

Nomination for Vice Chair of HSSC – Mr Mike Prince – Australia

Australia has nominated Mr Mike Prince for the role of Vice Chair of HSSC.

Mr Prince is currently the Acting Chair of HSSC, having served as Vice Chair since 2012. Apart from the obvious role of the Vice Chair, to step in on behalf of the Chair at HSSC if and when necessary, the key role of Vice Chair is to act as a sounding board for the Chair, particularly when there is a risk that a regional view may be inadvertently seen as a world view if not appropriately considered and assessed. Thereafter, once a view has been proven appropriate for the vast majority of Member State interests, or in accordance with the agreed strategic direction, the Vice Chair's role is to support that view, and influence where appropriate. As the regular Australian delegate, Mr Prince has a reputation for practical comments based upon experience, and hopefully for staying quiet when any comments would not add value to discussions.



Prince's background

Mr Prince is a former Category A hydrographic surveyor with the Royal Australian Navy. Seagoing service included destroyers, frigates and patrol boats, then five survey ships. The latter included surveys in Australia and Papua New Guinea, and exchange service with the UK Royal Navy. Roles included postings as a surveyor, Navigating Officer, Executive Officer and Commanding Officer. He also commanded the RAN Laser Airborne Depth Sounder Flight. He completed his 25 year naval career as head of survey operations and plans at the Australian Hydrographic Office (AHO).

In 2002 Mr Prince became the civilian Director of Charting Services at the AHO, responsible for delivery of all products and services required to meet Australia's obligations under SOLAS. He has overseen the complete transformation and expansion of the Australian charting portfolio from paper charts with variable datums and units to modern/ metric/ ENC, with consistent datums, and with all bathymetry quality assessed. He introduced a local ENC distribution service to parallel international arrangements, as well as a print-on-demand service for Australian paper charts (a scalable solution appropriate for declining demand). He has also driven a major shift from product-centric to data-centric production, shaped navigation requirements for Australia's domestic commercial vessels, lectures regularly to coastal and port marine pilots (and gets their feedback), authored or overseen several nautical publications, and recently lead the introduction of customised bathymetric ENC for selected Australian ports to support modern electronic navigation requirements (working directly with ports, pilots and bridge simulators).

Overall, he has a sound understanding of mariner requirements, the opportunities and limitations presented by emerging and legacy IHO standards and specifications and, within the constraints of what is possible, a firm focus on standards, products and services that are fit for purpose. He intends to draw upon that wealth of experience in the role of Vice Chair of HSSC.