

**GENERAL REGULATIONS  
OF THE  
INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC ORGANIZATION**



## **GENERAL REGULATIONS OF THE IHO**

### **CONTENTS**

	<i>Article</i>
<i>Consultative nature of the Organization</i> .....	1
<i>Activities of the Organization</i> .....	2
 INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC CONFERENCE	
<i>Meeting in ordinary session</i> .....	3
<i>Preparation and organization</i> .....	4
<i>Representation; delegations; delegates' expenses</i> .....	5
<i>Observers:</i>	
<i>Governments not Parties to the Convention</i> .....	6 (a)
<i>Inter-governmental organizations</i> .....	6 (b)
<i>Non-governmental international organizations</i> .....	6 (c)
<i>Working languages</i> .....	7
<i>Reports on work of the Bureau</i> .....	8 (a)
<i>Approval of reports in committee or plenary session</i> .....	8 (b)
<i>Submitting of proposals</i> .....	9 (a)
<i>Late proposals</i> .....	9 (b)
<i>Proposals submitted during a Conference</i> .....	9 (c)
<i>Extraordinary sessions</i> .....	10
 FINANCE COMMITTEE	
<i>Extraordinary sessions</i> .....	11 (a)
<i>Dates of meetings</i> .....	11 (b)
<i>Election and term of office of Chairman and Vice-Chairman</i> .....	11 (c)(d)
<i>Task of an ordinary session</i> .....	12
<i>Recommendations of the Committee; majority required</i> .....	13
<i>Meetings. Report</i> .....	14
 INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC BUREAU	
<i>Activities</i> .....	15
<i>Official representatives of Member Governments</i> .....	16
<i>Relations with Governments, scientific organizations and similar bodies</i> .....	17
<i>Study of questions of general interest; cooperation</i> .....	18
<i>New publications, charts and documents to be forwarded by Members</i> .....	19
<i>Requests for information</i> .....	20
<i>Distribution of IHB publications</i> .....	21
<i>Languages for communication with IHB</i> .....	22
 DIRECTING COMMITTEE	
<i>Functions of the Directing Committee</i> .....	23
<i>Administrative or technical decisions between Conferences</i> .....	24
<i>Resolving of questions by circular letter</i> .....	25 (a)
<i>Even voting on questions being resolved by correspondence</i> .....	25 (b)
<i>Circumstances not provided for in the Regulations</i> .....	26
<i>Term of office of directors</i> .....	27 (a)
<i>Re-election of a director</i> .....	27 (b)
<i>Age limit for candidates</i> .....	27 (c)
<i>Director elected between Conferences</i> .....	27 (d)
<i>Expiration of Committee's term of office</i> .....	28

<i>Director incapacitated for duty</i> .....	29
<i>Distribution of responsibilities among directors; decisions in the absence of one director</i> .....	30
<i>IHB Staff</i> .....	31

## PUBLICATIONS

<i>Annual report on activities</i> .....	32
<i>Yearbook :</i> .....	33
<i>Information on hydrographic offices</i> .....	33 (a)
<i>Content of the Yearbook</i> .....	33 (b)
<i>Periodical publications</i> .....	34
<i>Special publications</i> .....	35

## ELECTION OF DIRECTORS

<i>Election by the Conference</i> .....	36
<i>Number of votes</i> .....	37 (a)
<i>Estimates of tonnage to determine number of votes</i> .....	37 (b)
<i>Nomination of candidates</i> .....	38
<i>Experience of candidates</i> .....	39
<i>Statement of candidates' qualifications</i> .....	40
<i>Publication of candidates' particulars</i> .....	41
<i>Method of voting for election of Directing Committee</i> .....	42
<i>Rules for election of directors</i> .....	43
<i>Election of President of Directing Committee</i> .....	44 (a)
<i>Precedence of directors</i> .....	44 (b) (c)
<i>Date at which new Committee takes office</i> .....	45
<i>By-election to fill vacancy for director</i> .....	46
<i>Precedence of director elected to fill a vacancy</i> .....	47

## **GENERAL REGULATIONS OF THE IHO**

### **ARTICLE 1**

The Organization is a consultative agency. It has no authority over the hydrographic offices of the Governments Parties to the Convention.

