

STATUTES

as amended by the X Conference of the Commission in Bridgetown, Barbados. (November 2009)

ARTICLE 1: OF THE COMMISSION

- a) The Meso American-Caribbean Sea Hydrographic Commission has been constituted in conformity with Administrative Resolution T1.3 of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO), included as Annex 1, and shall be governed according to these Statutes.
- b) The geographic Region covered by the Commission shall be that defined by the IHO INT Charting Scheme Region B, included as Annex 2, hereafter referred as "the Region".

ARTICLE 2: OF THE MEMBERS

- a) Full Members of the Commission shall be IHO Member States within the Region who are signatories of these Statutes.
- b) Associate Membership is open to any non-IHO Member State within the Region who is a signatory of these Statutes. Other Members of the IHO who contribute to the safety of navigation through their activities in the fields of hydrography, nautical charting or nautical information in the Region and are signatories to these Statutes may be accepted as Associate Members. Associate Members have the same rights and obligations as the Full Members of the Commission except the right to vote or to be elected Chair.
- c) The Chair shall also invite other IHO Member States who are not signatories to these Statutes but who contribute to the safety of navigation by their activities in the fields of hydrography, nautical charting or nautical information in the Region, or organisations active in the Region to attend as Observers.

ARTICLE 3: OF THE AIMS

- a) The Commission, which is an integral part of the IHO and which promotes the aims of the Organization at the regional level, shall have an advisory, scientific and technological character; it shall not exert any authority over the Hydrographic Services or institutions responsible for hydrography and navigation of the Member countries and activities shall not extend to matters concerning international political issues.
- b) Particular aims of the Commission are:
 - 1 To promote technical co-operation and training in the domain of hydrographic surveying, marine cartography and nautical information.
 - 2 To examine in its area of interest, matters with which the IHO is concerned, avoiding any interference with the prerogatives of the International Hydrographic Bureau (IHB) and of any other bodies set up by the IHO.
 - 3 To stimulate all countries of the Region to expand their hydrographic activities and to encourage them to seek advice and technical assistance from the IHB and other organisations in order to strengthen their hydrographic capabilities.
 - 4 To facilitate the exchange of information related to surveys, research and/or scientific and technical development to assist in planning and organizing the hydrographic activities in the widest sense of the aims, but without interference in national responsibilities.
 - 5 To implement the INT and ENC Chart Schemes for the Region and to monitor their suitability.

6 To carry out studies and projects through working groups of the Commission or as a working group of the IHO when deemed necessary.

7 To identify the MACHC Representative(s) to the IHO Council, as outlined in the guidance provided in Annex 3 to the Statutes".

ARTICLE 4: OF THE ORDINARY CONFERENCE

- a) The Commission shall meet in ordinary Conference in a country of the Region at least twice between two successive ordinary sessions of the International Hydrographic Conference (IHC).
- b) The Members shall be represented at the Conferences by the heads of the Hydrographic Authorities or their nominees or, where such services do not exist, by heads of national authorities responsible for hydrography and navigation.
- c) The presence of at least one-half (½) of the Full Members of the Commission shall constitute the necessary quorum to hold the meeting.
- d) An invitation to attend the Conference shall always be sent to the Directing Committee of the IHB.
- e) The Chair shall invite those countries of the Region that are not Members of the Commission and the Coordinators of adjacent INT-Chart Regions to send Representatives to attend the Commission Conferences as Observers. Any Members may propose to the Chair the invitation of technical experts as Observers. Observers can participate in the discussions and in the working groups set up by the Commission but shall not have voting rights.
- f) The host country may limit the number of participants to not more than two per country pending availability of facilities.

ARTICLE 5: OF THE CHAIR AND VICE CHAIR

- a) The Conferences of the Commission are conducted by the Chair with the assistance of the Vice Chair.
- b) The Chair and Vice Chair of the Commission shall be from a Full Member State of the Commission, elected on a rotational basis. Under normal circumstances, the term for the Chair and Vice Chair will be two years. If the period between Conferences exceeds two years, the term will extend until the end of the next Conference.
- c) At the conclusion of a Conference, Full Members will offer suggestions regarding the election of a new Chair and Vice Chair. In order to assure the continuity, it is suggested that the Vice Chair be elevated to the position of Chair for the next period.
- d) If the Chair, or the Vice Chair, is unable to officiate at the Conference, he or she shall be replaced by his or her Representative.
- e) The incoming Chair shall take office three months after the conclusion of an ordinary Conference.

ARTICLE 6: OF THE SEATS OF THE CONFERENCES

- a) At the end of each conference the Full Members desirous of hosting the following conference shall put forward their candidatures. Proposals for holding the conference in a country of an Associate Member may also be considered. Where no other compelling circumstances exist, priority shall be given to a Full Member state which has not yet hosted a conference, or to the one which did so the longest time ago.

- b) The host country will assist with the arrangement of authorizations and visas, so as to facilitate attendance at the Conference.

