

STATUTES OF THE HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION OF THE ROPME SEA AREA (RSAHC)

ARTICLE 1: THE COMMISSION

- a) The Regional Hydrographic Commission for the ROPME Sea Area is constituted in conformity with resolution 2/1997, as amended, of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO), attached as Annex A, and shall be governed according to these Statutes.
- b) The geographic Region covered by the Commission shall be the ROPME Sea Area, illustrated at Annex B, hereafter referred as "the Region".

ARTICLE 2: MEMBERS

- a) Full Members of the Commission shall be IHO Member States within the Region who are signatories of these Statutes.
- b) Associate Membership is open to any non-IHO Member State within the Region who is a signatory of these Statutes. Other Members of the IHO who contribute to the safety of navigation through their activities in the fields of hydrography, nautical charting or nautical information in the Region and are signatories to these Statutes may be accepted as Associate Members. Associate Members have the same rights and obligations as the Full Members of the Commission except the right to vote or to be elected Chairman or vice-Chairman.
- c) Other IHO Member States which are not signatories to these Statutes but who contribute to the safety of navigation by their activities in the fields of hydrography, nautical charting or nautical information in the Region, or organizations active in the above field in the Region maybe invited to participate as Observers. Observers can participate in the discussions and in the working groups set up by the Commission but shall not have voting rights.

ARTICLE 3: AIMS

- a) The Commission, which is an integral part of the IHO and which promotes the aims of the Organization at the regional level, shall have an advisory, scientific and technological character. It shall not exert any authority over the hydrographic services or institutions responsible for hydrography and navigation of the Member countries and its activities shall not extend to matters concerning political issues.
- b) Particular aims of the Commission are:
 - 1) To promote safety of navigation through technical co-operation and training in the domain of hydrographic surveying, marine cartography and nautical information.
 - 2) To examine in its area of interest, matters with which the IHO is concerned, avoiding any interference with the prerogatives of the International Hydrographic Bureau (IHB) and of any other bodies set up by the IHO.
 - 3) To stimulate all countries of the Region to expand their hydrographic activities and to encourage them to seek advice and technical assistance from the IHB and other organizations in order to strengthen their hydrographic capabilities.
 - 4) To facilitate the exchange of information related to surveys, research and/or scientific and technical development to assist in planning and organizing the hydrographic activities in the widest sense of the aims, but without interference in national responsibilities.
 - 5) To co-ordinate and implement the INT Chart Scheme for the Region and to monitor its suitability.
 - 6) To carry out studies and projects through working groups of the Commission or as a working group of the IHO when deemed necessary.
 - 7) To exchange information about provision of services for GIS applications of hydrographic data.

ARTICLE 4: ORDINARY MEETINGS

- a) The Commission shall hold an ordinary meeting at least biennially in a country of the Region.
- b) The Members shall be represented at the meetings by the heads of the Hydrographic Authorities or their nominees or, where such services do not exist, by heads of national authorities responsible for hydrography and navigation.
- c) The presence of at least one-half (½) of the Full Members of the Commission shall constitute the necessary quorum to hold the meeting.
- d) An invitation to attend the meeting shall always be sent to the Directing Committee of the IHB.
- e) The Chairman shall invite those countries of the Region that are not Members of the Commission and the Co-ordinators of adjacent INT-Chart Regions to send representatives to attend the Commission meetings as observers. Any Members may propose to the Chairman the invitation of technical experts as observers.
- f) The number of participants shall not exceed 3 per country pending availability of host country's facilities.

ARTICLE 5: CHAIRMAN and VICE-CHAIRMAN

- a) The meeting of the Commission shall be presided over by its Chairman. However, in case the Chairman can not hold the meeting due to any unforeseen reason(s) then the meeting shall be chaired by its vice- Chairman. The Chairman and vice-Chairman shall be from a Full Member State of the Commission, elected on a rotational basis. Therefore, those Full Members desirous of chairing the next meeting shall put forward their candidature during an ordinary meeting. Priority shall be given to a country which has not yet chaired a meeting, or to the one which had not done so for the longest time. In cases of equal priority, a secret ballot shall be held with the decision being taken by a simple majority of Full Members present. The Chairman and vice- Chairman shall take office immediately after their election.
- b) In the interval between meetings, the Chairman shall assume the Secretariat of the Commission and shall see that all matters arising are addressed by correspondence. The Chairman shall also prepare a complete report on the activities performed by the Commission during his term and shall submit it as the first item of the Agenda for the next meeting.
- c) The Chairman will report the activities and future plans of the Commission to the relevant sessions of the IHC and make contributions to the IHO Annual Report. Between IHC sessions, reports of studies or other activities which may be considered of general interest to all IHO Member States should be reported by the Chairman to the IHB for general dissemination.
- d) In case the Chairman of the Commission is replaced from office at the relevant service, the successor shall become the new Chairman.

