

TERMS OF REFERENCE
OF THE
HYDROGRAPHIC SURVEYS WORKING GROUP (HSWG)

Reference: 8th meeting of the HSSC, Monaco, November 2016

9th meeting of HSSC, Canada, November 2017

1. Introduction

The International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) is an intergovernmental consultative and technical organization that was established in 1921 to support safety of navigation and the protection of the marine environment. The objectives of the IHO are:

- a. Promote the use of hydrography for the safety of navigation and all other marine purposes and to raise global awareness of the importance of hydrography;
- b. Improve global coverage, availability and quality of hydrographic data, information, products and services and to facilitate access to such data, information, products and services;
- c. Improve global hydrographic capability, capacity, training, science and techniques;
- d. Establish and enhance the development of international standards for hydrographic data, information, products, services and techniques and to achieve the greatest possible uniformity in the use of these standards;
- e. Provide authoritative and timely guidance on all hydrographic matters to States and international organizations;
- f. Facilitate coordination of hydrographic activities among its Member States; and
- g. Enhance cooperation on hydrographic activities among States on a regional basis.

At the 5th meeting of the IHO Hydrographic Services and Standards Committee (HSSC5 meeting it was noted that after the restructuring of the HSSC Working Groups, there was not a single WG focused on hydrographic surveying. At HSSC8 a Project Team on Standards for Hydrographic Surveys (HSPT) was established to review IHO publication S-44 – *Standards for Hydrographic Surveys* – with the task of preparing a draft 6th Edition. In addition the HSPT was tasked to submit a proposal and recommendation on whether the HSPT should continue as standing working group with details of appropriate tasks for the proposed working group to undertake.

At HSSCx it was agreed that there was a need for a standing working group, a Hydrographic Surveys Working Group (HSWG), whose focus should be on all aspects related to the conduct of hydrographic surveys and the maintenance of relevant IHO publications.

2. Objective

- a. To maintain IHO publication S-44 – *Standards for Hydrographic Surveys* – preparing and proposing revisions and amendments to reflect changes in the demands of hydrographic data users, particularly those pertaining to data quality and standards;
- b. Maintain IHO publication C-13 – *IHO Manual on Hydrography* - to reflect current techniques, methodologies and survey systems, in particular to ensure harmonization with the standards articulated in S-44, close to IBSC;
- c. Lead the translation task for S-44 and C-13 to enable their widest possible application and use;
- d. Maintain close liaison and other HSSC working groups, in particular the work of the Data Quality Working Group (DQWG) and the presentation/visualization of nautical data to the maritime customer;
- e. Lead the education on the use of S-44 and develop supporting documentation to articulate best practice guidance on the application of the standards contained in S-44;
- f. Identify new systems, technologies and methodologies and exchange experiences, best practice and challenges amongst member states in line with the IHO objectives; and
- g. Act as a focal point for industry engagement with the IHO.

3. Authority

This WG is subordinate to the HSSC. Its work is subject to HSSC approval.

4. Composition and Chairmanship

- a) The HSWG shall comprise representatives of IHO MS, Expert Contributors (EC), observers from accredited non-governmental international organizations (NGIO), and a representative of the IHO Secretariat. A membership list shall be maintained and posted on the IHO website.
- b) EC membership is open to entities and organizations that can provide a relevant and constructive contribution to the work of the HSWG.
- c) The Chair and Vice-Chair shall be a representative of a MS. The election of the Chair and Vice-Chair shall be decided at the first meeting after each Assembly and shall be determined by vote of the Members present and voting.
- d) If a Secretary is required it should normally be drawn from a Member of the HSWG.
- e) If the Chair is unable to carry out the duties of the office, the Vice-Chair shall assume the Chair with the same powers and duties.
- f) ECs shall seek approval of membership from the Chair.
- g) EC membership may be withdrawn in the event that a majority of the Members represented in the HSWG agrees that an EC's continued participation is irrelevant or unconstructive to the work of the HSWG.

- h) All Members shall inform the Chair in advance of their intention to attend meetings of the HSWG.
- i) In the event that a large number of EC Members seek to attend a meeting, the Chair may restrict attendance by inviting ECs to act through one or more collective representatives.

5. Procedures

- a) The HSWG should work by correspondence, teleconferences, group meetings, workshops or symposia. The HSWG should meet about once a year. When meetings are scheduled, and in order to allow any HSWG submissions and reports to be submitted to HSSC on time, HSWG meetings should not normally occur later than nine weeks before a meeting of the HSSC.
- b) Decisions should generally be made by consensus. If votes are required on issues or to endorse proposals presented to the HSWG, only Members may cast a vote. Votes at meetings shall be on the basis of one vote per Member represented at the meeting. Votes by correspondence shall be on the basis of one vote per Member represented in the HSWG.
- c) The HSWG should liaise with other IHO bodies, international organizations and industry to ensure the relevance of its work and timely notice of changes to the standards.
- d) The HSWG should report to HSSC on its activities and submit a rolling two-year work plan, including expected time frame.