

D CO-OPERATIVE NSHC /IHO PROJECTS

D1 IHO Strategic Issues, including work of ISPWG

NAV54, mandatory carriage of ECDIS

Update on The UK's ENC services in support of IHO and NAV54 proposals

The UK believes that demonstrating the availability of a global coverage of good quality ENC's at a reasonable price is key to the successful conclusion of discussions on mandatory carriage of ECDIS at NAV54 in July and delivery of the WEND aim. Over the last year the UK has, with the co-operation of other MS, developed and recently launched a new integrated ENC service with this in mind.

Outlined at X-WEND in October 2007, the service (Admiralty Vector Chart Service – AVCS) incorporates, alongside existing ENC's available through RENC or bilateral arrangement, 366 new ENC's produced by the UK on behalf of, and with permissions from, other nations. The priority has been to cover the largest 800 ports and the routes between them but with an intent to increase this to 2000 ports and routes within 18 months. This cooperative approach has been successful in improving coverage. We are now working with a number of nations to improve the quality and consistency of ENC's, but we recognise that this is a very significant task that will take a considerable time to fully achieve. The UK has increased the flexibility of its licensing systems to allow shorter licence periods (as allowed by producer nations / RENC's) to bring down the cost of ENC's to the user. However we consider further work is required to improve consistency, quality and pricing if we are to make ENC's competitive with unofficial commercial products at this time.

At IMO the UK* has been a long standing proponent of the potential for ECDIS to be an efficient and cost effective risk reduction control measure for safe navigation. However in the past it, along with other IMO MS, has expressed concerns with regard to ENC issues. UK believes that considerable progress has been made to address these since NAV53 and that there is now a justification for extending an ECDIS carriage requirement to other classes of vessel.

The UK however believes that for NAV54 to reach consensus on this subject and to put forward an ECDIS carriage requirement proposal to MSC a pragmatic solution is required to bridge the widely varying views of IMO MS. These include IMO MS concerns over consistency and cost as well as the coverage the IHO has been addressing. In view of this, UK is intending to submit a paper to NAV54 proposing a mandatory carriage of ECDIS on those vessel types and sizes where the risks of fatalities to passengers and crew or damage to the marine environment are greatest and therefore the benefits of fitting ECDIS are maximised. An implementation period spanning several years has been proposed to ensure a smooth transition for the mariner from paper based to electronic navigation.

*NB: The UK lead at IMO is the UK Maritime and Coastguard Agency not UKHO
