

MARINE SPATIAL DATA INFRASTRUCTURES
5th MSDIWG Meeting – 5-7 February 2014
MSDI Forum - 4 February 2014
Silver Spring, Maryland, USA

The 5th meeting of the IHO Marine Spatial Data Infrastructure Working Group (MSDIWG-5) took place from 5 to 7 February in Silver Spring, Maryland, USA. It was preceded on 4 February by an MSDI Open Forum. Both events were hosted by the US Office of Coast Survey (OCS). The working group aims to support the objectives of the IHO related to Spatial Data Infrastructures (SDI) and Marine Spatial Data Infrastructures (MSDI). According to the *Global Spatial Data Infrastructure Cookbook - 2009*, SDI addresses “the technology, policies, standards, and human resources necessary to acquire, process, store, distribute, and improve utilization of geospatial data”. The key interest for the IHO is that MSDI provides a framework for the provision of hydrographic information for uses that lie beyond the traditional field of surface navigation.

5th MSDI Working Group Meeting

Fifteen people attended MSDIWG-5, and another five participated via webcast and email communications. IHO participants represented Australia (web), Brazil (web), France (web), Denmark, Japan, Netherlands, Norway, Spain (web), United Kingdom and USA. The meeting was chaired by Mr. Jens Peter Hartmann, Denmark. There was also a very good level of participation by experts from industry. Assistant Director Michel Huet attended from the IHB.



A survey of MSDIWG members on MSDI issues, conducted in advance of the meeting, had revealed that the datasets considered the most important for use in MSDI/SDI were “Maritime and Administrative Boundaries”, “Bathymetry & Coastline” and “Regulated Areas”. The meeting heard reports on national status and plans regarding MSDI-related activities. Of particular note was the completion, under the leadership of the Japan Hydrographic and Oceanographic Department (JHOD), of the Japan Marine Cadastre which, in concept, is close to an MSDI.

Developments within the European HOs are progressing in line with the mandatory implementation of the Infrastructure for Spatial Information in the European Community (INSPIRE) Directive. Several Hydrographic Offices have set up, or are contributing to, geospatial data portals.

Reports were provided on initiatives being undertaken in the Caribbean and Baltic Sea regions. Possible cooperation with the Open Geospatial Consortium (OGC) on MSDI standardization was discussed. Other subjects addressed included Marine Spatial Planning (MSP) and e-navigation, MSDI being seen as a facilitator for the furtherance of these developments. Industry representatives expressed regret that useful data from HOs is often available only in an encrypted form.

The meeting split into six ad hoc sub-groups to consider how best to progress the various items of the MSDIWG work plan. This exercise resulted in a number of actions by WG members to be addressed intersessionally. Also, a sub-group, led by Australia, will look into identifying core geospatial standards of IHO, OGC and the International Standardization Organization (ISO). In order to ensure

steady progress of the actions agreed, it was decided that, between formal meetings, intermediate teleconferences or webinars will be held at three or four-monthly intervals.

MSDI Open Forum

The MSDI Forum followed the theme: *MSDI: More than Hydrography, Better Decisions from Better Data*. It was co-chaired by Ms. Maureen Kenny (OCS) and Mr. Paul Cooper (Caris). There were 30 people in attendance plus about another 20 via webcast. Various presentations, all of them given by external stakeholders, illustrated MSDI-related developments and achievements, mainly across the USA. The presentations covered data collection, data management, data discovery, data interoperability and data portals. All presentations are now available from the IHO website at: http://www.iho.int/mtg_docs/com_wg/MSDIWG/MSDIWG5/MsdiOpenForum/MsdiOpenForum_Programme.pdf.

The next meeting of the MSDIWG, to be associated with another MSDI Forum, is planned for February 2015 at the IHB in Monaco.