

IHO File No S3/8151/HSSC

CIRCULAR LETTER 04/2026
21 January 2026

18th MEETING OF THE HYDROGRAPHIC SERVICES AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE (HSSC-18)

18-22 May 2026, Gdańsk, Poland

References:

- A. HSSC Report to the 9th Meeting of the Council (Doc. [C9-04.1A](#)),
- B. List of Decisions and Actions from HSSC-17, as of 23 December 2025 (Doc. [HSSC17-11A](#)),
- C. HSSC List of Members as of 19 January 2026 (Doc. [HSSC-02](#)),
- D. IHO CL46/2025 dated 1 December 2025 - *Establishment of a joint Project Team on potential HSSC/IRCC restructuring.*

Dear Hydrographer,

1. This Circular Letter is to inform you that the 18th meeting of the Hydrographic Services and Standards Committee (HSSC-18) is planned to be hosted in Gdańsk, Poland from 18 to 22 May 2026, thanks to the kind invitation of the Hydrographic Office of the Polish Navy (HOPN). This meeting will be managed as an in-person event only. The feasibility of setting passive live streaming will be confirmed in due time.
2. HSSC-18 is planned to be conducted as follows. Participants are advised to plan their travel arrangements accordingly.

Session	Date(s)	Timing (UTC+1, CEST ¹)
Host/Chair/Secretariat Preparatory meeting	18 May	10:00 – 12:00
HSSC Chair Group Meeting (closed session)	18 May	14:00 – 16:00
HSSC-18 Plenary Sessions 1 and 2	19 May	09:00 – 12:00 13:30 – 17:00
HSSC-18 Plenary Session 3 and 4	20 May	09:00 – 12:00 13:30 – 17:00
HSSC-18 Plenary Session 5 and 6	21 May	09:00 – 12:00 13:30 – 17:00
HSSC Chair Group Debrief (closed session)	22 May	09:00 – 11:00

¹ Central Europe Standard Time.

New IHO Portal

3. All information related to HSSC18 (logistic, information, documents, registration) will only be made available through the IHO Portal. All delegates are reminded that an individual IHO Portal account will be necessary to access the HSSC section of the IHO portal.
4. All delegates are reminded that joining the HSSC Portal Group enables you to:
 - Fastrack registration to HSSC meetings (no approval required),
 - Access and share to all HSSC documents and resources (i.e. right-click public link generation).

Registration – Logistic Information

5. All delegates intending to participate in HSSC-18 are invited to register through [the IHO Portal](#) **no later than 21 March 2026**.
6. Ad-hoc logistic information from our meeting host is provided in Annex (**Annex A**). A block of rooms has been reserved at the PURO Hotel Gdańsk. As the high season begins in May, our host strongly recommend making your reservation immediately to ensure availability. To make a reservation, please complete the [hotel reservation form](#) available on the HSSC-18 Portal Page (Doc. HSSC18-00B) and send it directly to the hotel.
7. In the meantime, those delegates who need invitation letters to facilitate their visa requirements are kindly invited to contact the HSSC Secretariat (adcs@iho.int). It is highly recommended not to wait for the approval of your travel requests at national level for requesting these invitation letters: letters can be provided in advance of travel approvals.

HSSC Chair Group

8. As indicated in paragraph 2, the plenary meeting sessions will be preceded by a HSSC Chair Group meeting on Monday 18 May. A follow-up meeting of the Chair Group is also planned on Friday 22 May. Provisional agendas for both meetings will be communicated in due time.
9. In addition to the HSSC Chair and Vice-Chair, these Chair Group meetings will comprise of the Chairs of HSSC Working Groups (WGs), the Chairs of the Project Teams and the HSSC Secretary and Assistant Secretary.
10. If an HSSC WG/PT Chair cannot be present at the HSSC Meeting, they are requested to make appropriate arrangements for the WG/PT to be represented or to report to HSSC accordingly. Although passive streaming will be available, it will not be possible for HSSC WG/PT Chairs to present their report remotely, with the exception of pre-recorded videos. In any case, inform the HSSC Secretariat accordingly (adcs@iho.int).

