

MINUTES
OF THE 17th BALTIC SEA HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION CONFERENCE
SEPTEMBER 18th – 20th 2012, HELSINKI, FINLAND

A. Opening Formalities

A1 Opening of Conference

The chairman, Mr Patrik Wiberg, welcomed all participants to the 17th conference of the Baltic Sea Hydrographic Commission and anticipated a fruitful and constructive meeting. The new director of IHB, Mr Mustafa Iptes, and the observer from UKHO, Ms Kerrie Howard, were especially welcomed. The chairman noted that BSHC had its first conference in Helsinki in 1983 and he also thanked for the pleasant event on the icebreaker SISU the previous evening.

A2 Welcome from the host country

Mr Jukka Varonen (vice chairman of BSHC) welcomed all delegates to Helsinki on behalf of the host, the Finnish Transport Agency. He also noted the start of BSHC in Helsinki 1983 and remarked on some photographs from the first meeting. The primary first task within BSHC was to coordinate INT chart production. Some practical details regarding the venue and arrangements were given by the host.

A3 Adoption of the Agenda

There was a proposed change in the agenda to moving agenda item F (WG reports) directly after C1 National Reports. Sweden also wanted to add an issue to agenda item H regarding printed NtMs. These changes and amendments were approved and the agenda was adopted.

A4 Minutes and actions from the previous conference

There were no comments to the minutes of BSHC16 in September 2011. The action list from BSHC16 was reviewed and all items on action list from BSHC16 were considered done.

B. Strategic Aspects of further development of the IHO

B1 Report from the IHB

The new director, Mr Mustafa Iptes, introduced himself briefly and brought best regards from the other directors in IHB to this conference. The primary responsibility of director Iptes is regional cooperation and capacity building and he will be the IHB representative to BSHC. He commented that BSHC is considered one of the best examples of a well functioning RHC and thanked the host and the chair for the opportunity to participate at the meeting.

In the bureau Mr. David Wyatt is a relatively new assisting director with responsibilities regarding the liaison with BSHC.

The IHB report notes the situation regarding approval of new member states and approval of the Protocol of Amendments with special reference to the status of response from BSHC

member states. Director Iptes also reported that INT coordination in Region E is continuously updated in S-11 through Finland as coordinator. The status of updates of C-55 with regard to BSHC MS was noted. Not all MS have responded to CL51/2012 regarding an IHO ENC availability catalogue and were encouraged to do so.

Finland and Estonia commented that there seem to be a delay in publishing at the bureau of updates to the C-55 and also that membership approvals may be slow due to communication between respective foreign offices. Latvia also commented on MS approvals and C-55 updates.

Germany encouraged all contributions to the International Hydrographic Review.

B2 Cooperation within the IRCC

See next agenda item.

B3 Subjects arising from IRCC4

Denmark (Mr Lars Hansen, LH) represented both BSHC and NHC at the IRCC4 meeting in Singapore June 2012 and reported to BSHC17.

LH reported that the BSHC report to IRCC4 was very well received. He also went through the resulting action list from IRCC4 noting especially those with interest to RHCs. A discussion at IRCC4 concerning C-55 was briefly summarized. A future version should have a geospatial dimension and a geographical view. What are the end user needs and what information should be handled in C-55? Could e.g. a “survey quality parameter” be extracted from CATZOC already encoded in ENC?

IHB commented on the importance of C-55 and the bureau will issue a CL shortly concerning C-55. Germany asked whether BS MSDI WG could take a new information system for C-55 as a future task. Finland thanked LH for the IRCC4 report and asked for clarification on the way ahead for a “C-55 system” and wants a proposal to the next IRCC.

LH also informed that IRCC has elected as new chair Savithri Narayanan (CA) and as vice chair Nick Lambert (UK).

It was agreed that all MS review the relevant tasks of the IHO 2013 Work Programme and report on suggested updates to BSHC Chair by Mid of October. BSHC Chair will report to IRCC Chair by end October. [[Action #1](#)].

It was concluded that BSHC chair has a general action to handle the IRCC4 action list for any possible BSHC activities [[Action #2](#)].

The chairman expressed his sincere appreciation to Lars Hansen for attending the IRCC meeting in his place and for the informative report.