### **ARTICLE 2**

The activities of the Organization are of a scientific or technical nature and shall not include matters involving questions of international policy.

## **INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC CONFERENCE**

### **ARTICLE 3**

The International Hydrographic Conference shall meet in ordinary session every five years at the seat of the Organization at a date fixed at the close of the previous session.

### **ARTICLE 4**

The International Hydrographic Conference shall be prepared and organized by the Bureau.

### **ARTICLE 5**

Each Member Government may be represented at the Conference by one or more delegates, one of whom should preferably be the head of the national hydrographic office. No delegate of one Member Government may vote on behalf of another Member Government. Travelling and hotel expenses of delegates shall be defrayed by their respective Governments.

### **ARTICLE 6**

The Directing Committee shall be authorized to invite observers from:

- a) Governments that are not Parties to the Convention: one or two observers each, if proposed by a Member Government or the Directing Committee and subject to approval by two-thirds of the Member Governments.
- b) Inter-governmental organizations with which an agreement or special arrangement has been made: one or exceptionally two observers each; and
- c) Non-governmental international organizations with which the Organization has established appropriate relationships in accordance with the Guidelines for the Accreditation of Non-governmental International Organizations: one or exceptionally two observers each.

### **ARTICLE 7**

The working languages of the Conference shall be English, French, Spanish and Russian.

### **ARTICLE 8**

- a) The Conference shall examine the reports of the Bureau on its work since the previous Conference. These reports shall be submitted to Member Governments by the Bureau at least two months before the Conference.
- b) Committees shall be designated to study the reports. The committees' conclusions shall be submitted to the appropriate plenary session of the Conference.
- c) The Conference shall review the Strategic Plan of the Organization, and approve the Intersessional Work Programme for the next five years. *(see also article 23 c)*

### **ARTICLE 9**

- a) Twelve months before the opening of the Conference the Bureau shall invite Members to submit the proposals that they wish to discuss at the Conference. At least eight months before the Conference these proposals, as well as those submitted by the Bureau, shall be circulated to all Member Governments, who shall be invited to forward their comments to reach the Bureau at least five months before the Conference. After that date, no new proposals shall be accepted other than proposals referred to in (b) and (c)
- b) If due to exceptional circumstances Member Governments or the Bureau wish to submit a proposal at a later date, the submission should be approved by the Conference.
- c) Amending or alternative proposals directly related to the proposals already submitted under the procedure at (a) may be put forward subsequently.

### **ARTICLE 10**

- a) Unless the ordinary International Hydrographic Conference has specifically decided otherwise, the foregoing rules of procedure shall apply to extraordinary sessions.
- b) Government delegates to extraordinary sessions shall be chosen as far as possible in the light of the questions submitted for consideration.

## **FINANCE COMMITTEE**

### **ARTICLE 11**

- a) Between Conferences, the Finance Committee may meet in extraordinary session on the request of at least three Governments or of the Directing Committee. The Directing Committee shall consult the Finance Committee by correspondence concerning the 5-yearly and annual budgets and on transfers of credit between budget chapters in accordance with provisions laid down in Articles 8 and 10 of the Financial Regulations and on all other important financial or administrative questions.
- b) Dates of meetings of the Finance Committee shall be fixed by its Chairman in arrangement with the Directing Committee.
- c) The Chairman of the Finance Committee shall be elected at the first plenary session of the Conference. He shall be assisted by a Vice-Chairman elected at the same time. In the event of the Chairman's resignation, or if circumstances prevent him from fulfilling the duties of his office, the Vice-Chairman shall automatically replace him. A new Vice-Chairman should then be elected by Member Governments by correspondence, and this should also apply in the event of the resignation of the Vice-Chairman.
- d) The duties of the Chairman and the Vice-Chairman shall normally continue for the five years between Conferences.

