

MINUTES

27th North Sea Hydrographic Commission (NSHC) Conference Rostock, 4th – 6th September 2006

A. OPENING FORMALITIES

A1. Opening Remarks

Mrs Liz Dunn, on behalf of UK, the current chair of NSHC, opened the meeting, explaining how UKHO had found themselves without a Hydrographer at the time of the meeting. She described how Dr Wyn Williams had been honoured by his role as Chairman of NSHC and was sorry that his retirement had come a little too early to attend this meeting. Mrs Dunn thanked Peter Ehlers of Germany for stepping in to chair the meeting.

Professor Dr Peter Ehlers welcomed all delegates to 27th North Sea Hydrographic Commission Conference in Rostock. He outlined BSH broad responsibilities as a maritime authority – shipping, economics, hydrography, research. When Germany last held the NSHC chair in Hamburg in 1989 they would never have believed that this meeting would be held in Rostock, which is now the German centre for hydrography.

Dr Ehlers stated that he was happy to step in as chair for this meeting especially as UK was still providing the secretariat. NSHC is seen as a leader among the Regional Hydrographic Commissions and is the major player in the development of Marine Data Infrastructure (MDI). The Chair reminded everyone that there was a busy agenda and that this was a policy-making not technical meeting. He called for short introductions to topics and clear actions. The Chair particularly welcomed the delegates from Ireland and the IHB as observers to the conference.

A2. Administrative Arrangements

Thomas Dehling gave details of the practical arrangements for the conference.

A3. Adoption of Agenda

BE requested that Item C2 be taken with item B9, as it covered the same subject. BE also mentioned that it is normal practice for the current chair of the Tidal Working Group (i.e. DE) to present the report of the working group, not BE as the outgoing chair (item E2).

The changes were approved and the agenda was adopted.

A4. NSHC Conference Conclusions

Refer to Explanatory Note (EN) UK A4. Member States were requested to study the active conclusions of the NSHC with the aim of marking as many as possible 'effected' or 'obsolete'. Where actions remained 'active' it should be made clear what action is required to make them 'effected'. UK offered to coordinate the responses. On the request of FR, UK agreed to explain why some conclusions were marked "review required".

ACTION A4

UK: To provide explanation on conclusions considered "review required".

MS: To report to UK on the status of the NSHC conclusions which are currently defined as active. Recommendations should state whether the conclusion should be considered effected or obsolete. If it is considered that a conclusion should remain active, a proposal should be made on the action required to make it effected. Deadline 31 December 2006.

UK: To coordinate the responses to above action and report back to MS.

A5. Outstanding/ongoing activities

All actions from 26th NSHC meeting considered completed, superseded, or covered by later agenda items.

A6. Review of Statutes, when considered necessary

The review of statutes to be discussed if necessary following item D4.

A7. Activities of the IHO

Vice Admiral Maratos, President of the IHB, reviewed the main IHO activities since the previous meeting:

SPWG

The amendments to the IHO Convention approved during the EIHC in April 2005, have been sent by the Government of Monaco through Diplomatic Channels to Member States for approval, in accordance with Article XXI of the Convention. To date, ten Member States have completed ratification.

The SPWG, at their last meeting in Korea, and the LEX have finalized the wording of the amended General Regulations, Financial Regulations and Rules of Procedures for the Assembly, Council and Finance Committee.

IH Conference

Post tsunami activities

Member States have approved the plan presented by the Bureau during the special session for the tsunami held during the EIHC, in April 2005. It has been included in the IHO Resolutions as T.R. K4.5.

After discussions that IHB had with officials of IMO, 50.000USD were made available to the Bureau from the IMO tsunami relief fund, in order to finance the purchase of equipment needed for Sri Lanka. The Bureau, in cooperation with the German Hydrographic Service (who has been designated as the out of the area coordinator for support to States affected by the tsunami), along with Sri Lanka and private companies have put in place the appropriate arrangements for the purchase of a SBP system, as requested by Sri Lanka.

