

September 5, 2019

To: Kathryn Ries  
MACHC Chair  
Deputy Director  
NOAA Office of Coast Survey

From: L.L Dorst (Leendert)  
Deputy Hydrographer of the Kingdom of the Netherlands

Marc van der Donck requested me to inform you in his absence about the planning for RNLN Disaster Relief in the Bahamas. This is in your role as MACHC chair, in line with the relevant IHO resolution and MACHC CL 6/2019. I am also informing UKHO in their role as PCA for the Bahamas.

Currently, RNLN participates in the military exercise Caribbean Coast (CaCo) with HNLMS Johan de Witt (JWIT). As part of that exercise, 2 hydrographic officers and 2 MetOc officers were added to its crew. They have a mobile hydrographic package (MHP) on board, which includes a single-beam echo sounder. This can be mounted on any vessel of opportunity, like a landing craft on board. There are also Dutch Marines on board for additional protection. Also, one of our hydrographic survey vessels, HNLMS Snellius (SNEL) recently arrived in the area, for regular hydrographic work. SNEL has 4 hydrographic officers on board, an MHP with a multi-beam echo sounder, a RHIB and a Survey Boat.

We expect that a decision will be made today if JWIT and/or SNEL will be withdrawn from their planned activities, in favor of Disaster Relief in/around the Bahamas. We will keep you updated about this. A possible scenario is that RNLN will offer capacity for Disaster Relief (including hydrographic aspects) to the Bahamas from around 11 September until around the end of September.

The Hydrographic Office is not involved in the decision making process about redeployment. We do have a support role once the decision has been made. Any requests for assistance or other coordination efforts should go through the regular military and diplomatic channels. The contact details for additional communication are as we specified in our answer to MACHC CL6/2019, which I include again for your convenience.

Please contact me with any questions you may have until Marc's return (23 September), with Marc and Toine Barten in cc. Also, I will be visiting UKHO on Tuesday 10 September, which may be an opportunity to discuss further with the PCA.

Kind regards,