B4 Report from WEND WG

Finland (Mr Juha Korhonen, JK) reported from the activities of the IHO WEND-WG. There have been changes proposed to the ToRs of WEND-WG. There has also been a discussion on

revision of the WEND principles which will be considered further. The status of ENC overlaps and ENC coverage is monitored by the WG. The situation in the Baltic Sea region is generally acceptable or even good. There has been some confusion created by an analysis on ENC Port coverage made by the UK based on inaccurate positions. JK asked for any further comments and guidance in preparation for WEND-WG 2 meeting in the same week as the BSHC meeting.

Denmark thanked for the excellent work of JK as representative to WEND-WG. In general Denmark have ENC coverage problems but not in the Baltic Sea but rather in the Arctic. IHB commented on worldwide coverage and reminded on IHC18 decisions on the topic. Sweden remarked on the improvements on coverage in Baltic Sea thanks to efforts by Lithuania.

Germany attended the previous WEND-WG on behalf of the BSHC and one question raised regarding coverage was what to do when there are no authoritative resources in a coastal state. The RHCs should highlight these situations. Denmark commented that the fundamental rules are in SOLAS V and IMO needs to be part of a solution in these cases.

C. Strategic aspects concerning technical issues of the activities of HOs

C1 National reports

The participating member states were encouraged by the chair to briefly comment on items of specific interest in their respective national reports.

Denmark: There have been changes to the organization of hydrographic activities. The Danish Maritime Safety Administration (DaMSA) has been closed down. The responsibility for hydrographic survey operations has been moved to Kort- & Matrikelstyrelsen (KMS). DaMSA webpage is still in operation and linked to relevant organizations that have taken over responsibilities from DaMSA. New director of KMS will probably initiate new structure and organization for KMS in the near future.

Estonia: A new hydrographic survey vessel was commissioned in April 2012. This is a major improvement for survey operations in Estonia. List of Lights (LoL) is available on HO website and updated weekly. Pilot books will cover nationwide at the end of 2013.

Finland: Operations, budget and personnel are roughly the same as previous years. Regarding the Chart and ENC production a strategic decision has been made in order to build full coverage coastal usage band ENC and printed charts, respectively. Since September 2011 the hydrographic services including production have been certified according to ISO 9000.

Germany: A presentation was made highlighting some important changes in operations and policies of the German HO. Germany will reduce its chart portfolio outside national waters gradually starting 2013. A more than 100 years old tradition of charting foreign waters is ending. Germany has revised its national "Geodata Access Act" resulting in a strong move towards open and free availability of government geodata. This will affect licensing policies but a business case for certain thematic data like ENC may still be possible. Germany also has introduced a new cell structure for licensing to GIS-applications and pricing with high discount for high sales volumes.

Finland commented and Germany clarified that they will stop adopting charts from other MS around the Baltic Sea. Denmark asked about if there are any limitations regarding resolution in applying the new Act and Germany answered that in principle there are no such limits according to the national act. Finland asked about the liability and Germany answered that they are liable only for the official products of German HO. Sweden commented on the German production of the Baltic Sea Routeing Guide and this will continue for the time being. Sweden also asked about principles for presenting underwater hazards (e.g. wrecks) and differences in principles between countries. Estonia raised the issue that these principles may need harmonization between countries.

Latvia: An issue regarding duplicated work on INT Charts has been successfully solved between the Russian Federation and Latvia. There is a trend towards digital publications. A Print-on-Demand operation is established for the nautical charts. The possibilities with e-learning are studied for future training courses.

Lithuania: Not present at the meeting, see national report.

Poland: There are strategic considerations to decrease the number of products. The World Hydrography Day was celebrated with an event in Stettin with seminars and exhibitions open for the public. Poland wishes to thank also Germany for taking part in this event.

Russia: The delegate from Russia brought greetings from his colleagues that were unfortunately not able to participate at BSHC17. Russia reported on establishing a Print-on-Demand operation for nautical charts. There is a web page where Pilots and other publications are published and these publications are also available in English language.

Sweden: Commented on the outcome of hydrographic survey operations especially resulting from the MonaLisa project. There is a good cooperation with Finland with a common implementation of S-44 which is a good base for the requirements to survey contractors. Sweden also highlighted the ongoing project to revise the maritime boundaries.

C2 Speed up of finalizing the HELCOM re-survey plan with EU co-financing

Sweden presented a proposal to create funding for the implementation of the HELCOM re-survey plan and gave a background to the underlying political decisions within HELCOM and the EU. The presentation outlined the road ahead for a possible EU TEN-T co-financed project and invited all BS MS to participate.

