

Special NSHC meeting on 11 May 2007, in conjunction with XVIIth IHO Conference

Minutes

Participants: Belgium, Denmark, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, United Kingdom

Chairman: Prof. Dr. Peter Ehlers, Germany

Place: Monaco, Auditorium Prince Rainier III, Room 2

Meeting commenced on 14.00 hours.

The Chairman welcomed the participants, mentioning that the purpose was to examine the outcome of IHC XVII for any action required by NSHC, as it had been agreed at the past NSHC Conference in 2006.

The results were as follows:

1. NSHC representation at the Council

It has become clear that the day of approval of the amended IHO Convention may be more distant than originally expected. Discussions regarding NSHC representation at the future Council are deferred to the next regular NSHC Conference scheduled for 2008.

Meanwhile, members who belong to more than one RHC are invited to consider which RHC they intend to select.

2. Frequency of NSHC Meetings

Some members supposed that annual meetings may be useful or even required in view of annual IRCC meetings from 2009 on. Others suggested it should be reviewed annually whether a need for a meeting exists. Also the option to work through correspondence should be considered. Decision on this issue was deferred to the next NSHC meeting in 2008.

The date of the next meeting (NSHC28) will be beginning of May 2008 (possible clash of dates with WEND meeting should be avoided). Denmark, as host of NSHC28, will take into consideration as to whether the occasion of 2008 being the International Polar Year can be reflected with choosing the place of the meeting.

3. Other matters emerging from IHCXVII

ISPWG: Capt. de Haan, Netherlands, elected as Vice Chair by IHCXVII, will represent NSHC at this newly formed IHO Working Group.

Approval of amended Convention: All NSHC members who have not yet approved the amended Convention are requested to liaise with their respective national authorities to speed up the approval process. Netherlands believe that approval will take place by August 2007. In France, the Parliament will deal with the approval not before September 2007. Date of approval in Belgium is not possible to predict because of complex federal structure.

Ireland informs that its accession to IHO is about to be formally completed and is waiting for confirmation that the documents of accession have been received by Monaco. Approval process of amended Convention will be initiated then.

Ireland was unanimously adopted as new (10th) member of NSHC.

4. Maritime Policy

Green Book: Chairman summarised that at the recent EU Conference in Bremen the need for scientific and operational oceanography and marine SDI were addressed, but that hydrography was not directly touched. The Bremen Declaration will be distributed to participants by Germany. UK is awaiting further comments by 15 May at the latest, and will then compile a comprehensive NSHC comment to be circulated to members by end of May.

Next steps after expiry of deadline for comments will not be a “white book”, but the development of an action program by EU Commission. In October 2007 decisions on actions will be taken at a Conference in Lisbon.

WG on maritime policies: Is being chaired by Yves Guillaum, France. MS have all nominated POC. Four MS have provided comments so far. Further input is requested from MS. Work on processing the comments will commence only after summer holidays.

5. NAV53

Resolution 21 has been accepted by IHO Conference. NSHC members are requested to contact their Maritime Authorities to provide support for ECDIS carriage requirement at NAV. Nordic countries (except Iceland) have sent a separate paper to IMO. Norway will distribute this paper to the other NSHC members.

Chairman reports that the Helsinki Commission is developing an action plan for the Baltic Sea; in this conjunction, introduction of an ECDIS carriage requirement is considered.

6. Any other business

France is coordinating action on World Hydrography Day and has already contacted EMSA and the Directorate-General for Maritime Affairs in Brussels to propose a joint presentation of IHO issues. In addition, it is under consideration to organise a celebration of the WHD (21 June) during the IOC Assembly in Paris.

Meeting closed on 15.20 hours.