NSHC 28th Conference
Elsinore, Denmark
April 2008

Explanatory Note
Item D 1.2 (Annex)
France

INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC BUREAU

BUREAU HYDROGRAPHIQUE INTERNATIONAL

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Monaco, 23 January 2008

Dear Chairmen of the IHO RHCs:

I.- Background.

The XVII International Hydrographic Conference Decision N° 17 (PRO 18) "**Provision of Regional Staff Officers for Capacity Building effort" read as follow:**
*" The Conference agreed to ask the CBC, **in consultation with RHCs**, to consider the part-time allocation of personnel to act as Regional Staff Officers to assist those chairmen of Regional Hydrographic Commissions (RHCs) who have limited human resources with which to sustain the capacity building effort in their regions. It is suggested that the priorities for provision of such a post should be EAtHC, MACHC, NIOHC, SAIHC and SWPHC."*

The full text of the PRO 18 (amended at the Conference) is attached as Annex "A", together with the comments offered by MSs before the conference. In Annex "B' is the recollection of the discussion had at the IHC.

II.- Considerations.

1.- CB is a strategic IHO issue defined as a process aiming at assessing and assisting States to develop a sustainable development capability to meet the objectives of the IHO and the hydrographic, cartographic and maritime safety obligations and recommendations described in UNCLOS, SOLAS and other international instruments.

2.- It is felt beneficial to work CB initiatives with a regional perspective, as normally problems are of similar nature or characteristic and sustainable solutions could be explored , found and agreed under bilateral or multilateral cooperation and collaboration programs / projects. Therefore a regional approach is considered important.

3.- The IHO structure actually has 14 RHCs. While some RHCs do not require full support of the IHO for their development, others are very dependant on the activities that IHO could foster to improve their capabilities and capacities. Based on the

results of the assessment made (S-55), the following RHCs are the most demanding IHO CB effort: EAtHC, MACHC, NIOHC, SAIHC and SWPHC.

4.- CB process is built around 4 steps: awareness, assessment, analysis and action, and the success relies on a continue and persistent follow-up of the different initiatives. Personal knowledge, mutual confidence, flexibility, relationship and other factors are considered key elements to facilitate progress in the CB process, and only can be built if continuity is exercised. Therefore RHCs should aim at identifying regional officials that could take care and assume the responsibility on behalf of the participating MSs, of a "regional capacity building manager'.

5.- From one side, Chairmen of the RHCs are requested to have a much active role in the regional business, and on the other side, Chairmen are increasingly being pressed in their National Hydrographer's capacity to monitor their internal situation, not having the time to develop and propose a thoughtful way forward in the medium and long term. The result is that the RHC founds it very difficult to identify the needs and to formally propose evaluated alternatives to solve those needs. In brief, a CB policy cannot be worked out.

6.- The IHO has established a Capacity Building Committee to deal with all CB issues, that meets annually to coordinate IHO's efforts. The IHO CB provision is ruled by the financial resources available; by the managerial capability of the IHB CBC and the managerial capabilities at the regional level. If a RHC does not have the capability to put together a proposal to the CBC for consideration, chances are very high that that RHC will not be able to take the opportunity the IHO as an international organization is offering.

7.- The IHO does not have a budget to fund part-time personnel to become in charge of CB matters in all RHCs requiring such support. The support the IHO can offer to the RHCs is limited. The IHB does have the capability to manage CB at the global scale of the organization, but would not be effective nor efficient if aiming at managing the details at a regional level. It seems that if would be much effective if nominated CBC Member, could also be appointed as RHC CB point of contact, working all regional CB matters, supporting their respective RHC Chairmen.

8.- It seems to be an accepted, extended and growing practice to have this official being appointed on a voluntary basis, taking care of the CB portfolio of the RHC. That is the case of the SWAtHC, EAHC and MACHC that have decided to establish regional CB committees. This practice seems that it is becoming more and more popular and some CBC Members have started to play also the role of the appointed focal point officer in charge of the RHC CB matters.