Germany and Finland commented also the possibility to investigate methods for shallow waters and CATIII areas. This is a possibility to activate other initiatives towards for instance EU or other external financing.

An action for Sweden was decided to inform on further progress and invite to take part later on [[Action #3](#)].

C3 Harmonisation of depth information in ENC's and paper charts

Sweden presented the background and described the previous work of BSEHWG (ENC harmonization) and BSHDIWG (harmonization of depth information). None of these working groups are active any more. The proposal focuses on portrayal and display in ECDIS.

It was decided that Sweden and Finland form a pilot project and present the outcome if possible at the next BSHC conference [[Action #9](#)].

D. Strategic aspects concerning administrative and marketing activities of HOs

D1 Establishment of a proprietary BSHC internet domain

Germany presented the proposal to establish a home web page for the BSHC and discussed how to organize the future work to operate it. Sweden commented and suggested that an “.int” domain could be available. Sweden proposed a working group for future management of the home page. Finland was in general positive to the initiative and wanted to ensure the relation with IHO web pages. IHB commented and has nothing against the establishment of RHC home pages and other examples do exist.

It was decided that Germany and Sweden cooperates to establish a prototype home page and to suggest a future organization for management to the next BSHC Conference [[Action #6](#)].

D2 Discussion on proposal for BSHC logotype

Sweden has made a proposal for a BSHC logotype in accordance with an action from BSHC16. This proposal has been distributed and Finland has responded with some possible improvements. Finland, Latvia and Germany discussed other changes and the conclusion was to simplify the logotype and especially the texts in the lower part.

It was decided that Sweden makes a revised logotype taking the outcome of the discussion into consideration and distributes to MS [[Action #7](#)].

D3 Establishment of a pilot project targeted the leisure craft users

Denmark presented a pilot project for distribution of ENC to leisure crafts. Given the unwanted situation with regard to the use of ECS Denmark plans to establish a more proactive data service to the leisure craft market. The interest from OEMs to participate actively has not been high so far.

The project will have a test period during 2013 from April to September. Denmark will most probably invite to a workshop early 2014 to discuss the outcome and the consequences of the pilot project.

Finland appreciated the initiative. Germany asked for clarifications on the status of data, is it official or derived from official. Denmark answered that the idea behind the project is to distribute official and encrypted data and the package should always contain an update mechanism which is a crucial part.

The meeting noted the report and welcomed Denmark to invite to a possible workshop in early 2014 [[Action #8](#)].

E. BSHC cooperative projects with other organizations

E1 CHEMSEA Project

Sweden presented briefly the CHEMSEA (Chemical Munitions Search and Assessment) EU project. The survey part that Sweden is involved in has the aim to identify and map bottom objects for possible further analysis. The search is conducted with multiple sensors such as multi beam sonar, magnetometer, gradiometer and ROV.

Germany asked about full coverage in search areas and Sweden informed that the hydrographic survey has full coverage but not 100 % with regard to object identification.

The meeting noted the report.

F. Reports of BSHC Working Groups

F1 Report of the BS INT Chart Coordination WG

The chairman of BSICCWG, Mr Jarmo Mäkinen (JM), presented the report on the work and status of the working group. The chairman requested BSHC guidance and decisions on the following issues:

The meeting agreed on the proposed time schedule for S-11 update and Member States need to respond to BSICCWG on updates before October 19, 2012 [Action #10].

The meeting agreed on the proposed way of simplifying future reporting status of ENC harmonization.

The issue about Lithuanian INT charts was discussed. IHB commented that work is ongoing to have Lithuania as IHO member and that the topic on INT chart numbers will be discussed at the bureau. Latvia stated that there is nothing in regulations that prohibit Lithuania from producing INT charts if following the standards. A pragmatic approach is preferred. Finland, Germany and Sweden expressed support to this solution. Further guidance should be asked from the IHB.

The meeting endorsed that Lithuania should be able to publish their charts as INT charts.

With regard to the work on limits and names the common principles were discussed. Germany commented that the scope should be as wide as possible, safety of navigation being the most important. There is a value and help to others to have a BSHC solution which may be disseminated to other sectors.

The meeting agreed that the main scope is safety of navigation and chart production, but not limited to it, and envisions it as valid in a wider scope.

The last BSICCWG Chair's proposal contains 15 sub areas and a sub area may be divided into sub-sub areas if necessary. Latvia accepted the solution and Germany also. Denmark commented and regards the document as dynamic and accepted the proposal but changes may occur later. Finland hesitated to support the proposal without further investigations. Russia informed that this is in principle OK, but needs time to analyse the proposal in details.