Actions arising from HSSC-17

11. The current status of actions arising from HSSC-17 (**Reference B**), is available on the [HSSC-17 document section on the IHO Portal](#).

HSSC-18 Draft Agenda and Timetable

12. A draft provisional HSSC-18 agenda and timetable is provided in Annex (**Annex B**). Reports and proposals from the working groups and project teams will need to be focused on top priority items related to the execution of the S-100 implementation Roadmap. Objectives and Actions for meeting the various deadlines will need to be highlighted in the reports and accompanied by a (low/medium/high) risk assessment².

HSSC-18 timeline

13. Documents intended for consideration at HSSC-18 should be submitted to the HSSC Secretariat in accordance with the "[Instructions for the Submission of Reports and Proposals for Consideration by HSSC](#)". With the exception for substantive submissions, it is agreed that the Chairs of the working groups (WGs) and Stakeholders may only provide summary reports, using the HSSC ad-hoc template available on the IHO Portal and additional comprehensive documents if appropriate (proposals to be endorsed for instance).

	Submission Deadline
<u>Papers in support of Agenda items</u> (including reports/presentations from WG Chairs and new work programme items proposals)	No later than 30 March 2026 (7 weeks before commencement of the meeting)
<u>Papers providing comments or proposed amendments</u> to proposals contained in meeting papers <u>Reports from IGO/NGOs</u> ³	No later than 27 April 2026 (3 weeks before commencement of the meeting)

14. To ensure that all Member States and Observers are able to consider the issues/items in advance, the Chair and Secretary will strictly enforce the above deadlines. Late submissions will not be considered for inclusion in the agenda unless motivated by most exceptional circumstances. Otherwise, they will be handled by correspondence or postponed to the following HSSC meeting.
15. The foreseen approval of a new IHO Strategy Plan for 2027-2032 and the recent establishment of the Joint HSSC/IRCC Restructuring Project Team (JHIRPT) with **Reference D** are likely to impact the current HSSC Work Plan structure and content (including the subsequent plans by the WGs and PTs). Therefore, the HSSC WG/PTs Chairs are invited to consider the consolidated [HSSC Work Plan for 2025-26](#) as baseline for their 2026-2027 activities in their HSSC-18 reporting package. Further details on the elaboration of the next 3-years Work Plan for 2027-2029 will be provided in due time to the HSSC Chair Group.

² As presented by the S-100WG Chair at HSSC-16 in 2024.

³ Proposals for new work items must be submitted 7 weeks in advance. Ordinary reports 3 weeks.

All documents will be posted on the [IHO Portal](#) when they are received, and will be easily traceable through the notification dashboard (right side of IHO Portal interface). National representatives are requested to circulate (see paragraph 5 above) these documents amongst their relevant subject matter experts and consolidate any appropriate comments to allow effective decision making at the meeting of the HSSC and avoid, as far as possible, the need to defer decisions to allow further post-meeting technical consultations.

Miscellaneous

16. As we entered an Assembly year, HSSC-18 will see the election of a new Chair Team for a three-years term covering 2027-2029. Further details will be provided in due time to the HSSC Members.
17. The HSSC List of Members and Expert Contributors (**Reference C**) is kept up-to-date on the [IHO Portal](#). Any changes to the current list of HSSC contacts should be forwarded to the HSSC Secretariat (adcs@iho.int) at the earliest opportunity.
18. Proposals for hosting subsequent HSSC meetings are welcomed at any time, preferably **no later than 30 March 2026**.

On behalf of the Secretary-General

Yours sincerely,



Dr John NYBERG
Director

Annex:

Note: all the meeting documents are provided in the HSSC working language (English only)

- A. HSSC-18 Logistic information (courtesy of the Hydrographic Office of the Polish Navy),
- B. Draft Agenda and Timetable.

Distribution:

IHO Member States

HSSC Chair and Vice-Chair, IRCC Chair

HSSC Working Groups and Project Teams Chairs and Vice-Chairs

Other HSSC Contacts



18th MEETING of the Hydrographic Services and Standards Commission (HSSC18)

Gdańsk, Poland, 18 to 22 May 2026

LOGISTICS INFORMATION

VENUE

HSSC18 will take place at PURO Hotel Gdańsk, street: Stągiewna 26, 80-750, Gdańsk, Poland,
from 18 to 22 May 2026.

