



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration  
NATIONAL OCEANIC SERVICE  
Office of Coast Survey  
Silver Spring, Maryland 20910-3282

Dear Council Colleagues,

I want to begin by thanking you for the many thoughtful responses I received to my July letter. Your thoughts and aspirations for the council are inspirational and I am looking forward to working with all of you as we inaugurate the council over the next three years. I feel our first meeting offers us the valuable and rare opportunity to set our expectations, practices, and precedents for the future of this new organ of the organization body.

In my letter, I offered to provide a summary of the feedback to you by October 2. The attached “word tree” offers a sense of the themes that were raised. The larger the words, the more frequently you raised those concepts.

I heard you want the Council to:

- Be a catalyst for effective action of the IHO; facilitate the Secretariat, the IRCC, and the HSCC in their operations and to mature strategic proposals for decision by the Assembly. There is no appetite for the Council to be simply an additional layer of bureaucracy.
- Stay strategic, looking at the big picture and midterm issues.
- Be proactive, initiating discussions and inspiring action to deliver on priority activities.

I also just concluded a Council preparatory meeting at the Secretariat. As a result, a timetable associated to the Agenda is now posted for the October meeting (Doc C1-1.2B). You will note that the agenda has been balanced to allow time for strategic thinking and discussion as well as procedural issues.

*1) Expectations of the Council*

- a. We will begin on the first day by an introduction to the main topics of the IHO basic documents (General Regulations, Rules of Procedure...) which authorize and govern the Council, and by discussing how we would like to operate the Council. I will begin the discussion by summarizing your responses at a high level to the July letter, and then there will be time for open discussion.

*1) Assembly Direction on the IHO Strategic Plan*

As requested by the Assembly, we will begin the process of undertaking a comprehensive review of the strategic plan. To spur that discussion, I have asked Admiral Lowe of the UK to make a short presentation of PRO 4 from the Assembly to offer an input behind their thinking.

The Secretariat and I would also underscore that importance of your input in the discussion to follow. For that, please try to find time in advance to:

- a. Review the IHO strategic plan in place as adopted by the Assembly 1 in April 2017;
- b. Carefully consider the recommendations of the Secretary General’s proposal Document C1-5.1 and particularly those in paragraph 6;



- c. Consider the comments from Member States collated in the Council Red Book (Document C1-1.5),
- d. Consider your role in the “comprehensive review” process following the meeting. Will you be willing to chair or participate in a working group charged with reviewing and potentially revising the Strategic Plan between now and the Second Assembly?

2) *Coordination*

The Convention charges the Council “to coordinate, during the inter-Assembly period, the activities of the Organization within the framework of the Strategy, work program and financial arrangements, as decided by the Assembly.”<sup>1</sup> We will consider the reports from the IRCC and HSSC, and will consider proposals from these subsidiary bodies for their respective work program for the year to come. In this regard, I propose to relate our deliberations to the 3-year work program as approved by the Assembly. In doing so, we will arrive in a position to work out priorities, and call attention to strategically important work items that may be at risk or are of particular immediate importance for the organization. These key work items will be proposed for discussion by the Secretary-General for the Program 1 (Corporate Affairs), the Chair of HSSC for the Program 2 (Hydrographic Services and Standards), the Chair of Program 3 (Inter-Regional Coordination Committee). Please review these HSSC and IRCC reports and the IHO 2018 work program and identify a subset of what you consider your highest priority activities, so we may collectively flag items that merit focused Council attention and discussion.

I recognize that these advance requests from the Chair may not be a standard practice. However, I am mindful of the high expectations that we all have set for our Council, and would like to ensure we are well prepared to make the most of this first meeting.

Finally, I wish to congratulate Admiral Palmer for confirmation of his selection as our Vice Chair. I wish to offer our collective appreciation for his leadership and engagement and I very much look forward to working with him in that capacity.

I look forward to seeing all of you in two weeks in Monaco and wish you safe travels.

Best Regards,

Shep

Attached: Word Tree

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<sup>1</sup> See Article VI (g) of the Convention