Other issues

The IHO group of experts established to study, and propose improvements to, S-44, Standards for Hydrographic Surveying, will meet in November in Antwerp, during HYDRO 06 meeting, to finalize its work. The draft 5th edition should be circulated early next year to Member States for comments.

The adequate coverage of ENC's is the main issue in the discussions that take place in IMO for mandatory carriage of ECDIS. IMO Members are stating that, in order for IMO to accept mandatory carriage, a good coverage of ENC's must be in place. The IHO argument to this point is that the production of ENC's has been accelerated, as it has been recognized by all parties involved, and a decision for mandatory carriage will have a very positive effect on production. The IHO is going to report to the next meeting of NAV in June 2007 on the status of ENC production.

The Bureau has started working on the development of an on-line catalogue where the status of ENC's, raster charts and paper charts used as back up will be provided. It will be presented in the meeting of NAV next year and to MSC for approval in 2008.

The Bureau with the approval of Member States has drafted a questionnaire to be used by the IMO expert teams in the voluntary auditing scheme of its International Instruments and especially in SOLAS.

The Ministry of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries of the Republic of Korea has made 100.000USD available to IHO to be used for Capacity Building activities. It is expected that the same donation will be made each year, based on the MoU signed between the President of IHO and the Minister of MAF of Korea.

The way that World Hydrography Day was celebrated in Monaco and elsewhere, together with the theme of next year's celebrations, have been reported to Member States in CL 55/2006.

Ireland has received the required two thirds majority of MS votes and now has to deposit the Instrument of Accession with the Government of Monaco, in order to become a full Member of the Organization.

Discussion followed on ECDIS:

Norway (FK) explained that ECDIS has not been on the IMO agenda until this year, hence the perceived delay in implementing carriage requirements. It will be on the agenda for the next two years.

It was agreed by NSHC members that ECDIS must be discussed at next year's IHO Conference. WEND meeting (11-14 Sept) will discuss and MS would urge WEND to put a proposal to conference on ENC coverage and mandatory carriage requirements.

E-navigation strategy: coverage of ENCs undermines the case for mandatory carriage.

It was concluded that mandatory carriage requirements should not wait for 'full' coverage but 'relevant' coverage. Lack of world-wide coverage is used as an excuse, but paper chart coverage is not exhaustive.

B. STRATEGIC ASPECTS OF THE WORK OF HOs – TECHNICAL ISSUES

B1. Review of Status of Hydrographic Surveying and Nautical Charting in the NSHC Area (IHO Special Publication S-55)

Captain Barritt (IHB – S-55 Co-ordinator)) gave an informative presentation on progress with S-55. A great deal has been achieved - 90% of countries have entered records in the database.

SE Suggested that more guidance was needed on the criteria for categorisation of surveys. This was discussed with IHB in the margins and resolved.

NO Sounded a caution on the IHB proposal to call for comment on the status of update of charting, since an ENC should not be issued unless it is kept up to date.

FR Supported S-55 Co-ordinator in suggesting that this was a "counsel of perfection" noting that in many areas of the world the quality of the data on which the ENC was based was an even more fundamental issue than updating.

Chair Suggested that these are not NSHC problems and should be discussed at the relevant Commissions.

Post Meeting Note: The next IHB CL to MS related to S-55 will clarify that comments should be included on the status of update of paper charts.

ACTION B1

MS: To respond to IHB CL59/2006 on submission and update of data in S-55.

IHB MB: To coordinate responses to above.

B2. ENC Production

BE At the last NSHC in 2004, Belgium did not have any ENCs, but by the end of this year they expect to have ENCs covering their waters. These will be distributed by IC-ENC.

NO Have produced 22 completely new charts and ENCs from new survey data.

B3. Chart Production

Belgium and Denmark updated the conference on their progress with chart production:

BE Paper charts are being updated from ENCs.

