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| **TITLE** | **Reference** | **Last amendment (CL or IHC/A)** | **1st Edition Reference** |

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| **ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSIONS (RHC)** | **2/1997 as amended** | **xx/201x** | **T1.3** |

GENERAL

1 The mission of the IHO is to create a global environment in which States provide adequate and timely hydrographic data, products and services and ensure their widest possible use. To accomplish this mission, Member States (MSs) are to pursue, on an intergovernmental basis, their cooperation on hydrographic activities on a regional basis.

2 IHO MSs have established regional coordination as an essential factor to support enhancements in the exchange of information and foster training and technical assistance between all nations. To effectively implement this, Regional Hydrographic Commissions (RHCs) are recognized by the Assembly as the primary organs to bring together Coastal States (CSs) within a region to progress the work of the IHO and extract the highest societal value of MS effort for the benefit of the nation, region and wider global marine geospatial community.

ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSIONS

3 It is resolved that the IHO Secretariat 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 Organization, establish common regional approach’s, and balance regional issues with global and supra-national geospatial needs.

4 RHCs shall provide, in pursuance of the resolutions and recommendations of the IHO, regional coordination with regard to nautical information, hydrographic surveys, production of nautical charts and documents, technical cooperation and capacity building (CB) projects and Marine Spatial Data Infrastructure projects, related to the work of the IHO. RHCs, led by IHO MSs, should enable the exchange of information and consultation among the hydrographic services of all regional coastal States concerned. Geographically adjacent RHCs should liaise with each other to coordinate the provision of hydrographic services. Cooperation among all RHCs, including among those not adjacent, is encouraged and expected.

(Note: moved to paragraph 13)

5 RHCs shall assess regularly the status of nautical information, navigational warnings, hydrographic surveying, nautical charting, hydrographic capacity and requirements within their region and provide reports to the work of the relevant IHO subordinated bodies and inputs to relevant IHO publications.

6 As part of the IHO, RHCs shall be properly constituted, follow standard processes and have activities in line with the objectives of the IHO as described in Article II of the Convention on the IHO, and to contribute to the approved IHO Work Programme.

7 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.

(moved to paragraph11)

8 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 one of the official languages of the IHO. For correspondence with the IHO Secretariat, one of the official languages shall be used.

9 The IHO Secretariat shall be invited to attend meetings of RHCs as Permanent Obsesrvers. (former paragraph 6)

MEMBERSHIP

10 RHC membership may include full Membersand Associate Members, willing to contribute to the objectives of the IHO in the fields of hydrography, nautical charting, nautical information or navigational warnings, marine spatial data infrastructure (MSDI) and related fields in the region concerned. The roles of full members, associated members and observers will be defined by each RHC, in line with the IHO Basic Documents. The invitation procedures for membership will be established by each RHC, following open approachs that are open, inclusive and supportive of a regional coordination role.

11 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 other nations who are non-IHO members, with active hydrographic concerns in the region, and being signatories of the statutes of the RHC. International Organizations, Industry and Academia, active in the region concerned, may request to participate, or may be invited by the RHC to participate as Observers or Subject Matter Expert.

. (Note: former paragraph 4)

LEADERSHIP

12 Leadership of the RHC shouldbe documented within the Commission Statutes, and establish the position of Chairman, Vice-Chairman, and Secretary, with associated selection process, and term of duties. Duties of the Commission Leadership are encouraged to be in line with this Resolution and the IRCC document titled *Roles and Responsibilities of Regional Hydrographic Commission Chairman.*

CAPACITY BUILDING

13 Where CB is required, RHCs are recommended to establish an internal body to deal with CB matters. All RHCs are encouraged to appoint a CB Coordinator to ensure that regional capacity building activities are aligned and coordinated in accordance with the IHO CB Strategy and with procedures and practices developed by the CBSC. Such appointment should be reflected in the RHC Statutes to define the role of the CB Coordinator. This part-time allocation to assist RHCs should come primarily and ideally from a Hydrographic Offcie (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. (note: former paragraph 2 bis)

14 The CB Coordinators shall be nominated having in mind the importance of continuity; shall be in regular contact with the corresponding RHC Chair as well as with the CBSC Chair, the IHO Secretariat and the relevant NAVAREA Coordinators. Ideally should be a CBSC member with access to RHC meetings. However, RHCs may nominate a CBSC member different of the CB Coordinator. (note: previously paragraph 2 bis)

(Moved to paragraph 9)

REPORTING

15 Chairs of RHCs shall report to the IHO Assembly on RHC activities, the findings of the assessments made in accordance with paragraph 3, future plans and the agreed key targets that support RHC tasks detailed in the IHO Work Programme. The Chairs of RHCs shall also submit reports to the IRCC meetings and an annual report to the IHO Secretariat indicating progress made against the agreed key targets in the IHO Work Programme. Between sessions of the IHO Assembly, 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 IHO Secretariat for general dissemination.

16 The Chair will provide the secretariat support for the RHC meetings and the intersessional coordination within the region. The IRCC shall maintain a list of responsibilities of the Chairs to ensure the work of the RHCs

17 The following structure is to be used for National Reports made to those RHCs. These reports are also intended to streamline information to the used by the IHO Secretariat to update the Country Information System (CIS):

Structure for National Reports to Regional Hydrographic Commissions

Executive summary

1 Hydrographic Office / Service: General, including updates for the IHO Yearbook e.g. reorganization.

Note: use the available template for updates to the Yearbook

Use separate sections if more than one national HO works within region for a single MS.

2 Surveys: Coverage of new surveys.

New technologies and /or equipment

New ships

Crowdsourced and satellite-derived bathymetry – national policy

Challenges and achievements

3 New charts & updates: ENCs coverage, gaps and overlaps

ENC Distribution method

RNCs

INT charts

National paper charts

Other charts, e.g. for pleasure craft

Challenges and achievements

4 New publications & updates: New Publications

Updated publications

Means of delivery, e.g. paper, digital

Challenges and achievements

5 MSI Existing infrastructure for transmission

Statistics on work of the Nacional Coordinator

New infrastructure in accordance with GMDSS Master Plan

Challenges and achievements

Note : Use the WWNWS template for this section

6 C-55 Latest update

Note: use the available template to update C-55

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 CBSC

8 Oceanographic activities General

GEBCO/IBC’s activities, GEBCO Seabed 2030 activities

Tide gauge network

New equipment

Challenges and achievements

9 Spatial data infrastructures Status of MSDI

Relationship with the NSDI

Involvement in regional or global MSDI efforts

National implementation of the Shared Data Principles – including any national data policy and impact on marine data.

MSDI national portal

Best practices and lessons learned

Challenges and achievements

10 Innovation Use of new technologies

Risk assessment

Policy matters

11 Other activities Participation in IHO Working Groups

Meteorological data collection

Geospatial studies

Preparation for responses to disasters

Environmental protection

Engagement with the Maritime Administration

Aids to Navigation matters

Magnetic and gravity surveys

International engagements

Etc.

12 Conclusions

15 The IHO Secretariat will keep templates for the National Reports and its presentations to RHC meetings. The templates will be in a format compatible with the IHO databases.