ARTICLE 7: OF THE CONFERENCE

- a) The Chair shall prepare the Provisional Agenda in conjunction with the Members at least two (2) months before its opening. The Provisional Agenda shall contain all standard items required by the IHO (e.g., National Reports, INT Charts and ENC Cell scheme). The first item shall be the Chair's report on the activities of the Commission since the last Conference. All Conference Documents shall be made available on the IHO/MACHC web site at least one month prior to the meeting.
- b) Members' Proposals to be included on the Agenda of a Conference should be sent to the Chair for the next Conference at least four (4) months in advance of the date agreed for the commencement of the Conference.
- c) The Agenda shall be adopted by the Commission at the beginning of each Conference.
- d) The Commission can modify the order of discussion of the different items of the Agenda during the Conference.
- e) Proposals of Members not included in the Agenda shall be submitted to the Chair and, with the agreement of the Members, shall be added to the Agenda for consideration.
- f) Each Full Member has one vote and votes shall be indicated by a show of hands.
- g) At the end of each Conference, the Chair shall present the Resolutions and Decisions taken in the working language of the Commission. Twenty (20) days after the close of the Conference, the Chair will submit to the Full Members and Participants a report, (in the working language of the Commission) which will include those Resolutions and Decisions, as well as any supporting information submitted. Full Members shall report any objections of the report within twenty (20) days. Any objections to the report shall be made by electronic mail.
- h) Between Conferences, if necessary, subjects may be discussed and decided by correspondence in the MACHC working language.
- i) In preparation for, during and between Conferences, the Chair shall be assisted by the Secretary appointed by him/her. The duties of the Secretary include the following:
 - 1 To collate, three (3) months before the Conference, all proposals from the Full Members, to be included in the Agenda.
 - 2 To forward proposals and the provisional Agenda to the Chair and Vice Chair at least two (2) months prior to the Conference.
 - 3 To prepare and distribute a list of participants at least one (1) month prior to the Conference.
 - 4 To receive and to forward any requirements from the Members to the Chair and Vice Chair as appropriate.
 - 5 To prepare for the Chair, a report of the Conference within twenty (20) days following its conclusion, including the discussions resolutions and decisions taken, as well as any supportive information that was submitted.
 - 6 To prepare the final report and forward it to the IHB.
 - 7 To assure with the host country, the nominal organization of the Conference.

ARTICLE 8: OF RESOLUTIONS AND DECISIONS

- a) The resolutions and decisions of the Conference shall usually be reached by consensus among Full Members. If consensus cannot be reached, resolutions and decisions shall be adopted by a simple majority of the Full Members present. In case of an equal number of votes (tie), a second vote shall take place after listening to the comments of the Representative of the IHB.
- b) The Chair each day shall prepare a written text of the decisions taken on each item of the Agenda and shall see to its distribution to all the attendees present for the next day.
- c) Each Full Member has only one vote.
- d) At the end of the Conference, the Chair shall read the text of the resolutions and decisions taken. All decisions become operative immediately.

ARTICLE 9: OF CORRESPONDENCE

- a) The Chair shall send, within two months after the closing of the Conference, one (1) copy of the Draft Report regarding the discussions and decisions taken during the Conference to each of the Full Members for its approval, and for Associate Members and Observers to comment. The Full Members shall send back their approval or any amendments within two months after its receipt. Any objection shall be resolved by correspondence. A signature page shall be circulated to obtain final approval.
- b) A copy of the Final Report of the Conference shall be sent to the Full Members, Associate Members, Observers and the IHB.

ARTICLE 10: OF EXTRAORDINARY CONFERENCES

- a) The Chair may convene an Extraordinary Conference of the Members of the Commission when their Representatives are assembled for a session of the IHC, inviting others qualified to attend as Observers.
- b) In the case of urgent matters, which cannot be treated by correspondence nor can be delayed for the next Conference, the Chair, in agreement with the Full Members may convene an Extraordinary Conference.

ARTICLE 11: OF EXPENSES

- a) The Chair and the host country shall be responsible for the organisation of the Conferences and shall pay the expenses except those described below.
- b) Travelling, hotel and per diem expenses of the delegates shall be defrayed by their respective organizations.

ARTICLE 12: OF THE STATUTES

- a) The IHB shall be the custodian of these Statutes.
- b) The modification of the Statutes requires the approval of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the Full Members of the Commission.
- c) If modifications to the present Statutes are agreed by those Full Members attending a Conference, but they do not receive the approval of at least two-thirds (2/3) of the Full Members as required, the Chair shall submit the proposal(s) by mail to all Full Members with

information copies to Associate Members. Final approval shall be subject to the provisions of Article 12b. All approved modifications to the Statutes shall then appear in the report of the Conference.

ARTICLE 13: OF THE LANGUAGE OF THE COMMISSION

- a) The working language of the Commission shall be English.

**Signatures:
Full Members**

BRAZIL	Name Title/Post
COLOMBIA	Name Title/Post
CUBA	Name Title/Post
FRANCE	Name Title/Post
GUATEMALA	Name Title/Post
JAMAICA	Name Title/Post
MEXICO	Name Title/Post
NETHERLANDS	Name Title/Post
SURINAME	Name Title/Post
TRINIDAD & TOBAGO	Name Title/Post
UNITED KINGDOM	Name Title/Post
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA	Name Title/Post
VENEZUELA	Name Title/Post

Associate Members

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA	Name Title/Post
BARBADOS	Name Title/Post
EL SALVADOR	Name Title/Post
GUYANA	Name Title/Post
HAITI	Name Title/Post
HONDURAS	Name Title/Post
NICARAGUA	Name Title/Post
PANAMA	Name Title/Post
SANTA LUCIA	Name Title/Post
ST. KITTS AND NEVIS	Name Title/Post

