



OFFICE OF THE
**PALAU AUTOMATED LAND AND RESOURCE
INFORMATION SYSTEM (PALARIS)**

MINISTRY OF PUBLIC INFRASTRUCTURE, INDUSTRIES, AND COMMERCE

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To: Chairman
South-West Pacific Hydrographic Commission

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Subject: Republic of Palau National Report to SWPHC

The Republic of Palau is attending the 11th South-West Pacific Hydrographic Commission Conference by invitation after active engagement in the establishment of the Palau National Hydrographic Office (PNHO). At the 11th Conference, the Republic of Palau reported the following key points:

1. Two stakeholder meetings have taken place in Palau in 2011 towards the establishment of the PNHO. A Committee/Working Group was formed to handle administrative matters and to develop a proposal with the recommendations for the establishment of the PNHO.
2. The functions of the proposed hydrographic office are currently scattered among various agencies across four ministries in Palau.
3. The 11th SWPHC Conference and preceding technical workshop provided **A)** greater understanding of the critical urgency in establishing the PNHO towards meeting our international obligations to SOLAS and ensuring maritime safety in our waters; **B)** direction on a “way forward” for Palau in terms of setting priorities & arranging the functions of the PNHO accordingly; and **C)** a stronger network of relations with national commissions and other SIDS.
4. The following priorities will be recommended to Palau’s Committee/Working Group:
 - a) *Priority 1* – Determine Palau’s national priorities for establishing PNHO
 - Establish dialogues with appropriate agencies & potential support entities
 - U.S. NOAA/NGA through U.S. Embassy
 - SPC/SOPAC
 - b) *Priority 2* – Decide which regional hydrographic commission to establish membership in
 - c) *Priority 3* – Ascertain who Palau’s charting authority is and how sustainable that relationship is
 - In the meantime, update charts using our existing capacity
 - Establish relationship with NAVAREA Coordinator (Japan?)
5. The following capacity building activities were highlighted as priority needs for Palau
 - a) Land surveying skills to hydrographic surveying skills (upgrade)
 - b) GIS cartography to nautical cartography (upgrade)
 - c) Data management (expand existing network system and become web-based)

Background and Key Activities:

- Palau Extended Continental Shelf (eCS) Task Force was established to prepare Palau's eCS submission and address maritime delimitation issues that arose between Indonesia, Japan and Palau.
- The Office of the Palau Automated Land and Resources Information System (PALARIS), Palau's national GIS office, was mandated to assist as the technical and administrative arm of the eCS Task Force
- Palau's membership to SOLAS and UNCLOS prompted the Palau eCS Task Force to begin consideration of hydrographic surveying and charting requirements under SOLAS
- A number of communication exchanges between Palau and IHO regarding Palau's interest in regional IHO membership occurred in 2011
- Two stakeholder meetings took place in the latter part of 2011 prompted by technical visits by Mr. Chris Thorne (UKHO) and Capt. Robert Ward (IHO/IHB)
- The functions of a "typical" hydrographic office are scattered across several agencies within 4 key ministries and a number of semi-autonomous agencies
 - Ministry of State (MOS)
 - Ministry of Natural Resources, Environment and Tourism (MNRET)
 - Ministry of Public Infrastructure, Industries and Commerce (MPIIC)
 - Ministry of Justice (MOJ)
 - Environmental Quality Protection Board (EQPB/semi-autonomous)
 - Palau International Coral Reef Center (PICRC/semi-autonomous)
- An informal Committee was organized in early 2011 to establish the Palau National Hydrographic Office (PNHO)
 - A Working Group was formed to facilitate the administrative matters of the Committee and to develop a proposal regarding the structural arrangement and functions of the proposed PNHO
 - PALARIS was appointed to be Secretariat and Focal Point of the Committee/Working Group
- Palau has received training from IHO Capacity Building initiative in the past and is attending the SWPHC Conference for the first time by an invitation from the SWPHC via IHO.

Palau's Existing Capacity:

- Land Surveyors
 - Bureau of Lands & Surveys, MPIIC
 - at least 4 trained [could be more] and 2 certified land surveyors
 - some regional training in hydrography
- National GIS Technicians/Analysts
 - PALARIS, MPIIC
 - 6 GIS trained
 - Some national and regional training in hydrography

- Mr. Victorio Uherbelau, Special Advisor to the President on International Matters
 - eCS Task Force, Vice Chair (extensive historical institutional knowledge)
- International trade & technical assistance (foreign affairs)
 - Bureau of International Trade & Technical Assistance
- Mr. Jon Abrams, U.S. Consultant
 - Technical assistance for eCS/maritime delimitation negotiations
- Mr. Frank Ohlinger, U.S. Hydrographic Surveyor
 - Technical consultant
- Mr. Jerrold Knight, Retired/Independent Consultant/PALARIS Advisor
 - Initiated eCS technical applications for eCS submission
- Mr. David Idip, Jr., Independent Consultant/PALARIS Advisor
 - Remote Sensing expertise
 - GIS Analysis expertise
 - Ocean bathymetry expertise
- Marine Law/Maritime Authority (enforcement)
 - Bureau of Marine Law, MOJ
 - Harbor Master/Pilot
- Shipping & trade (regulatory)
 - Bureau of Commerce and Trade, MPIIC
- Marine resource management (regulatory/enforcement)
 - Bureau of Marine Resources, MNRET
- Environmental protection (regulatory/enforcement)
 - EQPB
- Oceanography (science/research)
 - PICRC