

Comments by Germany on the Status of HSSC8/27-High density contour lines ENC in

HSSC9-05.2A

Submitted by:	GERMANY
Executive Summary:	Reopening of the request to initiate the development of bathymetric ENC based on existing standards.
Related Documents:	HSSC8-05.3C List of Actions HSSC8; action item 8/27 HSSC9-05.2A
Related Projects:	None

Introduction/Background

HSSC8 considered a proposal submitted by CIRM and Germany (HSSC8-05.3C) to develop a standard which provides a harmonised presentation of high density bathymetric data in ENC by replacing original S-57 based ENC depth information.

HSSC work item 8/27 was assigned to the ENCWG to initiate some work regarding bENCs by exploring various existing options.

The ENCWG is reporting that the development of bENC was considered during their last meeting. Unfortunately, the report provides only information that no decision was made. A proposed way forward is missing.

Analysis/Discussion

It was reported that the meeting discussed the controversial issue of the impact of the provision of additional bathymetric information on ENC. The outcome was that the meeting was divided and no decisions were therefore made. By taking the outcome literally, we can summarise that at least the half of the meeting agreed that the development of a new standard on the provision of high density bathymetric data would be useful. This quantity of supporters justifies the development of this standard.

It is a matter of fact that the provision of bathymetric information is one of the core hydrographic pieces of information on which the existence of hydrographic offices is based on. An increasing demand of the provision of bathymetric information with higher density and a higher update frequency shows that the current standards (S-57) and the current ENC distribution ways (via a RENC) are not appropriate. S-57 is limited by the file size (5Mb) and the RENC provides only a weekly update.

If HSSC (which represents Hydrographic Standards and Services Committee) is not able to provide a solution, preferably by a standard, the gap will be filled by propriety solutions. That cannot be in the interest of the hydrographic community. It is well known that an S-100 based Product Specification on the provision of bathymetric data (S-102) is under development but the date when it could become an active standard is still unpredictable.

The new standard can be based on and can reuse existing standards (e.g. such as the methods already used by IENC). It is assumed that the workload is not unpredictable and that the result can be archived within a 2 year time frame. Based on that assumption Germany is pleased to offer the leadership of a Project Team which might possibly be established by HSSC. The Project Team can work under the supervision of the ENCWG or any other HSSC subsidiaries.

Justification/Impact

The provision of high density bathymetric data in a standardised way underlines the IHO responsibility on the provision of core hydrographic information. HOs facing customer requests to provide this density of bathymetric data enables them to provide this data in a harmonised way. That underlines the IHO competence for hydrographic data.

Action required by HSSC9

HSSC is invited to:

- reconsider the development of a standard on the provision of high density bathymetric data,
- establish a Project Team to develop this standard,
- order the development of this standard under the supervision of one of their subsidiaries.