

**48th Meeting of the FIG/IHO/ICA International Board on Standards of
Competence for Hydrographic Surveyors and Nautical Cartographers (IBSC)
St. Johns, NFL, Canada
5 - 16 May 2025**

Contribution to the IHO Work Programme 2025

Task 3.8.1	Organize, prepare and report annual meetings of the International Board on Standards of Competence for Hydrographic Surveyors and Nautical Cartographers (IBSC)
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High level summary:

- IBSC48 reviewed 19 submissions, including four new programmes.
- The list of planned on-site visits (OSVs) was updated.
- The implementation of the recognition of individual subjects of the S-5 Standards was discussed and some Frequently Asked Questions were developed.
- A revised roadmap was approved, targeting the approval of Standards S-5 A/B and S-8 A/B by August 2026.
- Detailed discussions were held on S-8 Standards to shift toward a more data-centric approach.
- A pre-consultation process was agreed upon to gather feedback on the Standards ahead of the formal consultation process.
- Given the improved outcomes of recent submissions, a workshop for institutions planning to submit within the next two years will be held on 1 October 2025.
- A stakeholder's workshop is also planned for the upcoming meeting in China, which presents a unique opportunity to strengthen relationships

Details:

The FIG/IHO/ICA International Board on Standards of Competence for Hydrographic Surveyors and Nautical Cartographers (IBSC) is a joint Board of the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG), the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) and the International Cartographic Association (ICA) that has as objectives to review syllabi of programmes and individual recognition schemes from education and training institutions, maintain IBSC publications, provide guidance to education and training institutions and support the IHO for the establishment of new hydrographic programmes where regional training capacity is lacking.

The 48th IBSC meeting was held from 5 to 16 May 2026 at the Fisheries and Marine Institute of the Memorial University in St. John's, Newfoundland, Canada. The meeting was chaired by Capt. (R) Nickolas Roscher (Brazil) and attended by all the 12 Members of the Board. The IHO Secretariat was represented by Assistant Director Leonel Manteigas (IBSC Secretary).

In the opening session Dr. Paul Brett - Vice-President pro tempore of Memorial University for the Fisheries and Marine Institute warmly welcomed the IBSC Members and emphasized the growing significance of science and hydrography, underscoring IBSC's vital role. He also noted the University's two recognized programs, highlighting their impact on both students and the broader community.

The Board reviewed 19 submissions from 14 countries, comprising one scheme, 14 programmes in hydrographic surveying, and four programmes in nautical cartography. Of these, four were from new programmes.

Following the review, six submissions were granted recognition. Three were classified as "Not Recognized," while ten were categorized as "Could Be Recognized," pending further adjustments to the submitted documentation. These ten will be reviewed intersessional.

On-site visits (OSV) are activities of the Board contributing to confirm the internal revision of those documents presented by the institutions and assessing the alignment of their programmes with the Standards, while reviewing their educational processes. During the meeting the most recent OSV were discussed, whilst new OSV were planned and prioritized.

To widen the availability of high-quality, IBSC recognized hydrographic training, the IBSC finalized the process to implement the recognition of single subjects of the S-5 A and B Standards issuing the Guidelines for the Implementation of the Standards of Competence for Hydrographic Surveyors and Nautical Cartographers Edition 3.0.0. During the meeting the Board also worked on the complementary Frequently Asked Questions document to clarify the respective process.

When the Board decided to update the four Standards (S-5 A and B and S-8 A and B) it was an ambitious goal. Since the Standards were not ready to be submitted this year to IRCC17 a new roadmap was defined with the objective of having the four Standards approved by August 2026. During the meeting the Standards were discussed with special focus on the S-8 that were debated in detail with the objective to move towards a more data centric approach.

Meanwhile the Board intends to continue the process with intersessional discussions. To enhance stakeholder engagement, the Board agreed to introduce a pre-consultation process, allowing for additional input ahead of the formal consultation. The final versions of the Standards are planned to be reviewed during the intersessional meeting in November 2025 and after a formal consultation process be submitted to IRCC 18. It is expected to have the Standards approved by the Member States in August 2026 to be applied by the submissions to IBSC50 in 2027.

The number of programmes granted recognition at IBSC48 was notably higher than in recent years. Contributing factors include the use of a detailed submission checklist and the workshops for submitting institutions. Having this in consideration, the Board will organize further workshops for institutions planning to submit within the next two years. These will be held on **1 October 2025**, with sessions scheduled in two time zones to accommodate global participants.

Over the past two years, the Board has organized stakeholder workshops alongside its meetings to enhance national and regional engagement. A workshop is also planned for the upcoming meeting in China, which presents a unique opportunity to strengthen relationships with stakeholders in China and the broader region.

IBSC discussed and approved other important working items such as the IBSC Work Programme, IBSC Fund, the programmes that have lost their recognitions and those needing of a recognition's extension.

During the meeting, elections were held for the term September 2026 to August 2028. The newly elected officers are:

Chair :	Mr Sobri Syawie, Indonesia (FIG)
Vice-Chair 1:	Emeritus Prof. Dr. Lysandros Tsoulos, Greece (ICA)
Vice-Chair 2:	Commodore Rod Nairn, Australia (IHO)

Photo



Upcoming meetings:

The next meetings are planned as follows:

- 2025 Intersessional (09-14 November 2025): Shandong University of Science and Technology China (Qingdao).
- IBSC49 (11-22 May 2026) Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia
- 2026 Intersessional: Valparaíso, Chile (TBC)
- IBSC50 (2027) London (to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the first meeting in London)