

INTER-REGIONAL COORDINATION COMMITTEE

Informal Guidelines for the Preparation of IRCC Meetings

Executive Summary: This document is intended to assist Regional Hydrographic Commissions (RHCs) and Member States to organize the meetings of the IRCC, RHCs and IRCC subordinate bodies.

Related Document: CL 96/2012 dated 15 November - *IHO Programme of Events - Longcast and Request for States to Consider Hosting Meetings.*

1. Introduction

This document was approved by IRCC5 held in Wollongong (Australia) on 3-4 June 2013.

2. Guidelines

The order is defined by the process, generally followed, when organising an IRCC, RHC or IRCC subordinate body meeting. The entries in **bold** are considered more significant.

Consider implications of hosting conferences	If a MS wishes to host, it should take into account the RHC statutes (funding and responsibility) and limitations that maybe imposed on delegates gaining entry to the country e.g. Visas. Difficulties in obtaining visas have previously blocked delegates attending RHCs.
Consider implications of becoming Chair or Vice Chair of the commission	MS wishing to take on the role of chair or vice chair should check the statutes as to what the role entails e.g. Providing secretary during their term in office, other meeting attendance such as IRCC, etc and responsibilities to be covered between meetings.
Provide conference dates as early as possible	It is advisable to provide conference dates as far in advance as possible to ensure Administrations are able to manage budgets and diary clashes for National Hydrographers are kept to a minimum.
Set deadlines	The invitation should be clearly indicate the deadlines for registration, hotel reservations, and the documents to be forwarded to the conferences.
Encourage all nations in region to attend	All nations within a RHC region should be encouraged to attend meetings, even if not IHO Member States. Meeting participation would highlight the hydrographic work being carried out in the regions, to which they could potentially contribute.
Invite chair/INT coordinator from adjoining commissions to conferences	Attendance by adjoining RHC Chairs will ensure that issues of common concern can be more widely discussed across regions and assist greater cooperation.

Organisation Participation	Regional organisations can find RHC participation particularly beneficial; duplication of effort, project overlaps or funding initiatives may be identified. It also provides an ideal opportunity to update regional organisations on the progress of hydrographic matters and/or issues in the region.
	A good example was the attendance by REMPEITC (Regional Marine Pollution Emergency Information and Training Centre for the Wider Caribbean) at 13 th MACHC. MS were unaware of a REMPEITC GIS, which could feed into a MACHC WG GIS project.
Stakeholder Participation	Stakeholder (users of products) involvement provides direct feedback to product producers and can highlight areas of increased traffic flow or development areas.
	Example: Representatives from the cruise ship industry, some of which assess ports for their suitability to host ships, attended 12 th MACHC. Some Member States were interested in their views for port planning/development purposes. The cruise ship industry representatives were updated on ENC issues and coverage, which they also found very beneficial.
Industry Participation	The IHB would like to see the use of Industry experience to promote greater interaction as well as educating MS on developments in the hydrographic industry.
Use of conference hotel as conference venue	It is sometimes beneficial to have the hotel and conference venue at the same location. Travelling from one location to another can be time consuming and costly.
Provision of meeting and events timetable	This enables delegate's home administration to contact them in breaks, if required, and promotes punctuality.
Wi-Fi in conferences	With today's technology it is advisable to have Wi-Fi in the conference room. This can be included in the conference rate for the hotel.
Provision of a "Dress Code" for the conference	Important for naval officers to take the correct uniform. Hosts/Chair to bear in mind the implications to delegates of carrying a full dress uniform abroad or being embarrassed by not having the correct attire, or in naval parlance 'rig'.
Social events	Social events prove beneficial for networking and encouraging cooperation between delegates. This also provides the host with an opportunity to showcase their country, if desired. An icebreaker prior to the conference has shown to be particularly beneficial.
Provision of meeting documents in adequate timescale	Experience has shown that the more information that can be provided to delegates prior to the meeting the greater the attendance and engagement at the meeting.

Report on latest IRCC and HSSC meetings	Provision of reports from the latest IRCC and HSSC meeting to update delegates on progress but will also encourage wider participation.
Inclusion of IRCC and HSSC actions	The agenda should incorporate actions from IRCC and HSSC and look to provide feedback where applicable
Include IHO standing agenda items	RHCs should include suggested IHO standing agenda items at their meetings (C-55, MSDI, International Chart Coordination WGs, etc).
Provision of an annotated agenda	The provision of an annotated agenda allows the delegate to fully understand and prepare a brief for each agenda item.
Document numbering	Desirable to have document numbers linked to agenda topics and clearly labelled for any revisions.
Publication of meeting documents	Meeting documents should be forwarded to IHB for inclusion in the RHC website, once published inform MS.
Discussion of wider maritime topics at meetings	An example of this would be work/regulations of the IMO such as Voluntary IMO Member State Audit Scheme (VIMSAS) and Navigational Telex (NAVTEX) services.
Active participation at conferences	Experience has shown that at many RHC conferences a number of MS attend but do not participate. Ways of actively involving these MS should be encouraged.
Forum/workshop attached to conference	Experience has shown that including a forum/workshop before/during/after the conference to discuss specific issues/topics relevant to the region has proved beneficial and educational.
Encourage the use of Working Groups (WGs)	WGs can be used to progress the work of the commission at a technical level during and between conferences. Good examples of this exist within many RHCs.
Use of teleconferences, videoconferences	The progression of both commission and WG work between conferences is greatly increased when telephone/video conferencing facilities have been regularly utilised.
Make RHC information widely available	The posting of RHC documents and information on the IHO website should be a matter of course for all RHCs. It enables other commissions to see your good work and learn from your experiences.
Encourage MS to be involved in the IHO WGs	IHO WGs only work well with active participation, especially in the technical WGs. MS active involvement within WGs will help them to shape future standards e.g. S-100. The RHC may mandate one MS to represent the commission on WGs eg. WEND-WG

Regional cooperation for projects	RHC involvement in regional initiatives and projects can lead to an increase in efficiency and reduction in costs and resources – ‘gather once use many times’.
Provide proposals to IRCC and HSSC	Encourage RHC to provide joint feedback to both IRCC and HSSC to drive their future work and considerations.
Use of extraordinary meetings when circumstances allow	The use of relevant gatherings can be used to progress RHC business in the form of extraordinary meetings, a good example of this were the extraordinary RHC meetings held at the recent IHC.