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/wdtJYM5VnYnMyvvs7>

ACCOMMODATION

Attendees are requested to make their own accommodation arrangements. The cost of accommodation is on the responsibility of individual IHO members.

A block of rooms has been reserved at the PURO Hotel Gdańsk. As the high season begins in May, we strongly recommend making your reservation immediately to ensure availability. To make a reservation, please complete the **attached hotel reservation form** and send it directly to the hotel.

The hotel has a limited garage parking spaces. For inquiries regarding availability and pricing, please contact the hotel reception directly. Please also be aware that the area surrounding the hotel is a restricted traffic zone.

The details about the Hotel shared on the website:

[Hotel w Gdańsku | Centrum – PURO Hotels – PURO Hotels](#)



- All rooms have free access to the Internet.
- Standard Classic Single Room – PLN 620 per night.
- Standard Classic Double Room – PLN 675 per night.

Alternatively, you can book other hotels within a short 5 minute walking distance in Gdańsk e.g.

Hotel Holiday Inn City Center

Street: Chmielna 1

80-750 Gdańsk

Website: [Holiday Inn Gdańsk – City Centre - Hotel w sercu Gdańska](https://www.holidayinn.com/pl/en/hotel/holiday-inn-city-center-gdansk)

Hotel HILTON

Street: Targ Rybny 1

80-838 Gdańsk

Website: <https://hiltongdansk.pl>

MEALS

- Coffee breaks will be provided (18th – 22nd May).
- A hosted dinner will take place on 20th May in PURO Hotel – Magari Restaurant.

The hotel facilitate its own restaurant. Additionally, it is surrounded by numerous restaurants with various themes of food.

TRANSPORT

The city of Gdańsk is capital of Pomorskie province, located on the northern Poland, situated at the mouth of the Vistula River on the Baltic Sea. The most efficient way for international travellers to reach Gdańsk is to fly to Gdańsk Lech Walesa Airport (GDN)

www.airport.gdansk.pl

The hotel is located just 16,5 kilometers from Lech Walesa Airport (GDN). The train station (Gdańsk Główny) is a 20-minute walk from the hotel.

- **PURO Gdańsk Stare Miasto – Stągiewna Street 26, Gdansk 80-750, Poland**

The hotel is situated in the city center, close to historical landmarks such as Artus Court and The Old Town.

Transport from the Airport to the Hotel

The best way to travel to the Hotel (Gdańsk City Centre) is by taxi from the airport:



The estimated cost is approximately 70 Polish Zloty (PLN) /16 Euros (EUR) and travel time around 20 minutes, depending on traffic conditions.

We strongly recommend using BOLT / UBER or public transport rather than taking a random taxi outside the airport!

You can also use public transport from the airport to the city centre – bus or metropolitan railway. The journey takes about 40-50 mins.

How to get from Gdańsk Airport (GDN) to Hotel PURO Gdańsk:

You can use public transport from the airport to the city centre – by bus or metropolitan railway. The journey takes about 40-50 minutes.

Option 1: By Bus Take Bus line 210 (ZTM Gdańsk) from the Airport (Port Lotniczy) to the main

railway station (Dworzec Główny).

Duration: approx. 40–50 minutes.

Direction: Make sure to take the bus heading towards Dworzec Główny / Gościnną.

Do not take the bus towards Osowa.

Where to get off: Get off at the Dworzec Główny stop.

Option 2: By Train (PKM/SKM) You can also reach the city centre by train.

Route: Take the train from Gdańsk Port Lotniczy to Gdańsk Wrzeszcz, then change platforms to take an SKM train to Gdańsk Główny.

Frequency: Trains depart approximately every 30 minutes.

