

**15th MEETING OF THE INTER-REGIONAL COORDINATION COMMITTEE
IHO -IRCC15
Tokyo, Japan, 12-14 June 2023
ROPME SEA AREA HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION (RSAHC)**

RSAHC report to IRCC15

1. Chair

Chair:	Captain Yahyah Al Balushi	Sultanate of Oman	Since Aug 2022
	Captain Khalid Al Jabri	Sultanate of Oman	Since Jun 2021
	AlirezaKhojasteh	IR of Iran	Feb. 2019 –Jun 2021
	Captain Muhammad Khalid	Pakistan	Feb. 2017 - Feb 2019
Vice-Chair:	Saud Hamoud M Alruways	Saudi Arabia	Since Nov. 2022
	Captain Khalid Al Jabri	Sultanate of Oman	Feb. 2019 - Jun 2021
	AlirezaKhojasteh	IR of Iran	Feb. 2017 - Feb 2019

2. Membership

Members: Bahrain, IR of Iran, Kuwait, Sultanate of Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Saudi Arabia and United Arab Emirates.

Associate member(s): France, Iraq, United Kingdom and United States of America.

Observers: Regional Organization for the Protection of the Marine Environment (ROPME), Middle East Navigation Service (MENAS), International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and lighthouse Authorities (IALA) and Arabian Maritime and Navigation Aids Services LLC (AMNAS).

3. Meetings:

Following [RHC] meetings have taken place:

9 th RSAHC Meeting	Muscat, Oman	18 - 20 Nov 2022
8 th RSAHC Meeting	Islamabad, Pakistan	18 - 20 Feb 2019
7 th RSAHC Meeting	Muscat, Oman	20 - 22 Feb 2017
6 th RSAHC Meeting	Abu Dhabi, UAE	09 -11 Feb 2015

Next meeting:

10 th RSAHC Meeting	Saudi Arabia	(TBC)
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4. Current [RHC] Working Groups:

RSA INT/ENC Chart Coordination working Group RSAICCWG, Coordinator IR of Iran.

5. Status of IRCC actions and recommendations to RHCs

a) Status of actions (relevant for the RSAHC):

- a. IRCC14/ Action 1: IRCC invited RHCs and Subordinate bodies to provide comments and inputs on the governance document on Dual Fuel Concept for S-100 ECDIS, intersessionally. (Permanent). (Noted)

b) Status of Recommendations to RHCs:

- a. IRCC14/Recommendation 6: RHC to establish an S-100 Coordinator role. (Ongoing)
- b. IRCC14/Recommendation 9: RHC encourage Member States and submitting institutions to consult the Guidelines, the FAQs and the White Paper (IHR-Nov-2017 – Article: Maintaining the Standards of Competence for Hydrographic Surveyors and Nautical Cartographers) early in the process of preparing submissions for programme recognition. (Noted)
- c. IRCC14/Recommendation 10: RHC to encourage all Member States to respond to IHO CL 21/2020 and, if possible, offer a positive response, even if qualified, to enable provision of CSB data into the public domain collected from ships within waters subject to their national jurisdiction. (Noted)
- d. IRCC14/Recommendation 12: RHC to encourage Member States to release datasets or subsets into the public domain via the IHO DCDB. (Noted)
- e. IRCC14/Recommendation 13: RHC to encourage Member States to support the CSB initiative with positive actions, such as requiring all research vessels to collect bathymetric data for late uploading, when on passage or when it does not interfere with other research activities. (Noted)
- f. IRCC14/Recommendation 14: Encourage RHCs to actively contribute with new data to GEBCO. (Noted)
- g. IRCC14/Recommendation 15: Encourage RHCs to discuss how nations can share existing data. (Noted)
- h. IRCC14/Recommendation 16: RHCs to encourage Member State and stakeholder bathymetric data contributions to the DCDB, regardless of origin. (Noted)

6. Agenda Items:

Main activities of RSAHC are the progress in developing the INT chart schemes, ENC production, Maritime Safety Information (MSI), Maritime Spatial Data Infrastructures (MSDI), General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans (GEBCO), and contributing to develop measurements of Strategic Performance Indicator (SPI).

The main agenda items for the 10th RSAHC meeting will include:

1. Selection of next Vice-chair.
2. INT Chart / ENC schemes coordinator report.
3. Revision and updates of RSAHC Statutes.
4. Capacity-building requirements and coordinator report.

5. Promulgation of Navigational Warnings with NAVAREA IX area, MSI in NAVAREA IX and the implementation of GMDSS.
6. Strategic Performance Indicator (SPI).
7. Crowdsourced Bathymetry (CSB).
8. General Bathymetric Chart of the Oceans (GEBCO) and Seabed 2030.
9. Maritime Spatial Data Infrastructures (MSDI)

7. [RSAHC] cooperation with stakeholders (organizations, industry, etc.):

ROPME Sea Area Hydrographic commission meetings are always enriched by the presence and participation of industry, encouraging healthy debate and developing opportunities for collaboration.

8. Difficulties encountered and challenges yet to be addressed:

a. According to encouraging member states to improve cooperation and effectiveness in order to achieve the goals of IHO, there has been no communication with the hydrographic sector of the United Arab Emirates to encourage their participation in the region's meetings. Additionally, Bahrain, Kuwait, and Qatar did not attend the 9th RSAHC meeting. This lack of communication and enthusiasm among member states is obstructing the hydrographic development of the region.

b. With regards of MSI received, NAVAREA-IX Coordinator highlighted that there is no information received from Somalia, Djibouti, Eritrea, Sudan and Jordan in last three years, and urged all to establish and maintain effective communications with NAVAREA IX Coordinator to ensure the timely provision of MSI.

c. The implementation of MSDI and new standards such as the S-100 series in the region will require Member States to undergo training to properly prepare for these changes. Moreover, several countries in the region have limited hydrographic and cartographic capabilities, which could pose challenges for international collaboration.

9. Achievements and lessons learned/ Conclusions:

a. Iraq became a member in IHO and will become full Member of the RSAHC after Iraq sign the RSAHC statutes IAW RSAHC statutes article 2 a.

b. During the period from the Commission Meeting (RSAHC8) in February 2018 to the most recent Commission Meeting (RSAHC9) in November 2022, there has been an improvement in ENC coverage in the region. This improvement has led to better coverage of un-surveyed areas within the RSAHC region.

c. Technical visit to Iran, was planned to be conducted in 2nd half 2023 by IHO/IALA and members from RSAHC and there will be High-Level Technical Implementation Visit to Iraq.

d. MSI Course planned to be conducted as a joint activity between RSAHC and NIOHC

Regions in Oman on October 2023.

e. The RSAHC remains maintaining and strengthening the cooperation among the hydrographic offices in the region.

10. Conclusion:

Capacity building is of utmost importance for the implementation of the new model S100 and the Marine Spatial Data Infrastructure (MSDI) in the region. Investing in capacity building programs will enable countries to develop the necessary skills and knowledge required for effectively utilizing these models and infrastructure. Additionally, the CB will empower member states to effectively implement and utilize these frameworks. As a result, there will be enhanced coordination, collaboration, and harmonization of hydrographic and geospatial data efforts, leading to safer navigation, improved maritime security, and sustainable development of marine resources in the region.

11. Actions required of IRCC:

a. The IRCC is invited to take note of this report.

Captain

Yahyah AlBalushi

RSAHC Chair