DK Have had problems with CARIS HPD and have not been able to use it at all. CARIS has released a new edition of HPD. Only one person is able to use the database at one time, which has caused delay. A 'cookie cutter tool' has to be developed which should solve the problem.

DE CARIS has a press release that shows 18 nations have adopted this software. Germany has still not produced any charts using CARIS HPD, but have begun to populate the database, successfully inputting the S-57 data. Germany has produced ENCs with enormous difficulties. They too hope the new version will help.

UK Would like to encourage technical experts to talk to each other.

DE A public users forum for experience exchange, working by correspondence, should be formed. Germany will investigate if CARIS help desk (internet based assistance for CARIS products) may be useful for this purpose, Interested parties (UK, DK and BE) should contact Mathias Jonas.

NL Delay in getting contract with CARIS (which may now be explained by comments from DE and DK). NL has set clear technical specifications. CARIS is worried about reaching specs within the budget. NL is keen to join such a user group to exchange info.

B4. Hydrographic Databases

BE The Flemish Hydrography distributes data to dredging division and scientific research areas. In the past they sent out CD-ROMs, now there is a database which other divisions have access to.

- BE Each 'end product' has a surface which is designed for its needs. Raw data is stored.
 DK Have experienced problems with the CARIS BASE Editor system, which was purchased to deal with survey data. When the generalise contour tool is used, it causes an offset of data. CARIS is investigating problems.

B5. Reference Datum and Positioning Systems

DE German Bight Chart Datum Model over Ellipsoid

DE See presentation.

NO Using the Ellipsoid as vertical reference for Seabed Mapping - as EN

NO Expectations for a new positioning system TerraPos - as EN

Norway (FK) offered to provide further information on the above items, on request.

NL LAT – Conversion: Report of Progress

NL Started ahead of SHIP2, now coming on line (see Presentation).

DE Working towards LAT (converting from W to E), estimated completion of full programme by 2012.

DK Estimated completion of conversion is 2008.

B6. Survey Capability

BE Installation of two new multibeam echo-sounders SIMRAD EM3002D on board a coastal and river-based surveying ship

Old multibeam was 10 years old, now have latest multibeam and plan to measure wrecks. Other departments are keen for them to survey the continental shelf, but first they will concentrate on locating wrecks and getting shoal soundings (still intend to wire sweep when resources allow).

NL Survey Equipment RNLN - see EN

NL Following extensive research, NL have concluded the requirement for wire sweeping remains – multibeam does not replace it.

B7. Satellite Imagery

UK Examination and use of widely available satellite imagery - see EN

There is a large volume of imagery available in the public domain. UK queried whether there was an obligation on HOs to look at it and asked what other countries are doing about it.

DK Use for reconnaissance before entering uncharted waters in Greenland.

DE Use for oceanographic purposes, they prefer to use airborne imagery for coastline

SE Northern Swedish charts have been compared with satellite images on Google-Earth by mariners. They are concerned at the differences found. SMA has commissioned university research to look into the issue.

FR Use for charting overseas territories and has been used for coastline and shallow bathymetry in the absence of other data. Used on a case-by-case basis for new charts. However satellite data is not always up-to-date, difficult to determine metadata. Have to look closely at use for safety of navigation.

NL If policy is to use all available data then it is a problem of capacity.

NO Do not use such data for coastline but used for reconnaissance. Propose an IHO WG to look into usefulness of satellite imagery.

DK Use of Satellite Imagery for quality control of base points in Greenland

DK Satellite imagery at 24m resolution is useful for base point control.

ACTION B7

Chair: To ask IHB to investigate the use, and implications, of freely-available satellite imagery.

B8. Improvement of the accuracy of Greenlandic charts

DK Cannot produce electronic charts (raster or ENC) of Greenland as data is so inaccurate. Coastline may be out by km in some cases.

B9. Limit of areas of responsibility for surveying in the southern North Sea and Dover Strait - see EN

ACTION B9

UK, BE, NL & FR: To discuss the Dover Strait Survey Strategy with a view to updating the arrangement.