The meeting agreed that the division into 15 subareas and sub-sub areas when necessary is a *possible* solution.

In the last proposal one sub area, Gulf of Bothnia, is divided in sub-sub areas, Bothnian Sea, the Quark and Bay of Bothnia. A possible principle to use established names, even if seemingly illogical, was discussed. Germany supported this principle and Denmark commented that details of sub-sub area names will be difficult.

The meeting agreed that well established names are preferred.

The guidance on how to use limits and names on INT charts is not clear from S-4. JM proposed that only the main region name and sub area names are to be used in titles of INT charts.

It was agreed that BSICCWG will ask further guidance from the CSPCWG.

The meeting discussed on how to publish a future agreed concept on Baltic Sea limits and names. Russia suggested to publish the result on the IHO web page and to disseminate from there. Latvia proposed an IHO CL to inform on the matter. Denmark informed on a similar discussion in NSHC and proposed to publish on a possible BSHC webpage. Germany suggested to be sensitive and not link it too closely to IHO web pages.

The meeting agreed that BSICCWG will, if needed, arrange a workshop to proceed with the proposal on limits and names. [[Action # 11](#)]

F2 Report of the HELCOM Resurvey Monitoring WG

The chairman of MWG, Mr Juha Korhonen (JK), presented the report on the work and status of the working group. Especially important issues raised were the intention to report on Baltic Sea Harmonised Re-survey Scheme to the upcoming HELCOM Ministerial Meeting in October 2013, time schedule for the reporting and asking advice from the meeting with regard to the content of the report.

IHB commented that real regional cooperation with BSHC MWG as a good example is important and also that there is political support for the efforts. It is also good to move into CAT III which is of interest to politicians for maritime planning, environment etc.

A discussion on time schedule for the reporting to HELCOM was concluded with that a very final version of the report will be ready by 1st May 2013 and to be forwarded to BSHC Members for approval, and to be delivered to HELCOM late August 2013. The report to HELCOM will then be confirmed at BSHC18 in September 2013.

Germany noted that there is interesting material for an IHR article in this cooperation and added that the final report should emphasize the fact that hydrographic surveys really create useful information for several sectors in society.

The meeting noted the MWG report and agreed:

- to forward the report to HELCOM Ministerial Meeting in October 2013
- to speed up the work of MWG as recommended
- to strongly encourage MS to complete their revised re-survey scheme by the end of 2012
- to strongly encourage MS to update their information in the resurvey database by the end of 2012
- to endorse the development of the re-survey scheme document as proposed

F3 Report of the BS Bathymetry Database WG

The chairman of BSBDWG, Mr Hans Öiås (HÖ), presented the report on the work and status of the working group. The reported method for modeling is based on tools developed by Stockholm University for GEBCO purposes. Some early versions of tools for viewing and download were demonstrated. HÖ also informed about “related” EU projects dealing with bathymetry and the confusion created by this situation. Denmark asked if it is possible to assign a new member to the WG.

Denmark commented on the principles for distribution and asked if a model with a specified resolution will be publicly available free of charge. The issues of governance have to be described. Both Denmark and Finland questioned the need for centralized storage and modeling versus a distributed solution more in line with Inspire. HÖ argued that modeling is needed when source information is sparse. Germany appreciated the presentation and discussed the advantage with a sustainable update mechanism compared to other initiatives. It was clarified that metadata will be available and compliant with Inspire.

There was discussion on the forthcoming EU/IHO meeting on 10 October 2012. Sweden will distribute the outcome and documents to all BSHC Members [[Action #4](#)].

The meeting noted the BSBDWG report and agreed:

- that a first set up of a BSHC Bathymetry Portal will be operated by SMA.
- that data provided from each country is processed by SMA for computation of a homogenous Baltic bathymetry model.
- to create a bathymetric model with 500 m resolution available for public use, free of charge.

F4 Report of the Chart Datum WG

The chairman of BSCDWG, Mr Jukka Varonen (JV), presented the report on the work and status of the working group.

JV described the situation regarding the IHO TWLWG proposal to revise IHO resolution 3/1919 and that CDWG sees a need to improve the proposal and has provided comments to HSSC4 in document HSSC4-05.8B. Improvements suggested by CDWG are mainly related to non-tidal waters and inland waters. The proposal from TWLWG has been withdrawn from

HSSC4 and thereby creating more time to reach a satisfactory solution. It will be discussed further on at the TWLWG5 meeting in Helsinki 13-17 May 2013.

