

**1st IHO-HSSC Meeting
The Regent Hotel, Singapore, 22-24 October 2009**

Paper for Consideration by HSSC

SCHEDULING OF HSSC AND SUBORDINATE WG MEETINGS

Submitted by:	IHB
Executive Summary:	This paper invites the HSSC to consider establishing guidelines for the timing of HSSC meetings and the meetings of its subordinate bodies.
Related Documents:	None
Related Projects:	None

Introduction / Background

An important element of each meeting of the HSSC (and formerly the CHRIS) is to consider the reports of the various subordinate working groups (WGs) and to consider proposals and work items that will impact on the work programmes for the following year.

Analysis/Discussion

Customarily, the CHRIS and its predecessor bodies have met during the period late October to early December. This has enabled a review of the year's work to take place and has been just in time to meet the submission deadlines for any proposals or reports that are to be tabled when there is an International Hydrographic Conference (IHC) - which is normally held in April.

In 2005 CHRIS-17 established submission deadlines for its meetings, similar to the well established rules for submissions to IHC's. Under these rules, substantive proposals and reports are required seven weeks prior to a meeting of the committee.

However, there have been instances where CHRIS WGs have not met these deadlines because WG meetings have been programmed to occur very close to CHRIS meetings. In these cases, relevant reports and proposals cannot be prepared and submitted according to the deadlines. This means that papers and proposals are either submitted late – in which case, meeting participants do not have an appropriate amount of time to consider and prepare for the HSSC meeting, or there is an inevitable 12 month delay before proposals can be brought to the attention of the committee. In order to avoid such situations, a policy regarding the scheduling of HSSC and its subordinate meetings is required.

Recommendations

It is recommended that the Terms of Reference for subordinate bodies of HSSC be amended to indicate that meetings should not normally be held within nine weeks prior to an HSSC meeting. Proposed amendments are set out in Annex A.

Justification and Impacts

This proposal will ensure that all relevant submissions for HSSC consideration are up to date and can be submitted on time.

Imposing a relatively short moratorium prior to HSSC meetings will have minimal adverse impacts. In general, the participants of working groups, with the exception of the Chairs, do not participate in committee meetings. Therefore, there are no particular benefits in holding WG meetings close to or back-to-back with HSSC meetings. In exceptional cases, if there is a reason to hold back-to-back meetings, it would be more appropriate for the WG meetings to occur immediately after, rather than before a committee meeting.

Action Required of HSSC

The HSSC is invited to:

- a. **agree** that meetings of HSSC will normally occur between late October and early December each year
- b. **approve** amendments to the Working Group Terms of Reference, as set out in Annex A.

PROPOSED ADDITIONS TO TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR HSSC WORKING GROUPS

Procedures

Under the relevant clause describing meetings, add:

When meetings are scheduled, and in order to allow any WG submissions and reports to be submitted to HSSC on time, WG meetings should not normally occur later than nine weeks before a meeting of the HSSC.