B10. Digital Sailing Directions

NL gave a demonstration of Digipilot – see EN. Questions followed on updating, media and security. DE invited NL to join the SNPWG to bring developments to the attention of the entire IHO community. NL confirmed that this is to be an official product; it is not known whether it can be integrated into ECDIS but they would like to avoid too many PCs on the bridge. The Chair welcomed DIGIPILOT and urged NL to join SNPWG.

IHB (VADM Maratos) raised the subject of the European Commission project EPDIS. Mathias Jonas (DE) investigated between sessions of the conference to provide the following background information:

EPDIS project was commissioned by EU (Electronic Pilot Display and Information System) to investigate a 3D Viewer based on ENC's, radar and satellite imagery.

It was co-funded by European Community under the Information Society Technology Programme (1998 – 2002).

C. STRATEGIC ASPECTS OF THE WORK OF HO's – ADMINISTRATIVE AND MARKETING ISSUES

C1. Reorganisation of National Hydrographic Offices

UK New Chief Executive, National Hydrographer and reorganisation at UKHO

UK explained the current lack of National Hydrographer and the proposed new organisation. UK also explained the changes in its Operations Directorate with data management teams and chart production teams. Day-to-day contact would change in some cases, but the same key people are still around and would redirect correspondence where necessary.

Post meeting note: UK has announced the appointment of its new National Hydrographer and Deputy Chief Executive (Hydrography) - Rear Admiral Ian Moncrieff, who took up his post on 5th December.

BE Reorganisation of the Belgian hydrographic services into one organisation: the "Flemish Hydrography" - see EN

FR SHOM 2007: new statutes, new organisation - see EN

SHOM will remain the National Hydrographic Office but with a more flexible statute. It will remain a non-commercial organisation, entitled to wider public funding, not only from defence but also from the national maritime administration and local administrations.

NL Reorganisation Netherlands Hydrographic Office - see EN

C2. Bilateral Agreements

Item taken with B9, as agreed on adoption of the agenda.

C3. European Initiatives

DE Results of Rostock Seminar on GDI - Action for HO's? – see EN

DE explained that this is not just a European issue, there are worldwide and IHO implications. There is a need to produce a marine spatial data infrastructure and a need to agree standards for integration. HO's need to establish closer links with the marine scientific world and consider needs for coastal zone planning. Developing MSDI can be considered under the EU maritime green paper. An MSDI was proposed for the North Sea and Baltic Sea area.

DE Conclusions from North Sea Ministerial Conference: implementation by member HOs

DE reported that the decision on hydrographic matters was accepted by Ministers with no discussion. It aimed to draw attention to hydrography, but this will now be up to Hydrographic Offices to push forward. The Conference was probably the last one of its kind; any follow up should be handled by OSPARCOM.

DE Proposed a working group on resurvey strategy.

Discussion followed on what a WG would seek to achieve. UK identified close parallels with the southern North Sea and Dover Strait where a small working group already exists. UK was keen to ensure effort is split equitably. DE considers the WG should concentrate on plans and priorities, gaining mutual agreement on routes; it may be enough to extend the current WG.

UK Proposed to return to producing diagrams of areas surveyed since the last meeting and proposed before the next meeting.

BE Wished to use the declaration to establish Belgian own method of surveying North Sea area – i.e. use to get funding.

DE Proposed new working group to do the job.

UK Explained the need to finish the Dover Strait Strategy first. Also, need visibility of which areas are surveyed to IHO Order 1.

SE Felt that NSHC need to do the work as proposed; Ministers will be expecting a response.

ACTION C3.1

DE: To establish a Working Group to determine a survey strategy for the North Sea area. This should aim to operate through correspondence. TORs to be drafted by Germany and distributed to MS - ‘elaboration of survey scheme’ – not surveying.

FR EU Hydrographic Service.

FR introduced the EN on the subject.

