Hitmi | Head of Environmental Monitoring Section
Supreme Council of Environment |
| 15.- | Dr. Alaa Abd Almo'ty | Technical Expert – Supreme Council for Environment |
| 16.- | Mr. Mohamed Al Mohanndi | Ministry of Manipulate Affairs |
| 17.- | Captain Safwan Mustafa | Technical Affairs & Fleet – Qatar Navigation |

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