ARTICLE 6: DATE AND VENUE OF MEETINGS

- a) Date and venue of the next ordinary meeting shall be agreed at each meeting.
- b) The Chairman elect of the Commission shall make arrangements for hosting the next meeting, preferably in the respective country
- c) The host country will assist with the arrangement of authorizations and visas, so as to facilitate attendance at the meeting.

ARTICLE 7: AGENDA OF MEETINGS

- a) The proposals considered by the Members, to be included in the Agenda of a meeting, should be sent to the Chairman for the next meeting at least four (4) months in advance of the date agreed for the commencement of the meeting.
- b) The Chairman shall prepare the Provisional Agenda in consultation with the Members at least two (2) months before the meeting.
- c) The Agenda shall be adopted by the Commission at the beginning of each meeting.
- d) The Commission can modify the order of discussion of different items of the Agenda during the meeting.
- e) Proposals of any Member which are not considered in the Agenda shall be submitted to the Chairman and, with the agreement of the Members, shall be incorporated in the Agenda for consideration.

ARTICLE 8: RESOLUTIONS AND DECISIONS

- a) The resolutions and decisions of the meeting shall be adopted by the simple majority of its Full Members present and voting. Votes in favour shall be indicated by a show of hands. In case of an equal number of votes (tie), a second vote shall take place after listening to the comments of the representative of the IHB.
- b) The Chairman shall prepare a written text of the decisions taken on each item of the Agenda each day and shall see to its distribution to all the participants for the next day.
- c) Each Full Member has only one vote.
- d) At the end of the meeting, the Chairman shall read the text of the resolutions and decisions taken.

ARTICLE 9: CORRESPONDENCE

- a) The Chairman shall send, within two months after the closing of the meeting, one (1) copy of the Draft Report regarding the discussions and decisions taken during the meeting to each of the Full Members for approval, and for Associate Members and Observers for comment. The Full Members shall send back their approval or any amendments to the Draft Report within two months after its receipt. After this period the Report shall be deemed to have been approved and decisions shall be put into effect. Any objection shall be resolved by correspondence. A signature page shall be circulated to obtain final approval.
- b) A copy of the Final Report of the meeting shall be sent to the Full Members, Associate Members, Observers and the IHB.

ARTICLE 10: EXTRAORDINARY MEETINGS

- a) The Chairman may convene an extraordinary meeting of the Members of the Commission when their representatives are assembled for a session of the IHC, inviting others qualified to attend as observers.

b) In the case of urgent matters, which cannot be treated by correspondence nor can be delayed for the next meeting, the Chairman, in agreement with at least 1/2 of the Full Members may convene an extraordinary meeting.

ARTICLE 11: EXPENSES

a) The Chairman and the host country shall be responsible for the organization of the meeting. The host country shall bear the expenses except those in Paragraph (b) of this Article.

b) Travelling, hotel and per diem expenses of the delegates shall be defrayed by their respective organizations.

ARTICLE 12: STATUTES

a) The IHB shall be the custodian of these Statutes.

b) The amendment of the Statutes shall require the approval of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the Full Members of the Commission.

c) If amendments to the present Statutes are agreed by those Full Members attending a meeting, but they do not receive the approval of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the Full Members as required, the Chairman shall submit the proposal(s) by mail to all Full Members with information copies to Associate Members. Final approval shall be subject to the provisions of paragraph b of this Article. Amendments to the Statutes shall then appear in the Report of the Meeting.

ARTICLE 13: THE LANGUAGE OF THE COMMISSION

The working language of the Commission shall be English.

TITLE	Reference	Last amendment (CL or IHC)	1 st Edition Reference
ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSIONS (RHC)	2/1997 as amended	69/2010	T1.3

1 It is resolved that the IHB shall encourage Member States having common regional interests in data collecting or nautical charting to form Regional Hydrographic Commissions (RHC) to cooperate in the undertaking of surveys and other projects. As part of IHO, the RHC shall complement the work of the Bureau.