Discussion centred on the need for an EU Hydrographic Service against a more effective IHO. MS were concerned that they were not being consulted by the EU and would like to have more influence on Brussels. MS have in the past reacted nationally, each making their own comments but not working together to influence policy. DE suggested a WG/CG to coordinate responses to EU initiatives. This was welcomed by member states although there were concerns about the TOR of such a group. Most MS could not agree to setting up of an EU Hydrographic Service nor an EU body, but were keen to influence EU from within the IHO structure. It was agreed that this group should work within NSHC, but sharing findings with other EU countries through IHO.

IHB stated that they had registered as an organisation working with the EU on SDI (Spatial Data Infrastructure) for INSPIRE. They were working closely with the coordinator.

ACTION C3.2

To form a group to propose the terms of reference for an EU ‘Working Group’ by Wednesday morning of the current meeting (**FR, UK, NO, IHB, DE, NL**).

Note: Wednesday 6 September

France presented TORs for a Working Group on ‘EU Marine and Maritime Policies’ to the Conference. TORs are designed to be simple and flexible. Conference agreed that France Chair the WG. WG Terms of Reference were adopted as **CONCLUSION 81** of Conference.

UK INSPIRE Directive

DE Proposed forming a working group on MSDI for INSPIRE – to ensure harmonisation of National HO MSDI. Technical group should consider: standards, frameworks, harmonisation of data portals. DE urged that work cannot be delayed, otherwise there is a risk of money being spent on non-compatible projects.

Discussion followed on the need for greater understanding of INSPIRE and how it applies to hydrographic offices. DK in particular had not established INSPIRE as a maritime issue within their administration.

ACTION C3.3

UK: To provide a paper to the NSHC member states on the implications of INSPIRE for marine hydrography. Invite other member states to discuss paper.

UK EU Maritime Green Paper

UK explained that this is another EU initiative where some coordination between NSHC members may be useful. The Chair reinforced that marine management and marine spatial planning cannot be done without hydrographic data. NO stated that in Norway they cannot allow others to even start exploration of an area before there is full information on surveys, geology and fisheries. It was agreed that NSHC should input comments to the Maritime Green Paper consultation.

ACTION C3.4

All MS: To send comments on EU Maritime Green Paper to UK by 30 November 2006.

UK: To coordinate the responses to above action and submit to EU on behalf of NSHC.

C4. National Initiatives affecting hydrography

UK UK Initiatives: MDIP and UK Marine Bill

See presentation. UK referred any queries on the subject to Nigel Sutton, National Relations Manager Nigel.sutton@ukho.gov.uk.

C5. Norway Digital - see EN

Norway explained that Digital Norway is 'INSPIRE for Norway', which is up and running. It is not free of charge, but entails an exchange of money between government organisations (until INSPIRE?).

C6. ISO 9001 – see ENs

UK Commented that they were happy to offer advice on this topic.

C7. Status 'Integrated Maritime Services' NO – see EN

D. CO-OPERATIVE NSHC/IHO PROJECTS

D1. Ongoing work of the IHO Capacity Building Committee

Capt. Barritt (IHB) gave a presentation on the work of the IHO CBC. Focus has been on all coastal states for the first stage, focussing on providing navigational warnings and passing data on to a charting HO (Assessment, Analysis and Action).

Review feedback from CB initiatives which have been conducted with NSHC MS support in EAthC, MACHC, NIOHC and SAIHC

Norway asked what the role of IHO in capacity building was and what the member states' role was. IHB advised that it does not have capacity for running major CB projects. Mozambique and Croatia projects were run under strict instructions from Norway Government. Projects may be ascertained from IHB work plan and identified needs.

Discussion followed on how assistance may be sought from national governments. It was agreed that it is difficult to sell ideas to an administration, but easier to sell detailed projects (commitment in hours, dollars). Some countries found it easier where the projects are conducted by more than one country. The main problem in critical areas is that the nation cannot identify the problem – they need assistance to work out the problem, then find a solution and then create a project to solve it. CBC could do more to identify projects.

