



## IHO HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION ON ANTARCTICA (HCA)

IHO File No. S3/0128

6 June 2017

HCA Letter No. 02/2017

**This letter seeks responses by 30 September 2017**

### **Outcome of the Extraordinary Meeting of the IHO HCA at A-1 and Outcome of the Fortieth Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM40)**

**To:** HCA Members, Observers and Expert Contributors (*by email only*)

#### **References:**

- A. Minutes of the 14<sup>th</sup> Conference of the IHO HCA
- B. Extraordinary Meeting of the IHO HCA at A-1 (Doc. ExtraHCA\_A1-02A)
- C. Update on the development of the IHO GIS and related web-based services (Doc. IRCC9-11A)
- D. IHO Report to ATCM40 (Doc. ExtraHCA\_A1-04A)
- E. IHO Bulletin Report of ATCM40.

1. Following the Extraordinary Meeting of the HCA (ExtraHCA\_A1) which took place in Monaco during the 1<sup>st</sup> Session of the Assembly (A-1), the Secretary-General of the IHO participated in the 40<sup>th</sup> Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting (ATCM40) held in Beijing, China, from 23 May to 1 June. This HCA Letter reports on the main outcomes of ExtraHCA\_A1 and of ATCM40.

#### **Outcome of ExtraHCA\_A1**

2. The ExtraHCA\_A1 meeting reviewed the status of the list of actions from HCA14 (see References A and B). The participants noted that these actions had progressed well, with the exception of Action HCA14/15 and related Actions HCA14/07&12, concerning the evaluation of the HCA GIS. HCA Members are therefore invited to provide their inputs to Action HCA14/15 to the HCA Secretary ([adcs@iho.int](mailto:adcs@iho.int)), using the form at Annex A, **no later than 30 September 2017**<sup>1</sup> (see also Reference C, paragraph 12). In the absence of significant response, the existing HCA GIS layers will continue to be maintained by the HCA Secretariat, but as a low priority task, with no significant upgrades being envisaged thereafter.

3. The main discussion at the ExtraHCA\_A1 meeting concerned the proposal, presented in the IHO report to ATCM40 (see Reference D), for a seminar on hydrographic awareness, to be held in 2018 at ATCM41. Ecuador confirmed that its authorities supported holding such a seminar, if approved at ATCM40. HCA Members were invited to identify and contact their representatives at ATCM40 in order to support the proposal.

<sup>1</sup> Former target date was 30 Sept. 2016.

4. As the option for having the next HCA Conference (HCA-15) in Ecuador was also confirmed by Ecuador and agreed by the participants in the meeting, possible arrangements were identified as follows:

- a. HCA15 could be scheduled in the first week of ATCM41, from Thursday morning to Saturday noon. The HCA15 agenda would include the finalization of the preparation of the seminar and a rehearsal.
- b. A seminar, for up to two hours, to be conducted no later than the first part of the second week of ATCM41 as part of the agenda of the ATCM Working Group 2 on Operations (WG2).

This would mean that instead of the normal three-working day meeting of the HCA, delegates would be required to be in-country no later than the Wednesday evening of the first week and should not consider leaving until the Tuesday of the second week (5 days total instead of 3 days).

#### **Outcome of ATCM40**

5. The Secretary-General, and as Chair of the HCA, introduced the IHO report (see Reference D) at the opening plenary session of ATCM40. No comments were made by ATCM delegates.

6. The IHO report was considered further during the meeting by Working Group 2, appointed by the ATCM to address the agenda items related to Operations, Science and Tourism, including the IHO Report and its proposal to conduct an information seminar on hydrography at the next ATCM in Ecuador in 2018. The IHO proposal was agreed in WG2 and subsequently agreed by ATCM40 in connexion with the 2018 priority item in the ATCM multi-year strategic work plan concerning hydrographic surveying in Antarctica.

7. ATCM40 also agreed to continue to encourage all parties to contribute bathymetric data to the IHO Data Centre for Digital Bathymetry.

8. It was not possible to finalise the timing for the IHO information seminar despite discussion by the Chair of the HCA with the Ambassador of Ecuador on behalf of the hosts and the Co-Chair of the WG2 on behalf of the ATCM. As a consequence, two options remain:

- a. a two-hour presentation to the plenary of ATCM after lunch towards the end of the first week of ATCM;
- b. a seminar as a side-event of the meeting of ATCM WG2 at the beginning of the second week.

It is anticipated that dates can be agreed between the ATCM Secretariat, the hosts and the IHO Secretariat before the end of this year.

9. During the discussions at ATCM, the Chair noted that operational restrictions are now being imposed by some countries on the use of acoustic devices, including MBES and other sonars, due to their possible impact on marine mammals. This matter is due to be discussed further by the ATCM in the future. Accordingly, this topic will need to be addressed by the IHO in its seminar in 2018.

### Call for Expressions of Interest

10. Notwithstanding the fact that dates have yet to be finalised, HCA Members, Observers and Expert Contributors are invited to indicate the likelihood of their participation in either or both HCA-15 and the hydrographic information seminar. Non-binding responses, using the form at Annex A, should be sent to the HCA Secretary (adcs@iho.int) **no later than 30 September 2017**. This will then allow initial preparations and further discussion to proceed between the organisers and the hosts.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Robert Ward', with a stylized flourish at the end.

Robert WARD  
Secretary-General,  
Chair, HCA

*Comments on Action HCA14/15 and HCA15/IHO Seminar at ATCM41*

**Response Form**

(to be returned to the HCA Secretariat **by 30 September 2017**)

E-mail: [adcs@iho.int](mailto:adcs@iho.int) - Fax: +377 93 10 81 40)

**Member  
State/Observer/Organization:**

**Contact:**

**E-mail:**


**1. Comments on IHO HCA GIS:**

Action HCA14/15 required: “HCA Members and Observers to evaluate the existing data layers available in the IHO HCA GIS database and to propose:

- additional layers (and the sources)
- any duplicate layers that could be linked from other databases rather than maintained by IHO
- any other comments?

Do you have any comments to make?

YES

NO

**Comments:**

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**2. Indication of likely participation in HCA15 and IHO Seminar at ATCM41:**

Noting that the combined activities of HCA-15 and an IHO Information Seminar will span a five-day period, is it likely that you will be represented at both the HCA-15 and the IHO Seminar in Ecuador in early June 2018?

YES

NO

If YES, are you willing to play an active role (by delivering a 10 minute presentation on specific topics) in the Seminar?

YES

NO