CDWG has been successful in interactions with ongoing work in INSPIRE and contributed actively to improved INSPIRE specifications. Only Finland, Germany and Sweden participated in the last WG meeting in August. A good understanding has been reached with other organizations round the Baltic Sea on the way forward with the vertical datum issue.

The CDWG is asking the real commitment of the BSHC Members to their transition to a harmonized vertical reference and has proposed a resolution to distribute an enquiry to all MS regarding willingness and plans to implement a harmonized vertical datum in all Baltic Sea Coastal states.

Denmark supported the opinion that maintaining HW (high water) datum is risky. Better to install gauges and display the situation clearly to the mariner for vertical clearances etc. Germany commented and strongly supports a move towards an EVRS based datum. Sweden proposed that enquiry to all Baltic Sea coastal states should contain a commitment statement and that chair of BSHC should send out the enquiry.

The meeting noted the BS CDWG report and agreed:

- to approve the CDWG resolution regarding an enquiry adding that BSHC chair formally sends it to all Baltic Sea coastal states [[Action #5](#)].
- to approve the CDWG work programme for 2012-2013.

F5 Report of the BS Maritime SDI WG

The chairman of BS MSDIWG, Mr Jens Peter Hartmann (JPH), presented the report on the work and status of the working group.

JPH reported from a BSMSDIWG workshop arranged in Copenhagen the week previous to BSHC17. There is a window of opportunity right now in time where a lot of value could be created for other society sectors with an interest in MSDI. The BSMSDIWG is considering a lot of possible ways forward and a work plan is not yet finalized.

Germany noted that this may lead to a redefinition of what a hydrographic office is all about. There is an opportunity to become the national focal point for maritime data themes.

The meeting noted the BS MSDIWG report and agreed:

- to approve proposed minor changes of BSMSDIWG Terms of Reference.
- to endorse the way forward towards a BSMSDIWG work programme.

JPH also gave a short presentation on the activities of the IHO MSDI WG. Input resulting from BSHC16 has been taken into work programme. JPH is now also the chairman of IHO MSDIWG.

The report from IHO MSDI WG was noted.

F6 Report of the Nordic Nautical Publications WG

The chairman of NHC Nordic Nautical Publications, Mr Jens Peter Hartmann (JPH), presented the work of NNPWG.

The work group of the Nordic Hydrographic Commission organized a workshop late 2011. There were participants also from BSHC and ARHC (Arctic Region Hydrographic Commission). A questionnaire has been distributed to HOs and some mariners have been interviewed. Three specific areas for future work have been identified.

- Modern database management of nautical publication information
- Formats for multiple user groups
- New workshop also inviting BSHC and ARHC during 2012

Finland wanted to see a clear division of task between NNPWG and IHO SNPWG. Germany commented that SNPWG needs guidance and that NNPWG could contribute with practical solutions from a regional perspective.

The report from NHC NNPWG was noted.

G. Status of Hydrographic Surveying and Nautical Charting Worldwide C-55

G1 C-55 status in BSHC Member States

There were no specific comments at this agenda item. The topic was considered sufficiently covered under earlier agenda items.

H. Unscheduled Items

Sweden asked the BSHC delegations about the situation regarding NtMs and if there are any thoughts about stop printing NtM and only distribute digitally. A quick round the table discussion revealed that only Denmark has seized to print already. Most countries will continue to print for the time being.

I. Closing of the Conference

I1 Review of decisions and action list

The secretary reviewed the noted actions from BSHC17 and they were approved.

I2 Election of the chairman and vice chairman of BSHC

The BSHC 17th conference appointed Mr Jukka Varonen, Finland, as chairman and Mr Taivo Kivimäe, Estonia, as vice chairman of BSHC for the next period. Appointments were made by acclamation.

I3 Place and time of next conference

It was decided that the BSHC 18th conference will take place in Estonia 16-18 September 2013. There will be information on location and details later.

I4 Closing Ceremony

The resigning chairman thanked all delegates for a very constructive meeting and decisions were made on several difficult topics. The chairman especially thanked the host, Finnish Transport Agency, for excellent meeting facilities and all arrangements. The chairman also remarked that a very important part of these meetings are all the interactions that take place between sessions and finally hoped to meet all again in Estonia 2013.