9.- PRO-18 has the support of the IHO. Opinions expressed at the Conference concur with the importance of having human resources being allocated to assist RHCs Chairmen in managing CB effort in their regions. This part-time allocation does not necessarily mean the provision of financial resources from the IHO budget or the CBFund to offer this assistance.

III.- The CBC opinion.

After having studied in detail this matter, it is the opinion of the CBC that, part-time allocation of personnel to assist RHCs Chairmen who have limited human resources with which to sustain the capacity building effort in the region should come primarily and ideally from an HO within the region. If that is not possible then the RHC might agree to request support to a neighbouring RHC that might wish to take that responsibility in the provision of assistance. Finally, and in the absence of any other viable alternative and despite its limited human resources availability a request of support could be requested to the IHB.
It is important for the effectiveness of the IHO CB management to have an accessible point of contact in each RHC, the responsibilities of which should be given directly and in detail by the concerned RHC. These contact points shall have the support of the RHCs; shall be nominated having in mind the importance of continuity; shall be in permanent contact with the corresponding RHC Chairman as well as with the CBC Chairman. Ideally should be a CBC member with access to the RHCs meetings.

IV.- The CBC proposal to the Chairmen of the RHCs.

It is proposed to insert a 2bis under the Adm. Resolution T1.3 **ESTABLISHMENT OF REGIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSIONS (RHC) with the following text:**

2 bis.- RHCs are recommended to establish an internal body to deal with CB matters and to designate a focal point to ensure continuity in the CB process. This part-time allocation to assist RHCs should come primarily and ideally from an HO within the region. If that is not possible then the RHC might agree to request support to a neighbouring RHC that might wish to take that responsibility in the provision of assistance.
These regional contact points, the responsibilities of which should be given directly and in detail by the concerned RHC, shall have the support of the RHCs; shall be nominated having in mind the importance of continuity; shall be in permanent contact with the corresponding RHC Chairman as well as with the CBC Chairman. Ideally should be a CBC member with access to the RHCs meetings.
In the absence of any other viable alternative and despite its limited human resources availability a request of support could be requested to the IHB.

V.- Action.

As Chairman of the CBC I kindly invite you to comment on this initiative by the 28th of February 2008, to hgorziglia@ihb.mc. If this initiative is supported, the CBC will require the IHB to seek MSs views in order to introduce the proposed text in the repertory of IHO Admistrative Resolutions.

Personal regards,

Hugo Gorziglia
Captain – Chilean Navy
IHB Director & CBC Chairman

Annexes:

"A" PRO 18 and comments from MSs.
"B" Recollection of the discussion had at the IHC.

ANNEX A

PRO 18 and comments from MSs.

PRO 18 – PROVISION OF REGIONAL STAFF OFFICERS FOR CAPACITY BUILDING EFFORT

Submitted by: United Kingdom

PROPOSAL

The Conference is requested to *ask the Capacity Building Committee in consultation with the RHCs,* ~~urge Member States~~ to consider the part-time allocation of personnel to act as Regional Staff Officers to assist those chairmen of Regional Hydrographic Commissions (RHCs) who have limited human resources with which to sustain the capacity building effort in their regions. It is suggested that the priorities for provision of such a post should be EAtHC, MACHC, NIOHC, SAIHC and SWPHC.

EXPLANATORY NOTE

1. The IHO Capacity Building Fund is now in receipt of generous donations from Member States, and the most serious constraint on activity in Work Programme 2 is availability of human resources. Whilst Member States have also been generous in supporting the IHO's Capacity Building programme with personnel with the appropriate skills, the demands are increasing as the revived strategy of the organization builds up momentum and more and more proposals are approved by the Capacity Building Committee (CBC).

