

REPORT OF THE TECHNICAL VISIT TO MALTA

Following the decisions of the Mediterranean and Black Seas Hydrographic Commission, a Technical Visit was paid by an Italian delegation formed by Cdr Roberto CERVINO (IT Navy HO) and Cdr Lamberto Orlando LAMBERTI (IT Navy HO) from 23 to 26 September 2008.

The delegation was received by the Head of the Maltese Hydrographic Office, Mr. Joe BIANCO at the Malta Maritime Authority (MMA).

COMMENTS AND FINDINGS

Status of Hydrography and nautical cartography

MHO is involved for updating paper chart, ENC and publication issued by UKHO sending NtMs and Navigational Warnings. Most of the surveys performed out of the harbours were made by UKHO before 1958. UKHO made two surveys at the approaches to the harbours one in 1999 (off Valletta) and one in 2006 (off Marsaxlokk Harbour).

It is necessary to re-survey with modern technology all the waters around Malta until 12 miles.

Malta, at the moment, has neither sufficient funds to finance these surveys nor the technical equipment and personnel.

MMA has a VTS based in Valletta covering his responsibility waters.

A Hydrographic Unit cooperates with the Land Mapping Department and is able to conduct harbour surveys. Vessel/survey boat, survey equipment, database/compilation sw/hw for hydrographic data management and chart compilation/production if requested from Malta .

There is no capability for official ENC, paper chart and publication production and printing. UKHO carries out this work for the MMA. There is a capability of ENC production for internal use.

MSI Organization and GMDSS.

MMA sends/receives MSI to UK, Spain, Russia and Italy. GMDSS is in implementation.

MMA is a part of the Ministry for infrastructure, Transport and Communications and it is also considered to be the Port Authority with regulatory functions for all the ports in Malta.

Maltese Information and NtM concerning Sailing Directions are sent to UKHO for publication update. There exists a bilateral agreement with UKHO to pass sounding data and information for chart/publication production, updating and distribution.

PROPOSALS

1. In addition to of Regulation 9 of Chapter V of Solas which is part of Malta's Laws, the IHO delegates proposed to insert an amendment in Malta Maritime Authority Act CAP352 issued 1991 to establish the duties of MHO (e.g. "providing and maintain adequate and efficient Hydrographic Surveys and Chart Production for Safety of Navigation"), similar to what is stated in article 6.(2) para d. of the Act for the Lighthouses and Signals Service.
2. To re-survey the territorial waters of Malta, at least the three/four miles zone in very short time.
3. To increase personnel, equipment and financial resources of MHO to conduct, independently, hydrographic surveys and chart/publication production.
4. Training is an essential need and training to personnel at Category A and B level is advisable. Any assistance and proposal offered from the IHO will be welcomed.
5. The capability to perform shallow water survey with MB and Digital SSS should be explored.
6. The existing survey boat should be upgraded or a new survey boat fully equipped for coastal survey purchased.
7. A Hydrographic Sounding Database and a Cartographic Database should be created and managed.
8. A new tide gauge station should be installed in Gozo

9. Local authorities should be made aware of the IHO publication M-2.

OTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

1. MHO to distribute MSI and Navigational Warning as convenient to other Countries.
2. To survey the territorial waters as soon as possible.
3. To request assistance to produce charts and publications and to become independent for chart/documentation production.
4. To establish a National Indicative Plan to increase the capacity of MHO.