2 RHCs are intended to provide, in pursuance of the resolutions and recommendations of the IHO, regional co-ordination with regard to nautical information, hydrographic surveys, production of nautical charts and documents, training, technical cooperation and hydrographic capacity building projects. They (RHC) should enable the exchange of information and consultation between the hydrographic services concerned. Geographically adjacent RHCs should liaise with each other.

2 bis Where Capacity Building is required in a region, RHCs are recommended to establish an internal body to deal with CB matters and to designate a focal point to ensure continuity in the CB process. This part-time allocation to assist RHCs should come primarily and ideally from an HO within the region. If that is not possible then the RHC might agree to request support from another RHC or an HO that might wish to take that responsibility.

These regional contact points, the responsibilities of which should be given directly and in detail by the RHC concerned, shall have the support of the RHCs; shall be nominated having in mind the importance of continuity; shall be in permanent contact with the corresponding RHC Chairman as well as with the CBC Chairman. Ideally should be a CBC member with access to RHC meetings.

In the absence of any other viable alternative and despite its limited human resources availability a request of support could be requested to the IHB.

3 RHCs shall be properly constituted and have activities in line with the objectives of the IHO as described in Article II of the Convention on the IHO and in accordance with the approved IHO Work Programme. Geographical areas of the RHC will normally coincide with INT chart regions, modified as appropriate to meet regional requirements and special circumstances. There are special provisions for Region M (Antarctica) because of its special status.

4 RHC membership may include full members, associate members, and observers, all willing to contribute to the safety of navigation in the fields of hydrography, nautical charting, nautical information or navigational warnings in the region concerned. The roles of full members, associated members and observers will be defined by each RHC.

Full membership is reserved for IHO Member States within the region who sign the statutes of the RHC.

Associate membership is available to other IHO Members States or States of the region who are non-IHO members, both being signatories of the statutes of the RHC.

Other States and International Organizations active in the region concerned may be invited by the RHC to participate as observers.

The invitation procedures should be established by each RHC.

5 The working languages used by the RHC shall be agreed upon by their members and designated to ensure the best communication between participants. The reports and IHO documents relating to RHC activities shall be in at least one of the official languages of the IHO. For correspondence with the Bureau, one of the official languages of the IHO shall be used.

6 A representative of the Bureau shall be invited to attend meetings of RHCs.

6bis RHCs shall assess regularly the hydrographic capacity and requirements within their region.

7 Chairs of RHCs shall report to the I.H. Conference on RHC activities, hydrographic capacity and requirements within their region, future plans and the agreed key targets that support RHC tasks detailed in the IHO Work Programme. The Chairs of RHC's shall also submit an annual report to the IHB indicating progress made against the agreed key targets in the IHO Work Programme for general dissemination. Between sessions of the IHC, reports of studies or other activities, which may be considered of general interest to all IHO Member States, shall be sent by Chairs of RHCs to the Bureau for general dissemination.

8 The following structure is to be used for National Reports made to those RHCs that wish to receive such reports:

Structure for National Reports to Regional Hydrographic Commissions

Executive summary

1	Hydrographic Office / Service:	General, including updates for the IHO Yearbook e.g. reorganization
2	Surveys:	Coverage of new surveys. New technologies and /or equipment New ships Problems encountered
3	New charts & updates:	ENCs ENC Distribution method RNCs INT charts National paper charts Other charts, e.g. for pleasure craft Problems encountered
4	New publications & updates:	New Publications Updated publications Means of delivery, e.g. paper, digital Problems encountered
5	MSI	Existing infrastructure for transmission New infrastructure in accordance with GMDSS Master Plan Problems encountered
Note : Use the WWNWS template for this section		
6	C-55	Latest update (Tables)
7	Capacity Building	Offer of and/or demand for Capacity Building Training received, needed, offered Status of national, bilateral, multilateral or regional development projects with hydrographic component. (In progress, planned, under evaluation or study) Definition of bids to IHO/CBC
8	Oceanographic activities	General GEBCO/IBC's activities Tide gauge network New equipment Problems encountered

- 9 Other activities
- Participation in IHO Working Groups
 - Meteorological data collection
 - Geospatial studies
 - Disaster prevention
 - Environmental protection
 - Astronomical observations
 - Magnetic/Gravity surveys
 - MSDI Progress
 - International
 - Etc.
- 10 Conclusions

The ROPME Sea Area

