

Report on the meeting of the International Harmonization Group on Inland ECDIS (IEHG)

(Rostock, Germany from 5 to 9 September, 2005)

The meeting was held in the premises of BSH, Rostock, Germany.

One and main question was included into agenda: Development of the final draft of Encoding Guide for Inland ENC and its presentation to 17th IHO CHRIS meeting that was holding at the same time in Rostock.

In accordance with the decisions of the IEHG in St. Louis the European partners of IEHG have developed a proposal for a common Encoding Guide for Inland ENCs based on the existing Encoding Guide of the USACE (US Army Corp of Engineers).



The proposal covered all the additional objects and attributes of the European Inland ECDIS standard and the developments within COMPRIS. The USACE Encoding Guide and the comments from Russia have shown, however, that some additional objects and attributes of the current European Inland ECDIS Standard can be replaced by pure S-57 features. A proposal for the necessary changes in the European standard has been drawn up in the meantime on the basis of the Encoding Guide.

The European proposal for the Encoding Guide has been presented to the American partners at the RTCM meeting in May 2005. After a thorough discussion at this occasion and on the OEF, second draft of the Encoding Guide (EG) has been produced and presented for discussion in Rostock. It is intended to present the final draft to the European Commission at the final conference of COMPRIS (25th October, Rotterdam) and to the European Inland ECDIS expert group (which has to adopt the proposed replacement of the section “Use of the object catalogue” of the standard by the EG and the other changes in the standard) at its meeting on November 7th and 8th in Budapest.

After the detailed discussions of EG and presenting it to the ECDIS stakeholder day of the CHRIS meeting positive results were provided.

The CHRIS meeting of IHO has decided to replace the planned Edition 4 of S-57 by a new S-100, which will not enter into force before about 2012, but the new data format and the registry with individual registers will be available in 2007. An edition 3.1.1 of S-57 is planned as an intermediate solution.

On the initiative of American participant of IEHG Mr. Lee Alexander, CHRIS has decided to use Inland ENC's as a testbed for S-100. The IEHG will be invited to take part in the meetings of TSMAD. This is much more than it had expected and it can be seen more or less as a guarantee, that S-100 will be compatible with IENC's.

During five days IEHG in series page-by-page considered EG. The procedure for future changes and amendments of EG and a form for EG change requests were developed during the meeting.

Finally, the following time schedule have been adopted:

- Finalization of the editing the EG by the results of discussions in Rostock, preparation of 5th version of EG – 16.09.05.
- Last comments and proposals to EG can be posted on the IEHG discussion forum on OEF until 30.09.05.
- A veto against one of these proposals can be posted until 07 10 2005.
- All the proposals, which have not been vetoed will be included in the official Version 1.0 of the EG.
- Version 1.0 will be published until 14 10 2005 on the OEF as PDF, together with a request form for future changes.
- Registration of all new objects/attributes/attribute values at the OEF will be done until 14 10 2005.
- The discussion forums of IEHG and Inland ECDIS on the OEF will be merged after 14 10 2005.
- The contacts with TSMAD will be coordinated using the OEF.

- The next meeting of IEHG is planned for autumn 2006, most probably in the US; main topics will be the discussion of change requests and the set up of the Inland Register.
- The European partners are going to provide updated proposals for the European Inland ECDIS Standard until 21 10 2005.