Funds available are modest compared with problems. Capacity building projects are capital intensive. UK felt that it was good to have this discussion in the NSHC forum. The main ways that UK has helped have been to provide Capt Barritt to work part time for the IHB, and to provide bursary training. It was felt that NSHC members are in a position to provide assistance to bilateral partners in producing ENCs to contribute to safety of navigation. There was further discussion on how CBC work could be improved. Ideas included approaching foreign ministries to provide money to CBC 'with restrictions'. Capt Barritt advised that placing staff in country or taking on staff for training gave a long term presence which retains momentum.

The Chair concluded by underlining the significance of CBC work. NSHC members are active in CBC, and are prepared to support CB work providing there are clear projects and they are a priority for the country concerned. He took the opportunity to thank Capt Barritt for all his work, including promoting CBC work within IHO, which he has carried out with such engagement.

D2. "Schelde-ECDIS project": production of ECS's used in Pilot Navigation and Docking Systems - see EN

- BE Advised that this project gives survey to product in 7 days and is very popular.
DK Referred to a similar project on CD-ROM from RDANH, giving 'unofficial' bathy data overlaid on standard charts.
DE Has a similar project to provide dense depth data using AML for private users. Data is available but the customer needs to 'add value'.
NO Advised that following Rocknes, they have developed a 'pilot suitcase' (PC/GPS/ECDIS). They have supplied 270 state pilots with up-to-date ENC's, with updates downloadable 24 hours a day. All pilots are now using ENC's.
BE Reported that pilots want much higher density of data and want data within 7 days of the survey (surveys on Schelde are carried out daily).

D3. Small scale ENC coverage for NSHC area – see EN

- DE Advised that it is not appropriate for Germany to continue to produce INT charts for the waters between Greenland and Norway and consequently wishes to hand over the responsibility for these INT charts and related ENC's to countries in the region.

ACTION D3

NO, IS, DK: To take on INT coverage from DE for northern Atlantic area no longer in DE's area of interest (and coordinate with INT area coordinator).

D4. NSHC Meetings – see EN

- DE The suggestion of annual meetings was based on the proposed IRCC meeting every year.
FR Meetings should not be planned on a systematic annual basis but as required.
NO Biennial meetings mean NSHC is not on top of all the issues, so need to have meetings more often.
NL With all the issues in Europe, meeting every 2 years is too infrequent. However, NSHC meetings need not be driven by IRCC meetings.
DE Proposed a special meeting in 2007 (immediately after IH Conference), and next meeting in the first half of 2008 (DK permitting)

It was agreed to hold a special NSHC meeting at the end of IH Conference, May 2007.

UK Consider adoption of IHO standard RHC Agenda including National Reports

- UK Explained that this proposal may enable meeting time to concentrate on important agenda items and reduce time on information papers.
DE Did not feel that National Reports were necessary (stopped by NSHC some years ago), as writing such reports places a burden on Member States to produce a large document which is rarely read.
Chair Concluded that National Reports are not required for NSHC.
BE Requested advice on submitting agenda items.
Chair Advised that information papers may be submitted, particularly where they contain new information of relevance to other member states.
NO Confirmed that they prefer the NSHC agenda, which is flexible and dynamic.
Chair Confirmed that the existing NSHC agenda should be retained.

D5. SPWG Matters – see EN

Progress on ratification of the revised IHO Convention was given:

NO, SE, DK, DE - Complete

UK Expected mid October 2006

NL With Ministry of Foreign Affairs – expected early 2007

BE HO part of Flemish authority but needs to be approved by Federal Government – pushing

FR Referred to Parliament, a long process - possibly before end of 2007

IS This year (2006) – pushing forward

IE Still waiting full membership status

Selection of an NSHC Representative on Council was discussed:

- NO Felt that member states should maximise NSHC influence by considering the optimum commission to be a member of (e.g. by saying nation is eligible to represent NSHC this may maximise number of seats available to NSHC - even if nation qualifies under hydrographic interest and do not intend to represent commission).
- FR Stated that there will be a full NSHC conference before we need to decide.
- Chair Proposed to discuss this issue again at the NSHC meeting following IH Conference (9 am Sat. 12 May - less than 3 hours meeting).

