

Nordic Nautical Publication WG report

Introduction

This report reviews the work group's findings, status and the planned next steps.

At NHC 54, the conference discussed the need for establishing a Nordic Nautical Publication Working Group as a formal working group.

One important issue was to clarify if the SNPWG would solve our challenges concerning publications in the future and thus make a regional WG redundant.

It was stated that the aim of SNPWG is to develop guidelines for the preparation of nautical publications in a digital format compatible with ECDIS. It was stated that SNPWG will not provide guidelines for nautical publications in paper/printed version, nor the future content of nautical publications. A coordinated Nordic effort with regards to nautical publications does therefore not conflict or overlap with the scope of SNPWG.

Taking into account the current situation and the expectations for the future development of maritime information - including nautical publications - it was agreed that there is a need for closer cooperation between organizations responsible for the circulation of maritime information. And as a consequence a need to establish a WG where we have the possibility to share and discuss the future development of Nautical Publications regarding standardization, harmonization and requirements.

Establishing a Nordic Nautical Publications WG was as such seen as the most efficient solution to achieve the short and long term goals.

Nordic Nautical Publication WG status

On December 13-14, 2011, the NHCPWG arranged a workshop for members of the Arctic Regional Hydrographic Commission, the Baltic Sea Hydrographic Commission and the Nordic Hydrographic Commission. Hosted by the German Hydrographic Office BSH, the purpose of the workshop was to investigate the current state of nautical publication management, updating and distribution among the three regional commissions' member states. As the distance grows between, on the one hand, fully spatially referenced information in ECDIS and, on the other hand, analogue information in nautical publications, navigators are meeting growing challenges in ensuring they include all relevant information in their route planning.

Given the importance of existing standards, agreement and regional cooperative efforts, the workshop participants agreed that in the short term, they will consider:

- reporting to NHC with proposals for a workshop in 2012 under the aegis of NHC with invitation invites to ARHC and BSHC, (NHC has approved a workshop in 2012)
- conducting individual and shared cost-benefit analyses of continued joint work; and
- begin to address the shortcomings of the NP1/2/3 approach with IHO.

In the longer term, the workshop participants agreed that it would be important to consider the potential value of:

- new standards; and
- codification in formal platforms.

The planned workshop in 2012 under the aegis of NHC has been postponed.

At the 4th meeting of HSSC in Taunton, 25-28 September 2012, the acting SNPWG Chair presented the report and recommendations of his WG. He noted that the next steps were to define the process for the creation of digital nautical publication products, extend the nautical publications data model and look at producing a product specification for radio signal information.

HSSC Chair questioned if HSSC still supported the need for Electronic Nautical Publications (NP). From the comments offered by Australia, Canada, Denmark, Sweden, UK, USA, and CIRM the continuation of the working group was generally supported, with a requirement to focus on meeting SOLAS carriage requirements. The need to serve the mariners independently of the ECDIS, to synchronize NP developments with the implementation of S-100 and to avoid having too many products that were not compatible, was acknowledged.

The Committee decided not to assign S-103 to the MPA product specification and invited SNPWG to continue using the generic identifier S-10X. IHB noted that the range 101-199 might be insufficient for IHO PS if the intention was to develop a stand-alone product specification for each NP theme.

The Committee reviewed and agreed revised key elements of the SNPWG work plan in order to reflect the outcome of the preceding discussion.

- The Committee confirmed the objective to provide nautical publications in electronic format.
- The Committee decided not to assign a product specification number to the draft product specification for Marine Protected Areas (MPA), for the time being.
- Action HSSC4/26: SNPWG to prepare a master plan for developing electronic nautical publications, with priority assigned to defining data models and product contents in order to coordinate the scheduling of deliverables with the implementation of S-101.
- Action HSSC4/27: SNPWG to provide an estimate of the number of potential product specifications related with nautical publications.

The chair of NNPWG has presented the outcome and conclusions of the NNPWG at BSHC and ARHC. There has been mutual support from both RHC and general interest in the results of the WG and to participate in a workshop.

Conclusions

There is a general interest in the work and results of the NNPWG.

A workshop should be arranged in Copenhagen in 2013 or 2014 with invitations to ARHC and BSHC.

The NNPWG should include the decisions and actions taken by HSSC4 in the forthcoming work and to cooperate with SNPWG in the future, focusing on the development of a data model which includes digital nautical publication.

Actions required from the NHC 57th Conference:

The NHC 57th Conference is requested to consider this report and to take appropriate actions.