2. Two particularly demanding aspects of capacity building effort are the planning and preparation of missions and training events, and the follow up to these activities. Much of the pressure falls on the RHC Chairmen. In many of the RHCs where the demands for capacity building assistance are high, the Chairmen are drawn from small Hydrographic Offices with few staff. The IHB Secretariat has limited capacity with which to support them.

3. During 2003-07, on completion of the initial stages of the project to update S-55, and in consistency with his role of Vice Chairman IHOCBC, the UK has made Captain M K Barritt RN available to the IHO on a part-time basis to support the capacity building programme. He has been able to take a substantial planning and follow up role in several major capacity building initiatives. This model is the basis of this proposal to the International Hydrographic Conference.

4. Capacity building efforts are likely to be concentrated in the EAtHC, MACHC, NIOHC, SAIHC and SWPHC regions, and it is recommended that the priority should be to provide Regional Staff Officers for them. Whilst desirable for liaison with the RHC Chairmen, it is not essential for a Regional Staff Officer to be based within a region. E-mail communication enables most planning and discussion to be conducted in a timely, cost-effective and proficient way.

5. The IMO has Regional Advisers in several of the regions listed at paragraph 4, and their co-operation has facilitated a number of recent IHO technical visit programmes. IHO Regional Staff Officers could work closely with their permanent IMO counter-parts, reinforcing the strategic partnership between the two organizations.

6. It would be desirable for personnel to be made available to the IHO for this role at nil cost. However, as the CBC Fund grows, consideration could be given to funding a part-time occupant, perhaps to take forward a specific activity or project. This employment would provide an excellent career development opportunity.

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MEMBER STATES' COMMENTS

AUSTRALIA

Australia supports the principles of this PRO 18. However, the scope of activity and other practical details such as the terms of employment, and roles and responsibilities of the regional staff have not been defined. It may be appropriate to task the CBC to consider this proposal further and if supported, the CBC should develop a business case for subsequent consideration by the IHO.

BRAZIL

The CBC activity in the scope of the IHO is recent and, within the Regional Hydrographic Commissions, it is in a very insipient stage. There is not yet a clear discussion to the use of the personnel.
Brazil considers that the subject must be studied by the Capacity Building Committee and, after its opinion, be voted by the Conference.

CROATIA

Croatia supports this proposal.
Besides supporting this proposal along with all the comments, it is our opinion that MBSHC should be added to the priority list of regional commissions requiring the assistance of regional staff officers, as it is the largest regional commission embracing hydrographic services at different stages of development. Some member states, by their level of organisation, budget, and hydrographic interest, are among leading HOs in the IHO, but many of them lack even minimum resources for the conduct of hydrographic service. The most obvious argument for that is the pressing problem of hosting the MBSHC Conference. For some member states in the region, due to objective restrictions, taking charge of the organisation and two-year chairmanship of the MBSHC Conference would involve serious financial and organisational problems. Another very important limiting factor is insufficient staff and inadequate competence for managing complex hydrographic issues on the MBSHC agenda. We believe that holding the Conference every year would even intensify this problem. We therefore propose to amend the proposal by adding the MBSHC to the priority list.

FINLAND

Finland supports the proposal. Finland believes that the availability of ENCs is a vital strategic issue to the IHO for the next 2 or 3 years. Thus all means for the fostering of ENC production should be utilized.

Finland proposes that the main issue in the TOR for the proposed Staff Officers will be the fostering of ENC production. The IHO may have one main "IHO ENC Coordinator" who should assist the development of the ENC production. He or she should follow up the agreed actions and report to Member States regularly. In addition there may be Regional Staff Officers on each area.

Finland believes that this is one concrete action to response to the requirement presented by the IMO NAV Sub-committee, WEND Committees and ECDIS Stakeholders' Forum.

FRANCE

Whilst approving the arguments which underlie this proposal, France is concerned by the risk that the establishment of Regional Staff Officers might incite the Regional Hydrographic Commission Chairmen not to fully devote themselves to their task. France therefore recommends that this proposal should not be submitted to the Conference for a formal decision, but should be referred to the Capacity Building Committee for a study, on a case by case basis, of the needs of the RHC and the possible solutions, in particular to examine their feasibility and impact on the operating costs of the IHO.

