

14th CHRIS MEETING
Shanghai, China, 15-17 August 2002

The future Work of CHRIS
Note by Germany

1. Reviewing the activities of Hydrographic Offices, as described e.g. on the websites, shows how much hydrography as a science required to provide marine background data has expanded into a number of new application fields, in addition and beyond the aspects of safe navigation. The common denominator of all applications of hydrography is the need for hydrographic data. From the aspect of IHO as the international organization, CHRIS is the expert interface of IHO to advise on most data aspects relevant to the international collaboration of HOs. The need is seen to widen the scope of CHRIS as appropriate to the requirements of the Member States. The purpose of this note is to suggest some items for discussion.
2. Regarding spatial data, the technological development including the overwhelming development of the Internet is shifting the demand from off-the-shelf products towards information services. This has prompted already numerous initiatives, nationally as well as internationally, to establish a spatial data infrastructure linking together the variety of data sources. That infrastructure is made up of established and supported data standards, the respective application software, the rules for data and procedures for data access. Taking into account the strategic importance of the developments described above for HOs as well as for the IHO as an organization as whole, it is suggested to re-examine the tasks of CHRIS and its Working Groups with the objective to facilitate the integration of all hydrographic requirements (including traditional products and services and the current ENC) into the spatial data infrastructure. This exercise should consider not only current and identified future activities but also the way they are, or will be, conducted.
3. It is recognized that ECDIS will remain a core business for IHO, and consequently CHRIS. However, the role of the IHO with respect to certain aspects of ECDIS, e.g. data presentation, data encryption, etc., needs to be reviewed, taking into account the responsibilities and competences of, and interfaces with, other international organisations. In addition, S-57 is being expanded to accommodate all hydro data types. A mechanism is needed to ensure that this, and other future developments, fully takes into account the needs of the whole user community. It should also be recognised that, although S-57 Ed 4.0 will have the ability to support all hydro applications, it is necessary to determine which IHO body will have the responsibility to develop the associated new product specifications. Apart from the necessary maintenance of the data standards, it should be reviewed what the core activities of IHO with respect to standards are, e.g. regarding presentation, encryption etc., taking into account the responsibilities of other international organizations.
4. CHRIS has evolved into a Steering Committee for a number of technical Working Groups. It is suggested to review the organization of work of CHRIS in relation to its Working Groups.
5. It is suggested to review the Terms of Reference for CHRIS according any proposed new work items of CHRIS.