

12th CHRIS MEETING
Valparaiso, Chile, 23-25 October 2000

5th WEND Meeting, IHB, Monaco, 16-17 March 2000
(Neil Guy, IHB)

The 5th WEND Meeting was held in the Conference Room of the IHB from 16-17 March 2000. Due to the fact that the Meeting was held immediately prior to the 2nd IHO Extraordinary Conference, the attendance was the highest ever for a WEND meeting. The Chairman was Dr Peter EHLERS, RAdm Neil GUY represented the IHB and acted as Secretary and the Rapporteurs were Dr Lee ALEXANDER and Ing en Chef Michel HUET. Delegates from 22 Member States attended.

Discussions during the Meeting highlighted the ongoing concern for the availability of ENC's and the development of RENCs in accordance with the WEND Principles. Although it was reported that much progress had been made in recent months in the production of ENCs, there were still a number of issues that had to be resolved that fell within the scope of the WEND Committee.

Various methods of distribution were discussed as well as the appropriate bodies and forums to promote ECDIS, and ENC production. It was very apparent that the solutions were not easy and the roles of the National Hydrographic Offices and industry were debated. It was generally agreed that greater co-operation between the two disciplines was vital. It was hoped that the IHO/Industry Interface Meeting, scheduled to be held after the WEND Meeting, would encourage position initiatives for co-operation. The activities of PRIMAR, which is the first operational RENC, were presented. The progress in establishing 'virtual RENCs' in the Mediterranean, Australasia, and the Far East were also discussed.

Technical ENC matters of general interest to WEND were reported on. These included the form in which ENCs should be delivered to the user, the updating of ENCs, Security systems and encryption and the various interim measures undertaken while full ENC coverage was not available. Other matters, such as financial policies, bilateral arrangements and other matters related to the reimbursement for the provision of data were debated.

The distribution and maintenance of ENCs was and is a difficult process but it was obvious that much progress had been made since the last WEND Meeting. It was vital however that the smaller issues still outstanding are addressed and the production of ENCs and the promotion of the structures necessary to distribute officially electronic charts and publications continue to be at a premium.