GREECE

Greece supports this proposal**.**

JAPAN

Japan could not catch the meanings of the proposal clearly and requests more detailed explanation on it, especially as of the budget point.

NETHERLANDS

The Netherlands have the following remarks regarding this proposal:

As a result of the IHO CBC initiatives many RHCs are now involved with the identification of regional CBC objectives with accompanying work plans. The importance to gain or maintain momentum in this development is undisputed. It should be a RHC responsibility to identify shortcomings in capacity to execute the approved RHC CBC work plan and to solve this first within the RHC and if appropriate finally in consultation with IHO CBC or IRCC. The proposal for a regional staff officer could be an option if endorsed by the RHC but not a prerequisite. This approach reflects the proposed future IRCC ToR, it keeps the RHC involved and responsible for the work plan and precludes duplication of work.

NORWAY

Whilst agreeing with the aim of this proposal, Norway believes that the Conference should restrict itself to task the CBC to consider the proposal as one of several means to achieve its goals, consulting also RHCs, and report back to Member States.

UNITED KINGDOM

The proposal was submitted by UK, therefore, we support.

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ANNEX B

Recollection of the discussion had at the IHC.

PRO 18 - PROVISION OF REGIONAL STAFF OFFICERS FOR CAPACITY BUILDING EFFORT

Captain BARRITT (United Kingdom), speaking in his capacity as Vice-Chairman of the IHO Capacity Building Committee (CBC), said that there appeared to be consensus that the proposal should be referred to the CBC, provided the CBC worked in consultation with the RHCs. He nevertheless hoped that the proposal would stimulate discussion of the demand for human resources entailed for the RHCs by Capacity Building. Task 2.3.2 of the proposed 5-year work programme for the period 2008-2012 (CONF.17/REP/01 Rev.1) called for technical workshops, seminars and short courses. Several of the comments on his delegation's proposal reflected a concern that it would make the work of the CBC more bureaucratic. However, no permanent or long-term posts were being proposed. On the contrary, the proposal sought to introduce a flexible means of seconding personnel, involving minimal cost in return for a substantial output. He urged the Conference to view the proposal as reflecting a mechanism that had been shown to work and could be replicated, instead of dwelling on the difficulties it might present.

Captain KAMPFER (South Africa) said his delegation supported the proposal. It was the RHCs and their chairmen that made the IHO work, but many RHCs had only limited human resources for capacity building.

Mr SPITTAL (New Zealand), speaking as the Chairman of the South West Pacific Hydrographic Commission, said his delegation endorsed the proposal by the United Kingdom. Many countries in the Pacific region had very limited human resources for hydrography. Even in his own country, the five staff available were also responsible for national hydrography. The terms and conditions for seconding personnel to act as regional staff officers should be carefully thought through.

Rear Admiral ANDREASEN (United States of America) said that if the RHCs were truly autonomous, it was improper for this Conference to decide that RHCs shall have regional staff officers from the CBC. A decision to second personnel should be an internal matter for the CBC to consider in conjunction with each RHC.

Captain IBARRA (Chile) congratulated the representative of the United Kingdom on his commitment, adding that his delegation supported the proposal.

Captain SUAREZ (Venezuela) also gave the proposal her full support. She suggested that discussions should be held in each RHC to determine its requirements and evaluate its available potential.

Commander PROAÑO SILVA (Ecuador), speaking as the Chairman of the South East Pacific Hydrographic Commission, said the proposal was a positive one, and should be extended to include capacity building with respect to rivers.

Dr. ESTIRI (Islamic Republic of Iran) also supported the proposal.

