



INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC ORGANIZATION
MESO AMERICAN & CARIBBEAN SEA HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION



MACHC Letter 07 / 2009
28 January 2009

To: MACHC Member States and Observers

Subject: **SHOM Structure**

Reference: MACHC Action List 9-11.

Dear Hydrographer,

1. The 9th MACHC Action List 9-11 states "MACHC Members are invited to know the new SHOM structure, and take note of it as a reference to those Hydrographic Services which have two kinds of responsibility, both civil and military".

For the knowledge of those who couldn't be present at the 9th Meeting, I'm sending as an Annex a small text which introduces the subject. Further information may be obtained with Mrs. Gwladys Theuillon <gwladys.theuillon@shom.fr>, the French Person of Contact at MACHC.

Yours sincerely,

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MACHC Chairman

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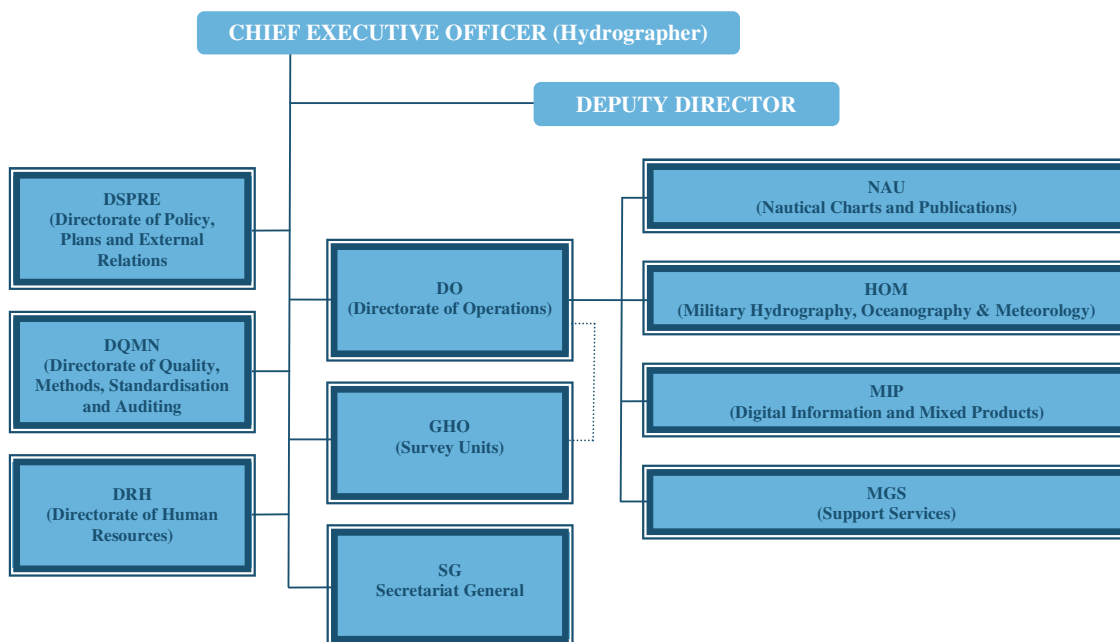
Note: To improve the Commission's effectiveness, this letter is provided only by e-mail.

Annex to MACHC Letter 07/2009

SHOM's new status

Since the 11th of May 2007 SHOM, whilst keeping its name, has become an *Établissement Public*, i.e. a national establishment endowed with a legal personality independent from the French Government. The new decree defines SHOM's missions and responsibilities which embrace all areas placed under French jurisdiction or where France has international commitments such as the MACHC area. The new decree is included in the IHO M-16 publication.

With most SHOM staff now located in Brest, the new organisation shown below was set up in late June 2007.



The change in status in 2007 finalises more than ten years of joint efforts undertaken by the Navy and the Service to ensure that SHOM continues to respond to new situations and meet the needs of the current context. The change was decided by the Defence Minister in 2006 and was made official by decree no. 2007-800 of 11 May 2007, which transformed SHOM, until then a service of the Navy, into an administrative public establishment under the direction of the Defence Minister. SHOM is managed by a Chief Executive Officer (Hydrographer) appointed by decree and supervised by a Board of Directors of 20 members representing a broad section of the French administration (Prime Minister, ministers of budget, defence, environment, industry, overseas and transport, several Government services and agencies). The new decree strengthens the traditional ties between SHOM and the Navy by having the Board of Directors chaired by the Chief of Naval Staff and providing the survey vessels onboard which SHOM's Survey Units operate.

SHOM's *raison d'être* is to make available qualified information depicting the physical maritime environment, coastal and offshore, to meet the requirements of civilian and military mariners as efficiently as possible. That objective is reached through three main missions stipulated by the new

decree.

- First of all, SHOM is the **French national hydrographic** service appointed to collect and check all the information necessary or merely useful to ensure the safety of maritime navigation. SHOM either disseminates that information or controls its dissemination. SHOM is therefore responsible for carrying out or supervising the necessary surveys in the French EEZ (11 million of km²) in order to produce and update the official nautical charts and publications covering those areas. Additionally, SHOM is also the de facto charting authority in many other areas. That activity conducted for the benefit of other coastal States is progressively formalized through bilateral arrangements.
- Then, SHOM is responsible for providing **hydrographic, oceanographic and meteorological (HOM) support** for military operations as well as for the development and use of weapon systems. In particular SHOM provides tools and services for the measurement, the description and the forecast of HOM environment. Those tools and services are tailored to the various types of warfare (underwater, above water, mine and amphibious warfare) and adapted to the sensors in-use (active and passive, radars, sonars, and infrared sensors).
- Finally, techniques and skills developed for and involved in those two missions are also made available to **support maritime public policies** and meet the various requirements of other ministries and public entities. For instance, SHOM provides expertise in maritime limits and boundaries to the Ministry of European and Foreign Affairs and is also tasked to develop a high resolution digital terrain elevation model in cooperation with the French National Geographic Institute (IGN) to support integrated coastal management (Litto3D®). SHOM is also officially designated to be part of the crisis response team in the event of a maritime pollution. Using its automated tide gauge network, SHOM contributes to natural disaster response programmes and, along with civilian partners, is heavily involved in ocean modelling including its extension to coastal areas.

Work continues on the contract of objectives and means of the establishment under the aegis of the Prime Minister's Secretariat for the Sea, according to the guidelines set by the Board.