

The establishment of a Nordic Nautical Publication WG

Introduction

This explanatory note includes a presentation of status and initiatives related to publications in the Nordic Hydrographic Commission and an invitation for the Baltic member states to participate in the forthcoming work in a newly established Nordic Nautical Publication WG (NNPWG).

The following information should provide the foundation for a discussion on how the Nordic and the Baltic member states see the future development of publications in the respective regions, including the possibility for Baltic states to participate in the forthcoming work in the NNPWG, especially with focus on how Hydrographic Offices in the future can benefit from a regional approach.

Some information on the current situation

At the NHC conference in 2010, the need for establishing a Nordic Nautical Publication Working Group as a formal working group was discussed.

It was agreed to hold a kick-off meeting/workshop, with the aim of determining the need for a related working or expert group and preparing a proposal to NHC 55 on how to proceed. It was decided that the Danish Hydrographic Office should arrange, host and chair the meeting.

The workshop was a one-day convention held in February 2011, with the agenda below. Sweden, Iceland and Denmark attended the workshop; remarks from Norway and Finland were received. The vice chair from SNPWG, Jens Schröder-Fürstenberg from Germany, participated the workshop.

Provisional agenda:

- Welcome
- Presentation of participants
- Purpose of the meeting
- Presentation of publications:
- IHO
- Future needs and expectations for nautical publications and the most important issues for the future development of nautical publications
- Conclusions and way forward

It was determined that SNPWG would not solve the participants' challenges concerning publications in the future; the establishment of a regional WG was determined not to be redundant. This is because, while SNPWG develops guidelines for the preparation of nautical publications in an ECDIS-compatible digital format, SNPWG does not provide guidelines for publications in paper version, nor for the

future content of maritime publications. A coordinated Nordic effort with regards to harmonizing publications would therefore not conflict or overlap with the scope of SNPWG.

Given the current situation and expectations for the future development of maritime information - including nautical publications - a need for closer cooperation between organizations responsible with the circulation of maritime information was identified. The establishment of a Nordic Nautical Publication WG was seen as the most efficient solution to achieving the short and long term goals.

In this context, and in order to promote an increased awareness of the development of Nordic nautical publications as well as the relation to other neighbouring regional hydrographic commissions, the 55th NHC conference established a Nordic Nautical Publication Working Group (NNPWG) as a formal working group with the TORs as listed below.

In order to achieve joint learning and a general increase in the awareness and development of publications, including the exchange of knowledge and solutions in the region, the 55th NHC conference also decided that the NNPWG should involve the Baltic states as much as possible in the WG.

ToR for Nordic Nautical Publication Working Group (NNPWG)

The Working Group should:

- Primarily focus on issues related to printed nautical publications (NP1) and to corresponding digital copies (NP2).
- If deemed appropriate and time permits also focus on NP3 and the co-operation with SNPWG. In order to discuss which of NP information should be included in the ECDIS and to agree on standards from a regional perspective.
- Identify and describe the current status of nautical publications in the Nordic region-
- Analyse how HOs belonging to NHC can distribute their information and updates in the most efficient manner to the user.
- Evaluate the current situation within the NHC and if deemed appropriate also within neighbouring regional hydrographic commissions:
 - evaluate the regulations related to the printed nautical publications
 - analyse the users' needs for printed nautical publications
 - evaluate the foreseeable future development of printed nautical publications
- Focus on how NHC in the future can benefit from a regional approach in order to achieve the listed goals for example by – study and propose harmonised solutions for printed nautical publications
- Monitor the development of publications that could be relevant for the Nordic region
- Present a report to the NHC. The report should as a minimum include:
 - A description of the current status

- A proposal to a definition of printed nautical publications and their digital copies in a Nordic context, given the current development of the individual HOs
- An identification of best practice in the various areas of nautical publications, including updating procedures, resulting in a report to NHC
- Development of a strategy and work program on how the NNPWG should proceed with its' work and, if deemed necessary, an action plan with a specified time schedule for future NHC actions.
- To forward its findings and recommendations for NP1s and NP2s which may have importance to the SNPWG for further evaluation

In order to initiate the work in the NNPWG and permit the member states to present the status of their publications, discuss the challenges for the future and establish a work plan, the WG has decided to arrange a workshop in late 2011. This also gives the Baltic MS the possibility to plan their participation in the workshop. Germany has volunteered to arrange the joint workshop, which will take place in Rostock in December (Week 50; 13-14). This gives BSH the opportunity to provide the workshop with information about Baltic states' work on developing new guidelines for their publications.

Actions required from the BSHC 16th Conference:

The BSHC 16th Conference is requested to consider this invitation for Baltic MS to participate in the NNPWG and to participate in the upcoming Publication Workshop in Rostock in December and to take appropriate actions.