From Gdańsk Główny (Main Station) to Hotel PURO:

Once you arrive at the Main Station (Dworzec Główny), you have three options to reach the hotel:

- 1. On foot (Recommended for sightseeing):** The hotel is about 1.7 km from the main station. It is a 20-25 minute walk through the beautiful Old Town and passing popular attractions (Długa Street, Neptune's Fountain).
- 2. By Tram (Fastest public transport):** From the Dworzec Główny stop, take Tram line 8 or 9 (direction: Stogi or Przeróbka).
Get off at the Chmielna stop.
From there, the hotel is just a 250-meter walk (about 3 minutes).
- 3. By Bus:** You can take bus line 112, 138, 166, or 178 from Dworzec Główny.
Get off at the Chmielna stop.
The hotel is located about 300 meters from the stop.

Tip regarding tickets: You can buy tickets at ticket machines (available at the airport, stations, and often inside buses/trams) or via mobile apps like Jakdojade or SkyCash, or Fala.

Remember to validate your paper ticket immediately after boarding!



Not sure how to get somewhere in the Tricity (Gdańsk, Sopot, Gdynia)?

Just use the convenient “Jakdojade” application (or Android/iPhone app) to find exactly what train/bus you need to take, check where to transfer, check the schedule and see the map of your route, buy tickets.



How to buy tickets without “Jakdojade” application?











Please use the FALA System:

[The FALA System – a pack of practical information](#)

CLIMATE



The climate for Gdańsk in early to mid-May:

 Min Temperature	8°C	 Rainy days	11 days
 Max Temperature	17°C	 Humidity	72%
 Water Temperature	7°C	 Windspeed	3 m/s
 Chance of Rain	37%	 Sunshine	239 hours
 Precipitation	64 mm	 Percentage Sunshine	

More about climate: [May weather - Spring 2026 - Gdańsk, Poland](#)

TOURIST INFORMATION

Information pertaining to tourism within the region of Gdańsk can be found at:

GDANSK: <https://visitgdansk.com>

TRAVEL DOCUMENTS & VISA

You can check the required travel documents by country here:

[VISAS - Ministry of Foreign Affairs Republic of Poland - Gov.pl website](#)

CURRENCY

The currency in Poland is the Polish Złoty (PLN). Poland is generally more affordable than Western European countries, meaning travelers holding Euros or Dollars often find it offers excellent value for money. Poland is a global leader in contactless payments; Poles use cards or phones for almost all transactions and rarely carry large amounts of cash. Cash machines ("bankomat") are still widely available in cities and towns. Visa and Mastercard are accepted almost everywhere, including public transport and convenience stores. While card acceptance is near-universal, some very small vendors at street markets or older public toilets may still require cash.

ELECTRICAL POWER

The Poland standard is 230 volts. We use the Type E compatible with C / F socket.



HOST POINTS OF CONTACT

Lt Dorota SULEJ

Telephone: +48 535 950 220.

e-mail: d.sulej@ron.mil.pl

CDR Karol GRZELAK

Telephone: +48 501 774 479,

e-mail: ka.grzelak@ron.mil.pl

CAPT(N) Adam KŁOSIŃSKI

Telephone: +48 501 940 908,

e-mail: a.klosinski@ron.mil.pl

Please copy (CC) all of the above-mentioned POCs on all correspondence regarding meeting participation.

18th HSSC Meeting

18-22 May 2026, Gdansk, Poland

DRAFT AGENDA AND TIMETABLE

Notes:

- a. Potential presenters of papers shown in brackets ().
- b. The original numbering of documents will be retained even if documents are subsequently tabled under new or adjusted agenda items.
- c. When submitting a new document, make sure to use the HSSC-18 templates available in the [HSSC-18 document section](#) of the IHO Portal.
- d. Filenaming convention for each meeting document is as follows:
HSSC18_2026_XX_EN_document-title_doc-version (XX refers to the agenda item ID)
- e. Please refer to the HSSC-18 Agenda and Timetable for the meeting documents numbering **HSSC18-XX**. New/Latest versions of document will be indicated in the IHO Portal notification Tab (right-side) and in the document title.