**ARTICLE 12**

- a) During its ordinary session, the Committee shall:
- (i) examine and recommend for approval the Finance Report by the Directing Committee for the preceding 5-year financial period,
  - (ii) examine and recommend for approval the budget for the coming 5-year financial period.
  - (iii) examine and give at least preliminary advice on the budget for the year following the Conference.

These recommendations and advice are submitted to the Conference.

- b) Between its ordinary sessions, working normally by correspondence, the Finance Committee shall:
- (i) examine and recommend for approval the budget for the coming financial year,
  - (ii) examine and comment upon the Annual Report, Part 2 - Finance, submitted by the Directing Committee, concerning the financial administration by the Directing Committee of the preceding financial year,
  - (iii) study any questions related to finance which the Directing Committee or Member States may submit.

**ARTICLE 13**

The Finance Committee's advice and recommendations shall be taken by a majority of two-thirds of the number of votes cast during the Finance Committee sessions or by correspondence. Each Member Government shall have one vote.

**ARTICLE 14**

The Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Finance Committee shall meet with the Directing Committee regularly and preferably twice per year. A report of each meeting shall be made and circulated to Member States by the Directing Committee, after agreement with the Chairman and Vice-Chairman of the Finance Committee.

**INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC BUREAU****ARTICLE 15**

In accordance with the provisions of Article VIII of the Convention, the Bureau shall undertake the scientific and technical activities necessary for the attainment of the objectives of the Organization.

**ARTICLE 16**

For its relations with the Bureau, each Member Government shall designate an official representative, preferably the head of its hydrographic office.

**ARTICLE 17**

The Bureau shall keep in close communication with the hydrographic offices of Member Governments. It may also correspond with related scientific organizations of Member Governments, provided that it informs the official representative of the Government concerned (Article 16 above). Furthermore it may correspond with similar bodies of other Governments and with international organizations.

**ARTICLE 18**

The Bureau shall bring to the notice of the hydrographic or other competent offices of the Member Governments any hydrographic work of an international character and problems of general interest that it might be useful to study or to undertake. It shall strive for the solution of such problems or the undertaking of such work by seeking the necessary collaboration between Member Governments.

**ARTICLE 19**

To enable the Bureau to achieve its purpose, the Hydrographic Offices of Member Governments shall forward copies of their new international (INT) charts, electronic charts (raster and vector), as well as any nautical publications.

**ARTICLE 20**

The Bureau shall satisfy as far as possible all requests from representatives of Member Governments for information or advice related to its work. Matters which can be dealt with directly between two national hydrographic offices should not normally be referred to the Bureau.

**ARTICLE 21**

The Bureau shall issue and distribute the publications referred to in Articles 32 to 35 and any other documents requested by the Conference.

**ARTICLE 22**

In their communications with the Bureau, representatives of Member Governments may use languages other than the official languages of the Organization, but the Bureau shall not be held responsible for any delay or misinterpretation which may ensue.

**DIRECTING COMMITTEE****ARTICLE 23**

- a) The Directing Committee shall administer the Bureau in accordance with the provisions of the Convention and the Regulations and with directives given by the Conference.
- b) It shall be responsible for the carrying out by the Bureau of the scientific and technical assignments entrusted to it.
- c) The Directing Committee, taking into consideration the work of Committees and Working Groups, should present to all ordinary Conferences a Programme Budget proposal containing the work programme to be carried out during the following period, and the financial implications related to it, to be analyzed, discussed and decided upon



at Plenary Session. The plan should be distributed to all Member States at least 4 months before the Conference.

