

18th Hydrographic Services and Standards Committee Gdansk, Poland 19-21 May 2026

Contribution to the IHO Work Programme 2026

Task 2.1.1 Organize, prepare, and report annual meetings of HSSC.

High level summary

- HSSC-18 was the first HSSC meeting following the 4th session of the IHO Assembly (Monaco, April 2026), which approved the new IHO Strategic Plan 2027–2032 and established the IHO S-100 Infrastructure Centre in Busan, Republic of Korea.
- The meeting formally endorsed S-98 Edition 3.0.0 (foundational S-100 ECDIS interoperability standard) plus the complete S-100 Phase 2 package of product specifications (S-122, S-123, S-125, S-127, S-131),
- Ms. Julia Powell (United States/NOAA) was elected as HSSC Chair and Ms. Nathalie Leidinger (France/Shom) as HSSC Vice-Chair for the 2026–2029 period.
- New S-100 product numbers were allocated: S-116 (Undersea Feature Names), S-413 (Submarine Cables) and S-415 (Marine Weather Synoptic Features).

Details

The Hydrographic Services and Standards Committee (HSSC) convened from 19 to 21 May 2026 in Gdansk, Poland, hosted by the Polish Hydrographic Office. The meeting was attended by 81 participants representing 29 IHO Member States, and by 5 IHO Member States remotely. Representatives from international partner organizations and industry (IMO, IALA, WMO, IEC, CIRM, OGC, NATO/GMWG, ICPC, IC-ENC, and Primar) also attended the meeting. The IHO Secretariat was represented by Technical Director Dr. John Nyberg and Assistant Directors Yong Baek and Eric Langlois. IHO Secretary General Dr. Mathias Jonas attended the second day of plenary.

Opening remarks were delivered by Captain Dariusz Beczek (Polish Hydrographic Office), who welcomed delegates to Gdansk and provided a historical overview of Polish hydrography and its centenary of IHO membership. Dr. John Nyberg emphasized the importance of capacity development as an integral part of standards work, and invited the committee to reflect on inclusivity and the ability of all Member States to engage meaningfully with S-100 specifications. Outgoing HSSC Chair Mr. Magnus Wallhagen (Sweden) noted that HSSC-18 would be his seventh and final meeting as Chair, acknowledged the S-100 milestones achieved during his tenure, and formally declared the 18th HSSC meeting open.

The Committee reviewed outcomes of the 9th IHO Council (C-9) and the 4th IHO Assembly (A-4, Monaco, April 2026) relevant to the Committee. HSSC noted Decision A-4/04 regarding IHO Publication S-11 and tasked the Nautical Cartography Working Group to update S-11 Article 3.14.1.d accordingly. HSSC Vice-Chair Nathalie Leidinger (France) presented the new Strategic Performance Indicators (SPIs) proposed for HSSC supervision under the 2027–2032 Strategic Plan:

- SPI 3 (S-100 ENDS connectivity service availability),
- SPI 4 (release of S-100 Phase 2 product specifications), and
- SPI 8 (IHO Infrastructure Centre performance).

These were endorsed and will be submitted to C-10 for approval.

The S-100 Infrastructure Centre Establishment Project Team (ICE PT) reported that the team's core mandate — defined in its Terms of Reference — had been fulfilled with the Assembly's adoption of all required governance documents and host agreements. HSSC acknowledged this achievement, commended the ICE PT Chair and Vice-Chair Martin Park (Republic of Korea) for their work, and agreed to disband the ICE PT.

Dr. John Nyberg (IHO) presented progress on the Infrastructure Centre's operationalization:

- completion of office design in Busan (occupancy planned June 2026),
- launch of recruitment for six positions,
- publication of a service and identity register beta test, and
- planning of an opening ceremony targeted for November 2026.

The Joint HSSC-IRCC Restructuring Project Team (JHIRPT), recently formed by the IHO Council to review the overall IHO Committees and subsidiary organs structure, was invited to consider the need to clarify the Infrastructure Centre's steering mechanisms, work plan, and budget in accordance with the resulting new IHO Resolution 01/2026 on the establishment of the IHO Infrastructure Centre.

The S-100 Security Scheme Project Team (SSPT) provided an update on the development of new OEM and data server agreements, audit mechanisms, APIs for secure certificate exchange. He also confirmed that IHO member states are exempt from paying fees to acquire their digital signature certificate. The HSSC endorsed a one-year extension of the SSPT mandate and tasked the JHIRPT to define the structure and remit of a future permanent security-related IHO body.

HSSC endorsed S-98 Edition 3.0.0 following intensive negotiations: the endorsed edition splits the document into a main document and data constraints annex with independent maintenance regimes, retains S-124 navigational warnings as mandatory in S-100 ECDIS, makes extended S-124 user interface requirements optional (with mandatory inclusion targeted for Edition 4), introduces self-cancellation via S-100 Part 17, and requires Lua as the mandatory portrayal mechanism for ECDIS-mandatory product specifications.

HSSC endorsed S-97 Edition 2.0.0 and S-164 Edition 2.0.0 and approved for the latter a clarification process to progressively incorporate ECDIS screenshots and test datasets.

HSSC approved the principle of developing and maintaining an S-100 ECDIS maintenance regime for inclusion in the S-100 Roadmap Annex 2.

HSSC approved two new IHO S-100 Sea Trial Area initiatives: a proposal from India (Indian Ocean region), and a comprehensive proposal from China (Pearl River Delta, Shanghai–Ningbo–Zhoushan corridor, Beibu Bay). Sea Trials Lessons learned from the Canadian St. Lawrence, Australian Torres Strait, and UK/France Channel Islands sea trials were presented, highlighting the added value of S-102 dynamic safety contours, S-104 water level adjustments, and S-111 surface current data.

HSSC also endorsed the whole package of operational editions of S-100 Phase 2 product specifications submitted by NIPWG. HSSC endorsed Edition 2.0.0 of S-122 marine protected areas, S-123 marine radio services, S-127 marine traffic management, and S-131 marine harbour infrastructure, and approved Edition 1.0.0 of S-125 marine aids to navigation (AtoN) for experimentation and testing. HSSC also approved the first editions of S-158 validation checks for S-122, S-123, S-125, S-127, S-128, and S-131.

HSSC allocated S-116 as the future S-100 product number dedicated to Undersea Feature Names proposed by GEBCO's Sub-Committee for Undersea Features Names (SCUFN). New S-100 product numbers were also allocated: S-415 (Marine Weather Synoptic Features, WMO) and S-431 (Submarine Cables, ICPC).

Elections were held to renew the HSSC Office Bearers for 2026-2029. Ms. Julia Powell (United States/NOAA) was elected as HSSC Chair by acclamations. Ms. Nathalie Leidinger (France/Shom) was elected as HSSC Vice-Chair among other candidates from New Zealand, United Kingdom, China and Australia. Outgoing Chair Magnus Wallhagen received the appreciation of the Committee for his seven years of service as Chair.

Photo



*HSSC-18 Group Photo — Gdansk, Poland, May 2026
(credits: Polish Hydrographic Office)*

Upcoming meetings

HSSC-19 will be hosted by the IHO Infrastructure Centre / KHOA in Busan, Republic of Korea, 18–21 May 2027.

HSSC-20 will be held at the IHO Secretariat, Monaco (2028, dates TBD)

HSSC-21 will be held in Wollongong, Australia (2029, dates TBD)