Monday 18 May (UTC+1, CEST)	HSSC-18 PREPARATION and HSSC-18 CHAIR GROUP MEETINGS
	<i>Preparation Meeting – Closed Session (Host, HSSC Chair/Secretariat only)</i>
	<i>HSSC Chair Group Meeting – Closed Session (Chair/Vice-Chair of HSSC, Chairs of HSSC Working Groups (WGs) and Project Teams (PTs), Secretary and Assistant Secretary of HSSC only)</i>

Tuesday 19 May (UTC+1, CEST)	HSSC-18 – PLENARY SESSION 1
	Opening Ceremony and Welcome Address
	1. Opening and Administrative Arrangements (Chair/IHO Director/Host) <i>Docs: HSSC18-01A List of Documents (IHO Sec.)</i> <i>HSSC18-01B List of Participants (IHO Sec.)</i> <i>HSSC18-01C HSSC Membership List (IHO Sec.)</i> <i>HSSC18-01D TORs for HSSC and related WG/PTs (IHO Sec.)</i>
	2. Approval of Agenda <i>Doc: HSSC18-02A Agenda and Timetable (IHO Sec.)</i>
	3. Matters arising from the 17th HSSC Meeting <i>Docs: HSSC18-03A HSSC-17 Action List Status Update (IHO Sec.)</i> <i>Pending actions to be considered under relevant agenda items in general.</i>

	4. HSSC Administration <i>Docs: HSSC18-04.1A General overview of the outcome of C-9 affecting HSSC (HSSC Chair/Secretary)</i> <i>HSSC18-04.2A Implementation of the IHO Strategic Plan 2020 - 2026, Strategic Performance Indicators allocated to HSSC. Report (HSSC Vice-Chair)</i> <i>HSSC18-04.2B Joint HSSC/IRCC Restructuring Project Team – status update (JHIRPT Chair)</i> <i>HSSC18-04.3A Update on the management and projects carried out by the joint IHO-Singapore Innovation and Technology Laboratory and impact on HSSC activities (HSSC Chair/Singapore/Secretary)</i> <i>HSSC18-04.4A Report and Recommendations of the S-100 Infrastructure Centre Establishment Project Team (PT Chair/HSSC Chair/Secretary)</i> <i>HSSC18-04.5A Report and Recommendations of the S-100 Security Scheme Project Team (S-100 SS PT Chair)</i>
	END OF HSSC-18 PLENARY SESSION 1 Lunch Break HSSC-18 – PLENARY SESSION 2
	5. Reports by HSSC Working Groups
	5.1 S-100 (S-100WG) <i>Docs: HSSC18-05.1A Report and Recommendations of S-100WG (S-100WG Chair)</i> <i>HSSC18-05.1B Report on S-100 Registry Management (S-100WG Chair/IHO Sec.)</i> <i>HSSC18-05.1C Report of the S-101 Project Team (S-101PT Chair)</i> <i>HSSC18-05.5B Report of ISO 9001 Cell Report (HSSC Vice-Chair)</i> <i>HSSC18-05.1D Report of the S-102 Bathymetric Surface Project Team (S-102PT Rep.)</i>
	5.2 ENC Standards Maintenance (ENCWG) <i>Doc: HSSC18-05.2A Report and Recommendations of ENCWG (ENCWG Chair)</i>
	5.3 Hydrographic Surveys Working Group (HSWG) <i>Doc: HSSC18-05.3A Report and Recommendations of the HSWG (HSWG Chair)</i>
	END OF HSSC-18 PLENARY SESSIONS 1 & 2

