

Nordic Nautical Publication WG report

Introduction

This report reviews the work group's findings, status and the planned next steps.

At NHC 54, the conference discussed the need for establishing a Nordic Nautical Publication Working Group as a formal working group.

One important issue was to clarify if the SNPWG would solve our challenges concerning publications in the future and thus make a regional WG redundant.

It was stated that the aim of SNPWG is to develop guidelines for the preparation of nautical publications in a digital format compatible with ECDIS. It was stated that SNPWG will not provide guidelines for nautical publications in paper/printed version, nor the future content of nautical publications. A coordinated Nordic effort with regards to nautical publications does therefore not conflict or overlap with the scope of SNPWG.

Nordic Nautical Publication WG status

On December 13-14, 2011, the NNPWG arranged a workshop for members of the Arctic Regional Hydrographic Commission, the Baltic Sea Hydrographic Commission and the Nordic Hydrographic Commission. Hosted by the German Hydrographic Office BSH, the purpose of the workshop was to investigate the current state of nautical publication management, updating and distribution among the three regional commissions' member states. As the distance grows between, on the one hand, fully spatially referenced information in ECDIS and, on the other hand, analogue information in nautical publications, navigators are meeting growing challenges in ensuring they include all relevant information in their route planning.

Given the importance of existing standards, agreement and regional cooperative efforts, the workshop participants agreed that in the short term, they will consider:

- reporting to NHC with proposals for a workshop in 2012 under the aegis of NHC with invitation invites to ARHC and BSHC
- conducting individual and shared cost-benefit analyses of continued joint work; and
- begin to address the shortcomings of the NP1/2/3 approach with IHO.

In the longer term, the workshop participants agreed that it would be important to consider the potential value of:

- new standards; and
- codification in formal platforms.

At the NHC 57th Conference the chair of NNPWG presented the outcome and conclusions of the NNPWG. The NHC 57th Conference agreed that a workshop should be arranged in Copenhagen in 2013 or 2014 with invitations to ARHC and BSHC.

It was decided that the NNPWG should include the decisions and actions taken by HSSC4 in the forthcoming work and to cooperate with SNPWG in the future, focusing on the development of a data model which includes digital nautical publication. The planned workshop under the aegis of NHC has been postponed.

Hydrographic Services and Standards Committee (HSSC) status

At the 4th meeting of HSSC in Taunton, 25-28 September 2012, the acting SNPWG Chair presented the report and recommendations of his WG. He noted that the next steps were to define the process for the creation of digital nautical publication products, extend the nautical publications data model and look at producing a product specification for radio signal information.

HSSC Chair questioned if HSSC still supported the need for Electronic Nautical Publications (NP). From the comments offered by Australia, Canada, Denmark, Sweden, UK, USA, and CIRM the continuation of the working group was generally supported, with a requirement to focus on meeting SOLAS carriage requirements. The need to serve the mariners independently of the ECDIS, to synchronize NP developments with the implementation of S-100 and to avoid having too many products that were not compatible, was acknowledged.

The Committee decided not to assign S-103 to the MPA product specification and invited SNPWG to continue using the generic identifier S-10X. IHB noted that the range 101-199 might be insufficient for IHO PS if the intention was to develop a stand-alone product specification for each NP theme.

The Committee reviewed and agreed revised key elements of the SNPWG work plan in order to reflect the outcome of the preceding discussion.

- The Committee confirmed the objective to provide nautical publications in electronic format.
- The Committee decided not to assign a product specification number to the draft product specification for Marine Protected Areas (MPA), for the time being.
- Action HSSC4/26: SNPWG to prepare a master plan for developing electronic nautical publications, with priority assigned to defining data models and product contents in order to coordinate the scheduling of deliverables with the implementation of S-101.
- Action HSSC4/27: SNPWG to provide an estimate of the number of potential product specifications related with nautical publications.

Re-structuring of the working groups of the Hydrographic Services and Standards Committee (HSSC)

HSSC approved in principle, at its 5th meeting, a new structure composed of working groups and project teams. The Committee decided the establishment of a correspondence group (CG), composed of the Chairs of HSSC, TSMAD, DIPWG, CSPCWG, SNPWG, TWLWG, SCWG and an IHB representative and open to all Member States, to develop draft terms of reference and rules of Procedure, and to consider the composition of the new bodies as well as appropriate and timely transition arrangements.

The intention is to establish the following working groups in accordance with the draft TORs being considered by the CGHR: S-100 Working Group, ENC Standards Maintenance Working Group, Tides, Water Level and Currents Working Group and to merge CSPCWG and SNPWG into Nautical Information and Cartography Working Group (NICWG).

The intention is to keep: MSDIWG, DQWG, DPSWG, HDWG untouched under the existing TOR for the time being.

Conclusions and recommendations:

There seems to be wide consensus to establish the following working groups: S-100 Working Group, ENC Standards Maintenance Working Group, Tides, Water Level and Currents Working Group but strong reservations against the merger of CSPCWG and SNPWG into NCIWG.

NCIWG is expected to reconsider the separation between nautical charts and nautical publications and is expected to promote an integrated approach for the provision of chart and other geo-referenced nautical information, especially in the context of e-navigation implementation.

It is not clear what kind of projects the NCIWG will oversee and how its activities will be conducted in practice. The focus of the future NCIWG does not seem clear and it is therefore difficult to describe the scope of NCIWG in relation to the Nordic Nautical Publication WG and the impact.

It is recommended to postpone the work in the Nordic Nautical Publication WG until the restructuring of the working groups of the Hydrographic Services and Standards Committee (HSSC) is finalised and ToR for NCIWG is approved and the necessary resources is allocated to the WG.

It is recommended that Denmark present a paper at NHC 59 describing the challenges and the future role of NNPWG in order for the MS to discuss if there is a need for NNPWG in the future.

It is recommended that each MS gives a status report about their nautical publications at NHC 59.

Actions required from the NHC 58th Conference:

The NHC 58th Conference is requested to consider this report and to take appropriate actions.