

## **B STRATEGIC ASPECTS OF THE WORK OF HOs – TECHNICAL ISSUES**

### **Limit of areas of responsibility for surveying in the southern North Sea and Dover Strait**

At the 27<sup>th</sup> NSHC meeting (2006), UK noted that the Dover Strait Survey Strategy agreement between the Hydrographic Services of Belgium, France, Netherlands and the United Kingdom had been signed in 2000. Since then, traffic routeing measures in the area had changed and survey techniques had developed.

UK proposed that the extant agreement be reviewed and that each of the four countries should review their letter of intent to bring it up to date for current practices. Also each country should consider whether the limits of responsibility are still applicable.

27<sup>th</sup> NSHC Action B9 was placed on UK, Belgium, Netherlands, and France to meet to discuss the Dover Strait Survey Strategy with a view to updating the arrangement.

Updating of the Dover Strait Survey Strategy was discussed at the 1st Meeting of the NSHC Re-Survey Working Group in April 2007. The work of the Dover Strait Survey Strategy was acknowledged as an important part of a North Sea Re-Survey Strategy.

In July 2007, UK circulated the extant version of the strategy document to the co-signatories proposing that it be updated by correspondence, if possible. Comments and input to update the agreement were requested by September 2007. To-date, none has been received. The forthcoming NSHC meeting provides the opportunity for renewed impetus to complete the action.

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#### **Background to the 2000 agreement**

1963 at 2<sup>nd</sup> NSHC meeting, matter first raised.

1984 an agreement between Netherlands, France and UK established the areas of responsibility for hydrographic surveying in the southern North Sea and Dover Strait.

1996 at 22<sup>nd</sup> NSHC meeting, following concerns raised by France, action on France to form working group with UK, Netherlands and Belgium to address survey strategy in the southern North Sea and Dover Strait.

1998 at 23<sup>rd</sup> NSHC meeting, working group reported their intention to produce an agreement between the nations. It was agreed that the 1984 limits would be retained, omitting the critical areas defined in the existing diagram. Each country had agreed to produce a letter of intent outlining their survey policy for the area of their responsibility.

2000 at 24<sup>th</sup> NSHC meeting, an agreement was signed by UK and Belgium. France and Netherlands signed following the meeting. The limits of responsibility were amended slightly from the 1984 diagram, to exclude the inshore zones and to re-align with amendments to the routeing measures.

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