Wednesday 20 May (UTC+1, CEST)	HSSC-18 PLENARY SESSION 3
	5.4 Tides, Water Level and Currents (TWCWG) <i>Doc: HSSC18-05.4A Report and Recommendations of TWCWG (TWCWG Chair)</i>
	5.5 Nautical Information Provision (NIPWG) <i>Doc: HSSC18-05.5A Report and Recommendations of NIPWG (NIPWG Chair)</i>
	5.6 Nautical Cartography (NCWG) <i>Docs: HSSC18-05.6A Report and Recommendations of NCWG (NCWG Chair)</i>
	5.7 Hydrographic Dictionary (HDCG) <i>Doc: HSSC18-05.7A Report and Recommendations of HDCG (HDCG Chair)</i>
	END OF HSSC-18 PLENARY SESSION 3 Lunch Break HSSC-18 PLENARY SESSION 4
	5.8 Data Quality (DQWG) <i>Docs: HSSC18-05.8A Report and Recommendations of DQWG (DQWG Chair)</i>
	5.9 Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships (MASS) Navigation (MASS PT) <i>Doc: HSSC18-05.9A Report and Recommendations of the MASS PT (MASS PT Chair)</i>
	5.10 Polygonal Demarcation of Global Sea Areas (S-130 PT) <i>Doc: HSSC18-05.10A Report and Recommendations of the S-130 PT (S-130 PT Chair)</i>
	6. Inter-Organizational Bodies
	6.1 IHO-IAG Advisory Board on the Law Of the Sea (ABLOS) <i>Doc: HSSC18-06.1A Report and Recommendations of ABLOS (ABLOS Chair)</i>
	7. Decisions of other bodies affecting HSSC
	7.1 IRCC (incl. MSDIWG) <i>Docs: HSSC18-07.1A IRCC activities affecting HSSC (including MSDI, WEND-100 Principles) (IRCC Chair)</i>

	7.2 IMO <i>Doc: HSSC18-07.2A Report on IMO activities affecting HSSC (including engagement for the S-100 implementation roadmap) – (IHO Sec.)</i> <i>HSSC18-07.2B Report and views from the IMO on IHO matters, S-100 implementation in particular (IMO Rep.)</i>
	END OF HSSC-18 PLENARY SESSION 4

Thursday 21 May (UTC+1, CEST)	HSSC-18 PLENARY SESSION 5
	7. Decisions of other bodies affecting HSSC (cont.) 7.3 IALA <i>Doc: HSSC18-07.3A IALA activities affecting HSSC – Joint IALA-IHO Seminar (IALA)</i>
	7.4 IEC <i>Doc: HSSC18-07.4A IEC activities affecting HSSC (IEC)</i>
	7.5 CIRM <i>Doc: HSSC18-07.5A CIRM activities affecting HSSC (CIRM)</i>
	7.6 ISO <i>Doc: HSSC18-07.6A ISO activities affecting HSSC (CIRM)</i>
	7.7 OGC <i>Doc: HSSC18-07.7A OGC activities affecting HSSC (IHO Sec.)</i>
	7.8 DGIWG and NATO <i>Doc: HSSC18-07.8Aa Report from DGIWG on activities affecting HSSC</i> <i>HSSC18-07.8Ab Report NATO GMWG Technical Panel</i>

	<p align="center">END OF HSSC-18 PLENARY SESSION 5</p> <p align="center">Lunch Break</p> <p align="center">HSSC-18 PLENARY SESSION 6</p>
	<p>7.10 ICPC</p> <p><i>Doc: HSSC17-07.10A Report on ICPC activities affecting HSSC (ICPC).</i></p>
	<p>7.11 RENCs</p> <p><i>Doc: HSSC17-07.11A IC-ENC activities in support of the S-100 Implementation Roadmap, concerns and recommendations</i></p> <p><i>HSSC17-07.11B PRIMAR activities in support of the S-100 Implementation Roadmap, concerns and recommendations</i></p>
	<p>8. Review and Endorsement of HSSC Work Plan</p> <p><i>Doc: HSSC17-08A Proposed HSSC Work Plan (IHO Sec.)</i></p>
	<p>9. Any Other Business</p>
	<p>10. Date & Location of the next meetings</p>
	<p>11. Review of List of Decisions and Actions from HSSC-18</p> <p><i>Doc: HSSC17-11A HSSC Work Plan 2023-24 (IHO Sec.)</i></p>
	<p>12. Conclusions - Closure of the Meeting</p>
	<p align="center">END OF HSSC-17 PLENARY SESSION 6</p>

Friday 22 May (UTC+1, CEST)	<p align="center">HSSC-18 CHAIR GROUP MEETING</p>
	<p>HSSC Chair Group Meeting (closed session)</p> <p><i>Debriefing, Consolidation of Decisions & Actions, Conclusions, Way forward.</i></p>
	<p align="center">END OF HSSC-18</p>