#### **ARTICLE 24**

- a) In the period between two Conferences, should no appropriate provision be made in the Convention or the Regulations, the Committee shall make any administrative or technical decisions which may be necessary, with the reservation that they be referred to the next Conference.
- b) The Directing Committee shall be guided by the IHO Strategic Plan and the Five Year Rolling Work Programme

#### **ARTICLE 25**

- a) If the Committee considers that any questions should be referred to the Member Governments for solution, it shall send a circular letter to their representatives, in accordance with Article VI 6) of the Convention, requesting them to notify the Bureau of the opinion of their respective Governments.
- b) When voting for or against is evenly divided, the question shall be deferred to the next Conference.

#### **ARTICLE 26**

If circumstances preclude observation of the procedure prescribed in the Regulations, the Committee shall make the necessary decisions and give Member Governments an immediate account of the fact.

#### **ARTICLE 27**

- a) The directors shall be elected for a period of five years, in accordance with Articles 36 to 47.
- b) The directors shall be eligible for re-election for a second five-year period.
- c) A candidate must be less than sixty-six years old in the year of his election or re-election.
- d) When a director is elected to fill a vacancy occurring between Conferences, his term of office shall end at the same time as his predecessor's would have done had he retained the post.

#### **ARTICLE 28**

The duties of the Directing Committee shall terminate on the last day of August following the regular election of a new Directing Committee at an International Hydrographic Conference. The new Directing Committee shall assume their duties on 1 September.

#### **ARTICLE 29**

A director who has been incapacitated for duty for six consecutive months or otherwise for an aggregate of twelve months, during his term of office shall automatically cease to be a director.

### **ARTICLE 30**

- a) Pursuant to the Article X of the Convention, the President is the leader of the Directing Committee. The President and the two other directors shall each have particular responsibility for one or more branches of the work of the Bureau, but the Directing Committee shall deliberate on all important questions.
- b) When all members of the Directing Committee are available and unanimity of view cannot be achieved, decisions shall be taken by the President with the concurrence of one other director. In instances where the two other directors disagree with the President, the matter may be referred by the Directing Committee to Member Governments.
- c) If only two directors are available and a decision cannot be postponed, the view of the President or acting President shall prevail.

### **ARTICLE 31**

The staff of the Bureau shall be under the control of the Directing Committee. It shall consist of technical and administrative assistants and employees. The staff shall be appointed by the Committee as necessary.

## **PUBLICATIONS**

### **ARTICLE 32**

At the beginning of each year the Bureau shall publish a report on its activities, inviting Member Governments to comment on it within a period of three months of publication of the report. The Bureau should then forward all comments received, together with the Bureau's responses to them, by Circular Letter.

### **ARTICLE 33**

- (a) The Bureau shall issue a Yearbook giving all necessary information on the hydrographic offices of the Member Governments and, insofar as such information can be obtained, on those of other Governments.
- (b) The Yearbook shall include the addresses of the official representatives designated in accordance with Article 16, and the following information:
  - (i) A list of Governments which have participated in the work of the Bureau between the date of its creation and the date of entry into force of the Convention.
  - (ii) A list of Member Governments.
  - (iii) A list of Governments which have denounced the Convention pursuant to Article XXII.
  - (iv) A table of tonnages of Member Governments' fleets.
  - (v) A table showing the shares, contributions and number of votes of the Member Governments.

### **ARTICLE 34**

The Bureau will publish an International Hydrographic Bulletin including technical and miscellaneous information related to the mission and work of the International Hydrographic Organization.

### ARTICLE 35

The Bureau shall issue special publications on technical subjects of interest to hydrographic offices.

### ELECTIONS

### ARTICLE 36

The directors shall be elected by the Conference in accordance with the provisions of Articles V b), VI 4) and X 2) of the Convention. The election shall be held by secret ballot.

### ARTICLE 37

- a) For the election of the directors, each Member Government shall have two votes; those Governments which have 100 000 tons of shipping or more shall have supplementary votes in accordance with the following scale:

GROSS TONNAGE	SUPPLEMENTARY VOTES
100 000 - 499 999	1
500 000 - 1 999 999	2
2 000 000 - 7 999 999	3
8 000 000 and above	4

- b) The estimates of tonnage shall be made in accordance with Article 5 of the Financial Regulations.

