

7th Meeting of the Worldwide ENC Database (WEND) Working Group (WENDWG), Washington DC, USA, 31 January – 2 February

The seventh meeting of the Worldwide ENC Database Working Group (WENDWG) took place in Washington, District of Columbia, USA, hosted by the Office of Coast Survey of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), from 31 January to 2 February, in conjunction with the 2nd joint meeting of the Regional ENC Coordinating Centres (RENC), IC-ENC and PRIMAR. The meeting was chaired by Mr Jamie McMichael-Phillips (United Kingdom). Twenty-one delegates from 12 Member States (Argentina, Brazil, Canada, China, Finland, France, Italy, Japan, Norway, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States) representing eleven Regional Hydrographic Commissions (ARHC, BSHC, EAHC, EAHC, MACHC, MBSHC, NHC, NSHC, SAIHC, SWAHC, USCHC), the Chairs of the IC ENC Steering Committee and PRIMAR Advisory Board and the directors of both RENC attended the meeting. Director Mustafa Iptes and Assistant Director Yves Guillam (Secretary) represented the IHO Secretariat.



Participants to the 7th WENDWG Meeting.

The meeting noted that most of the decisions and actions arising from the 6th meeting of the WENDWG were implemented or complete. As a result, the meeting concentrated on the main work items of the WENDWG 2016-17 programme of work, and the actions assigned to the WENDWG by the Inter-Regional Coordination Committee (IRCC) at its 8th meeting in 2016.

The WENDWG agreed that there was a need to draw the attention of the 1st Session of the IHO Assembly (IHO-A1) to some important issues. An ad hoc drafting group prepared the key messages that could be included in the oral presentation of the Chair of the IRCC. This included drawing attention to the steps that should be taken by RHCs and ENC producers to minimise overlapping ENC coverage, particularly where it could impact on the safety of navigation. The status of ENC coverage was reviewed based on a report provided by the United Kingdom, taking note also of the report prepared by the IHO for the 4th Session of the IMO Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR 4/25/5). The meeting acknowledged the set of actions and related issues raised from the 8th meeting of the Hydrographic Services and Standards Committee (HSSC-8) regarding the use of the ENC/ECDIS Data Presentation and Performance Check for Ships by port State Control authorities. The WENDWG participants, including the RENCs, agreed that the “List of Hydrographic Office Contact Person Regarding ENC Overlap Issues” which is available on the IHO web site, was not used anymore and should be withdrawn.

Two other ad hoc drafting groups were established during the meeting; the first one to prepare the draft of a new IHO Resolution seeking to limit overlapping ENC coverage issues when safety of navigation is at stake. This new proposed IHO Resolution aims to clarify and consolidate the procedure which already exists in the *Guidelines for the Implementation of the WEND Principles*. It will be submitted to IRCC9 in June 2017 for endorsement. The second ad hoc drafting group was established to establish procedures and guidelines for RENCs to assess the “significance” of any particular instance of overlapping ENC coverage, to develop further the possibility of exchanging ENC *data* between RENCs for harmonization purposes, and quality control in general. The WENDWG agreed that the new procedures and guidelines should also incorporate the relevant parts of the ENC data flow diagram (see IHO WENDWG Repository web page) and embrace the so-called “exclusive” ENCs that are not currently distributed through the RENCs.

The representatives of the RHCs reported on the progress made on ENC Scheming in their charting region. They were informed by the IHO Secretariat that IHO Member States will soon be requested to approve a new Edition of S-11 Part A - *Guidance for the Preparation and the Maintenance of International (INT) Charts and ENC Schemes*. The inclusion of ENC schemes in the guidance is intended to reinforce the need to implement ENC scheming at the regional level. The situation varies significantly from one region to another and it is currently unclear if there is a common understanding on this matter, notwithstanding the fact that the establishment of regional ENC schemes has been designated by the IRCC and monitored over the last five years through the IHO performance indicators associated with the IHO Strategic Plan. These performance indicators were discussed as part of preparation of the next IHO Assembly. A recommendation was made to focus the indicators on ENC usage bands 1 to 3 in future, since bands 4 to 6 are usually confined to national rather than regional ENC coverage.

Some ENC producer countries, who already include Temporary & Preliminary Notices to Mariners (T&P NtMs) in their ENC updates, argued that decisions made at IRCC-8 relating to the Admiralty Information Overlay service provided by the UKHO as part of its AVCS service, had not been implemented yet. The UKHO agreed to report on this issue within a month.

The WENDWG agreed to recommend the continuation of its activities to the IRCC and that the next meeting of the WENDWG should be held back-to-back with the next Joint RENC meeting in March 2018 in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

Further information concerning the meeting is available on the IHO web site at:

www.iho.int > Committees & WG > WENDWG > WENDWG-7

Reference documents are also available at:

www.iho.int > Committees & WG > WENDWG > WENDWG Repository