Rear Admiral RAO (India) said he was concerned at the prospect of extra bureaucracy in the work of the CBC. In the past 2 years there had been an expansion of capacity in the North Indian Ocean Hydrographic Commission, and several bilateral surveys had been carried out. India offered various possibilities for training, including a hydrographic school. Financial assistance would be required, but it would be preferable to train persons from the region rather than bringing in personnel from elsewhere.

Admiral ABRAMOV (Russian Federation) said the proposal should first be considered by the CBC, then by the RHCs and finally by Member States.

Captain QUIRÓS CEBRIÁ (Spain) supported the proposal. Attending the 2006 EAtHC Conference in Dakar, Senegal, enabled him to see for himself the situation in the countries of that region, and why they needed to channel human and financial resources efficiently in order to provide hydrographic capacity. He paid tribute to the work done by the current Vice-Chairman of the CBC.

Rear Admiral MONCRIEFF (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of his own delegation and as Chairman of the NIOHC, supported the proposal. The CBC had made significant progress, and when the current Vice-Chairman steps down much effort would be needed to sustain the momentum it had developed. The work of an RHC Chairman demanded time and effort. Support from IHO through an appropriate mechanism would be valuable and should not prove costly. However, if possible, it should come from within each region. Capacity building was an important IHO activity of benefit to the safety of life at sea, and should be made widely known. It would not be appropriate for IHO to shed its responsibility in that area.

Captain GORZIGLIA (Director IHB) said systematic capacity building activities had begun only in 2004, following the establishment of the Capacity Building Committee, which had been followed in 2005 by the Capacity Building Fund. The activities had been successful precisely because countries had offered support, for example by seconding staff. However, Member States must be open to innovation at a time when the Organization was being restructured, and more support for capacity building was needed in order to make the most of the progress achieved to date. The current Vice-Chairman of the CBC had done much to take matters forward in the RHCs but, as the previous speaker had said, steps must be taken to ensure that the activities continued after he stepped down. Clearly, the various RHCs had different needs; some required no additional support, while others required help in mobilizing resources and with tasks such as drafting letters. A flexible approach would be needed, and the proposal offered one way of proceeding.

Commodore ABULU (Nigeria), supporting the proposal, confirmed that some RHCs needed support so that the Chairman's workload could be lightened. He also felt that governments might pay more attention to hydrographic matters if support staff were connected with an international body such as IHO. The CBC should be asked to consider how the proposed scheme should operate.

Mr. OEI (Singapore), speaking as Chairman of the East Asia Hydrographic Commission, expressed his appreciation of the support received from the CBC in setting up a regional capacity building committee. Capacity building activities could not be sustained without a proper framework. It was obvious that the RHCs had different capacities and needs: the IHO should develop a more holistic and cooperative approach, the stronger nations supporting the less fortunate. Such an approach was especially important at a time when navigational issues, such as the IMO mandatory ECDIS carriage requirements, were becoming more prominent, leaving less time for hydrographic capacity building.

The PRESIDENT, on the basis of the written comments received, suggested that the words “to urge Member States” in PRO 18 should be replaced by “ask the Capacity Building Committee”.

Captain BARRITT (United Kingdom), speaking on behalf of the United Kingdom and as Vice-Chairman of the CBC, proposed that the replacement wording should read “ask the Capacity Building Committee, in consultation with the RHCs”. Future ideas must come from the RHCs, which would be responsible for delivering regional activities.

IGA BESSERO (France) supported the President’s proposal, as amended by the representative of the United Kingdom. It reflected the new Terms of Reference of the IRCC.

Rear Admiral ANDREASEN (United States of America) endorsed the remarks by the representative of the United Kingdom, and paid tribute to his work as Vice-Chairman of the CBC.

Dr. GRŽETIČ (Croatia) agreed with the remarks by the representatives of the United Kingdom and France.

The PRESIDENT said that, in the absence of any objection, he would take it that the Conference approved the amendment he had proposed, as further amended by the representative of the United Kingdom.

The amendment was adopted.

PRO 18, as amended, was adopted.

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