

Via email

Tallinn, 10 December 2013

From: Tõnis Siilananrusk, PAC Chair

To: Peter Kortenoeven, IC-ENC SC Chair

Copy: IHB, WEND-WG Chair, RHSG Members, NHS-UKHO-AHS (as RENC operators), PAC Members

Dear Peter,

First of all, let me thank you for your kind participation in the PAC20 open session in Gdańsk on 21 November 2013 together with James Harper. It was highly appreciated by PAC members.

During this session, the outcome of the IC-ENC Steering Committee on the IHO-WENC concept was discussed in depth, as well as your letter dated 11 October 2013. This note is a summary of PAC Members views on this subject for your consideration.

1. PAC Members consider that RENCs are, probably more than before, an important tool of the global IHO strategy for enhancing safety at sea. As an example, PAC Members stressed the fact that RENCs will be playing an increasing role in achieving the development of **an ENC worldwide recognized and seamless database**¹, for instance in accordance with §1.7.1 of the new **IHO Guidelines for the implementation of the WEND principles** (“...*The RHC may seek the assistance of a Regional ENC Coordination Centre (RENC) to assist in development of this assessment and should take a proactive approach with the ENC Producer Member States, to resolve overlap issues within the region...*”).
2. Considering the recent creation of the RHSG (former IC-ENC-PAC Co-operation Committee), it is important to report to you that PAC Members remain committed to support the development of “**the most appropriate RENC structure for the IHO to achieve the WEND vision**” (RHSG ToRs). This involvement follows a joint presentation given at the XVIIIth IHC where IC-ENC and PRIMAR stated that “*The more is achieved in consistency and harmonization at the RENC (HOs) level, the less the End-User Service Providers (private sector, commercial HO activities) have to assume official HO responsibilities*”. PAC Members would appreciate that this vision is still shared by IC-ENC Members.
3. All the matters of concern on the development to the IHO WENC concept, raised in your letter, were carefully considered by PAC Members. As a matter of fact, it is agreed that

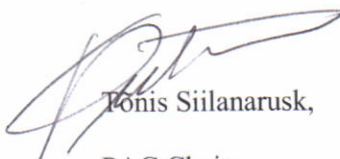
¹ IHO Strategic Objective.

the operational implementation of the concept might need some further work, and an experimentation phase. However, it is in the opinion of PAC Members that, on the principles, there is nothing new that could worry the IC-ENC Members: the RHSG is already set up, and equivalent in its composition to the so-called WENC Management Board. The ToRs envisaged by the RHSG for this “management board” do not exceed the level of authority of a guiding body in the framework of WEND principles and guidelines, which indeed should be first approved by IHO. There is therefore no extra responsibility for the IHB, but the only recognition that RENCs should be part of the IHO toolbox, such as RHCs for instance.

4. As a conclusion, PAC Members take note of the IC-ENC Steering Committee position but consider that tasks given to the RHSG², subordinated to the WEND-WG, should be pursued until completion, then reported to IRCC6/EIHC5. As presented at the IVth EIHC and at the XVIIIth IHC, PAC Members consider that the implementation of the WEND Principles is the cornerstone of the IHO credibility in relation to IMO requirements (SOLAS, SN Cr.). PAC members believe that RENCs, which have been built thanks to the initiative and efforts of some HOs, must now be instrumental in this implementation.
5. As a consequence, PAC members believe that there is an urgent need for setting up the foundations of an IHO-approved RENC structure as part of the IHO toolbox, because it is the only way to meet, in the long term, the increasing requirements of the marine digital /e-navigation world. It is essential for achieving the IHO (members) commitment to establish a recognized, seamless, high quality and comprehensive WEND database.

Finally, PAC Members consider that if it is not possible to reach a joint agreement on the WENC concept as depicted in, or derived from the document produced by the RHSG prior to the IRCC6/EIHC5, then it will be necessary to take note and give the evidences, at the Conference. As a consequence, the process for coordinated approach for the provision of a **comprehensive and IHO-approved ENC database** to the mariners would suffer a serious blow, setting back the timeline for the RHSG and making it close to impossible to jointly report on formally introducing the RENC’s into the IHO structure as part of the WEND-principles. PAC Members expect from IC-ENC Members that they share PAC’s concerns on these potential consequences, and hope IC-ENC MS will therefore revise their position.

Yours sincerely,



Tonis Siilanas,
PAC Chair

² Whom IC-ENC SC Chair is a member.