D6. RENC Status Reports

NO PRIMAR – see EN

Norway reported on: New areas (including Japanese charts); significantly improved coverage; a new service PRIMAR online through distributors; subscribers’ real time update; increased rate of new subscribers.

UK IC-ENC – see EN

Discussion on the RENCs followed.

- DE Saw a similar picture for both RENCs, with much improved coverage and increased updates. It was felt that merchant shipping take-up is still below expectations. Also, a recent press release by Jeppesen, announcing their purchase of C-Map, may have a major effect on the market place. This should assist the objective of making ENC standard in ECDIS. This could be considered a promising development rather than bad, as long as they do not produce their own ENCs.
- FR Was not happy with the existence of two more or less competing RENCs within one commission, notwithstanding considerable investment by Norway and UK, and felt that a NSHC strategy should be discussed.
- DE Agreed that competing RENCs is not a good idea. Making and maintaining ENCs is government responsibility, but being competitive is not. They would be happy to enter negotiations in trying to come to a solution to amalgamate the RENCs.

E. NSHC WORKING GROUPS

E1. Report of WG on standardisation of digital exchange of Notices to Mariners

See DE presentation.

It was proposed to endorse the recommendations, to accept the WG tasks as completed, and to disband the WG. There was strong support for the report of the working group. UK reiterated its offer to assist other nations on implementation. The Chair accepted the work and suggestions of the WG. He invited MS to work with the technical groups of CHRIS to develop this topic further as part of the S-100 approach.

E2. Report of Tidal Working Group - see EN

Tidal WG put forward a proposal to become a Tidal Committee rather than a WG. Member states agreed that the work needed to be continued, but were not convinced that there was a need for a NSHC tidal committee as well as an IHO tidal committee. It was agreed that the Tidal Working Group would continue under NSHC.

ACTION E2

Tidal WG: To provide more information on why a NSHC Tidal Committee is needed in addition to the IHO Tidal Committee

To execute tasks as defined in the work plan.

To revise TORs to Tidal Working Group not Tidal Committee

E3. NW European Charting Group – approval of TORs and Work Plan – see EN

The Chairman (UK – Tim Wellington) had offered to continue as INT Area D coordinator.

DE Supported UK to continue as Chair.

The Work Plan was discussed. It was agreed to amend Item 3vii) in order to allow updated catalogues to be supplied to members on request. Item 3vii) to read “The Group will keep the NSHC INT Chart Catalogue up-to-date and will provide it to member states on request”.

DE Remarked that the IHB hope to have up-to-date catalogue on line.

FR Considered that a “check for consistency with all adjacent INT regions” should be included in TORs.

Chair Accepted TORs and Work Plan with the amendments noted above. He requested regular updates and a link to the IHB report at each meeting. He accepted UK to continue as coordinator.

ACTION E3

UK: To check receipt of updated copies of the Catalogue of INT Charts of Region D, and if required, send further copies to members.

Charting Group: Revise work plan to include amendments suggested by NSHC members.

F. MISCELLANEOUS

F1. The Mareano project - see EN

F2. Integrated Management of the Barents Sea - see EN.

Norway advised that the organisations involved were NHS, Geological Survey and Marine Institute. The project started in 2000 and was aimed high to the attention of Prime Minister. Scientists understood the need for surveys to base their data on. The Project Chair (NO) stipulated that HOs have tasks beyond navigation safety and that these will become more important. NSHC is leading the way and should emphasise these new requirements to nations around the world.

F3. World Hydrography Day

FR Commented that some states had made significant efforts, with mixed results. This is a great opportunity to raise awareness. A collective opportunity may be even better.

