

IHO File No. S3/8151/HSSC & S3/0104

**CIRCULAR LETTER 40/2025
04 November 2025**

**JOINT PROJECT TEAM ON POTENTIAL HSSC/IRCC RESTRUCTURING
TO
BETTER ALIGN FUTURE HSSC/IRCC WORK PLANS ACCORDING TO
IHO STRATEGIC PLAN 2027-32**

References:

- A: Project Team Terms of Reference (Annex A).
- B: Summary Report of the 9th meeting of the IHO Council dated 14-16 October 2025 (Decision C9/059).
- C: IRCC and HSSC Work Organization (C9 04.1B).
- D: Work Plan Revision based on the new strategic plan for 2027-2032 (C9 06.5A).

Dear Hydrographer,

1. As proposed by the HSSC and IRCC Chairs, the IHO 9th Council, agreed to establish a joint Project Team to investigate potential restructuring of and distribution of work between the two Committees in order to achieve better HSSC/IRCC work plan alignment in line with the future IHO Strategic Plan 2027-2032.
2. In the course of this action, the joint Project Team led by the office bearers of the two Committees has been tasked to consider Working Group alignment, the possible creation or retirement of Working Groups, the potential impact on the IHO Basic Documents and Structure, implementation timelines, and opportunities to align the Work Plans of both Committees with the future Strategic Plan 2027 – 2032 and the resulting IHO Work Programme for 2027-2029.
3. The Project Team shall include the Chairs and vice-Chairs of both HSSC and IRCC, the IHO Secretariat and additional subject matter experts as deemed appropriate.
4. The attached Terms of Reference (Annex A) were jointly drafted by the Chairs of HSSC and IRCC and approved by Council 9 (Decision C9/059 refers). It is advised that online meetings and work by correspondence are the preferred options of the Project Team. In person meetings – if any – should be held at the IHO Secretariat.
5. The joint Project Team shall provide a status report to Council 10 along with recommendations for restructuring and a timeline for doing so. If deemed necessary, the Project Team shall include a timeline for implementation which ensures that the realignment is in place in time for the period of the future Strategic Plan 2027-2032 and for execution in the three years' Work Programme 2027-2029.

6. IHO Member States are kindly invited to nominate their representatives to the Project Team. To ensure balanced involvement, it is suggested that no more than one representative per Committee be proposed, preferably selected from those national representatives already serving within IRCC and HSSC. At the same time, Member States are encouraged to submit any comments regarding the proposed way forward and specific items to be addressed under the annexed Terms of Reference. Nominations and feedback should be sent to the IHO Secretary-General (sg@iho.int) by November 30, 2025.

Yours sincerely,

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

Dr Mathias JONAS
Secretary-General

Annex A: Realignment Project Team - Terms of Reference

Realignment Project Team

Terms of Reference

Background

Recognizing the need to investigate a potential Committee realignment to support the IHO Strategic Plan 2027 – 2032 and improve cross-Committee efficiency, the IHO Council tasked the Chairs of IRCC and HSSC to lead a temporary Project Team to evaluate the necessity for and potential impacts of realigning the IRCC and HSSC Working Groups.

Objective

To analyze the current alignment of the IRCC and HSSC work structures with the IHO Strategic Plan 2027 – 2032 a guide and if deemed necessary to provide recommendations for realignment to improve cross Committee collaboration and efficiency.

The Project Team should consider:

- a. Working Group realignment
- b. Possible addition or retirement of Working Groups
- c. Potential impacts on the IHO Basic Documents and Structure (IHO Secretariat)
- d. Timeline for implementation
- e. Others as deemed appropriate

Authority

The Project Team is a subsidiary body of the IHO Council. Its work is subject to the Council's approval.

Composition

- The PT shall be composed of representatives from the IRCC, HSSC, and IHO Secretariat. Additional subject matter experts may be included should the Chair(s) deem appropriate.
- The co-Chairs shall be the current IRCC and HSSC Chairs or the co-Chairs may jointly designate a Chair.
- The co-Chairs shall alternate chairing duties between meetings with the non-Chair serving as vice-Chair unless otherwise agreed between.
- If a secretary is required, it should generally be drawn from a member of the PT.
- All Members shall inform the Chair in advance of their intention or inability to attend meetings of the PT.

Procedures

- The PT should work through correspondence, teleconferences, group meetings and workshops.
- Decisions should generally be made by consensus. Only Members may cast a vote if votes are required on issues or to endorse proposals presented to the PT. Meeting votes shall be based on one vote per Member represented at the meeting. Correspondence votes shall be based on one vote per Member represented in the PT.
- The PT should liaise with other IHO bodies, Working Groups, and other Project Teams to ensure the relevance of its work.
- The PT should report to Council at its 10th Meeting (C-10) on its decisions and recommendations.
- The PT will be dissolved following C-10.