### ARTICLE 38

Each Member Government may nominate one candidate, who shall be of the nationality of the proposing country. If possible, nominations should reach the Bureau at least three months before the Conference. The list of candidates shall be closed ten days prior to the opening of the Conference.

### ARTICLE 39

Every candidate should have had considerable sea experience and have extensive knowledge of practical hydrography and navigation. In the elections, the technical and administrative ability only of the candidates should be taken into consideration. No particular rank or other standing is required of them.

### ARTICLE 40

Every nomination shall be accompanied by a note giving the candidate's qualifications for the position. To facilitate comparison of the candidates' qualifications the statements of service shall be compiled in a uniform manner as follows:

General

1. Name.
2. Nationality.
3. Date of birth.
4. Titles and decorations.

Education and Promotions

5. Education (periods, including specialized or special qualifications)
6. Languages (speaking and reading knowledge).
7. Promotions.

Service

8. Hydrographic service
  - (a) Sea service (periods and posts).
  - (b) Shore service (periods and posts).
9. Non-hydrographic service
  - (a) Sea-service (periods and posts).
  - (b) Shore-service (periods and posts).

Scientific activities

10. Publications.
11. Research work and awards.
12. Scientific societies (member of, past and present).

Additional information

13. Candidate's Position, which should include, but is not limited to, the candidate's vision of the importance of hydrography and cartography, of the role of the IHO and of the objectives and approach envisaged to best advance the priorities of the Organization as established by the Member States.

(Signature of candidate and of forwarding authority).

**ARTICLE 41**

- a) The names of the candidates, with the statements of service, shall be published by the Directing Committee as soon as they are received.
- b) The Bureau shall collate the lists of names submitted and present them, together with the statements of service, to each delegation at the opening of the Conference.

**ARTICLE 42**

- a) There shall be three separate ballots, one for each of the three members of the Directing Committee.
- b) To register their votes for electing each member of the Directing Committee, in each of the three ballots, the delegations shall inscribe on a number of voting papers equal to the number of votes to which each delegation is entitled the name of one of the candidates whom they wish to elect.
- c) In each successive ballot, the candidate being voted for must be of a different nationality from one already elected.
- d) Any voting paper not completed in strict accordance with paragraphs (b) and (c) shall be nullified.

**ARTICLE 43**

- a) The three candidates of different nationalities receiving the largest number of votes in the three separate ballots shall be considered elected.
- b) In each ballot, in the event that two or more candidates equally receive the largest number of votes, a new ballot should be held to determine the relative positions only of those candidates who obtained the largest number of equal votes.

**ARTICLE 44**

- a) When the three directors have been elected, a separate ballot shall be held to elect one of them as President of the Directing Committee. For this purpose, delegations shall inscribe on their allotted number of voting papers the name of the director they wish to make President.
- b) The number of votes actually received by each director shall determine the order in which they may be called upon to replace the President elected.
- c) In the case of a tie, a second ballot shall be held to determine the relative positions of the directors who obtained the same number of votes.

**ARTICLE 45**

When voting has been completed, the President of the Conference shall invite the newly-elected directors to take up their duties on the first day of September following their election.

**ARTICLE 46**

- a) If a post of director falls vacant during the period between two Conferences and more than two years before the next Conference is due to meet, the Directing Committee shall conduct a by-election by correspondence to fill the vacancy.
- b) In such a case, the Bureau shall invite Member Governments to send lists of candidates in accordance with Articles 38 to 40. On receipt of these lists the election shall be held observing a procedure closely modelled on that described in Articles 41 to 43.
- c) On completion of the above-mentioned procedure, the Committee shall immediately notify Member Governments of the result of the ballot and invite the director elected to take up his duties.

**ARTICLE 47**

A director elected to fill a vacancy shall take third place among the directors.

---