IHB Informed that they had received lots of very positive reports. IHB had supported MS, and provided links to other websites. The IHB have proposed the theme of ENC's for 2007. They agreed with French proposal (IMO celebrates World Maritime Day for a week).

NL Queried what the objective of a collective celebration would be. In NL it will require lots of energy to gain national interest.

UK Support possible joint celebration. Requested nominations for the Alexander Dalrymple award (for services to hydrography). WHD logo developed which can be provided for others to use.

ACTION F3

FR: To coordinate a joint celebration of World Hydrography Day in 2007.

F4. Routeing measures affecting more than one country

UK Advised that the reason for raising this was to indicate that periodically there is a need to review routeing measures which may affect more than one nation. UKHO and UK Maritime and Coastguard Agency work together on submissions to IMO. There is also a need to talk to our neighbours about hydrographic requirements for any proposed schemes.

UK MCA Explained that routeing measures around F3 buoy (Strait of Dover) are to be put to IMO NAV meeting in 2007. International cooperation will be required as the scheme falls within the waters of several countries.

UK Offered to send details to affected hydrographic offices.

NL, BE and FR requested that details are sent well in advance of NAV meetings.

G. UNSCHEDULED ITEMS

G1. Liability under Criminal Legislation

UK advised other Members of UKHO's recent awareness of the potential application of Criminal Legislation to the activities of HOs, in relation to liability, following the implementation of European Directive 2001/95/EC in UK law. The Directive imposes requirements concerning the safety of products intended for customers or likely to be used by them if such products are to be put on the market by producers or supplied by distributors. It covers products that were originally designed and intended for professional use but which subsequently migrate to the consumer market. If it is reasonably foreseeable that a product will migrate to the consumer market then suitable instructions for consumer use and warnings of any risks that are not obvious must be provided. UK recommended that Member States check the Directive and its implementation through their national law.

G2. Multibeam course

Norway will host a multibeam course, 12-17 March 2007, in Stavanger. IHB will send out a Circular Letter with details.

H. CONCLUDING FORMALITIES

H1. Approval of Conference Conclusions and Recommendations

Conclusion 81 was accepted and the draft list of actions was reviewed.

H2. Place and Time of next Conference

DK Denmark will host the next meeting in April/May 2008. Proposed date and place to follow.

As agreed at Item D5, a special NSHC meeting will be held after IH Conference in Monaco, May 2007 to discuss selection of NSHC Representation on Council.

H3. Election of new Chairman

Dr Ehlers (DE) was elected and expressed his thanks for the 'practice run'!

H4. Closing Remarks

Dr Ehlers expressed his thanks to all for their participation, constructive comments and cooperative spirit. UK was thanked for preparing notes and minutes. Thanks also went to colleagues at BSH for doing an excellent job of organising the meeting.

Dr Ehlers said that although not many concrete decisions had been made, the meeting was still very important, with lots of exchange of information. There are many activities affecting MS such as improving hydrographic services, establishing new technologies and positioning systems, satellite imagery, production of charts.

A major issue has been how to get digital product line in place. There have been complex implementation issues but we share optimism that it will come together soon.

He re-iterated that the tasks of HOs are widening. Maritime safety remains the main task but other tasks are appearing. Knowledge of marine activities and marine management will be very important for HOs in the future.

Lots of reorganisation of offices shows that this is a time of change. There is a need for good cooperation within NSHC in order to be able to influence. The European dimension is increasingly significant - do we need to work more closely with the other EU members? A working group has been established to help answer some of these questions.

A recurring theme of this conference has been the visibility of hydrography - there is a need to increase public perception. MS need to be visible to influence developments – it is hoped that World Hydrography Day will assist.

Dr Ehlers closed by saying that he hoped that all delegates would leave feeling that this visit was worthwhile, thanking them for visiting and looking forward to meeting them again at Conference in Monaco.