

Report of the BSHC Representative to the WENDWG

Report on WENDWG Activities and Key Developments

1. Introduction

The Worldwide ENC Database Working Group (WENDWG) plays a central role in coordinating global electronic navigational chart (ENC) coverage and supporting the transition to the S-100 era. This report summarizes the main outcomes from the WENDWG15 meeting (Wollongong, Australia, February 2025) and highlights issues of relevance to the Baltic Sea Hydrographic Commission (BSHC). In addition, it includes some updates on actions taken after WENDWG15.

The WENDWG is chaired by Mr Jens Schröder-Fürstenberg (Germany), seconded by Mr Jason Scholey, Vice Chair (UK). Assistant Director Eric Langlois represented the IHO Secretariat as WENDWG Secretary. Delegates from 21 Member States.

2. S-100 Readiness Status

S-100 readiness Status still remains challenging in many RHCs. Survey Results (2024):

- 64 out of 104 IHO Member States responded (60% response rate).
- Average progress towards IMO's 2026 S-100 ECDIS target (SPI 1.3.1) is 43%.
- Production priorities: S-101 and S-102, followed by S-104, S-111 and S-124.
- 23 member states plan to produce S-128 (catalogue) datasets.
- Regional readiness varies:
 - Very good: BSHC, USCHC
 - Good: EAthC
 - Intermediate: SWAtHC, MACHC, NSHC
 - Low: HCA, SAIHC, MBSHC, EAHC, SWPHC, ARHC, NIOHC, RSAHC
 - No info: SEPRHC
- INTogIS III is expected to replace much of the survey process by providing regional implementation data directly.

3. Key Structural and Policy Documents

The WENDWG has consolidated several important guiding documents:

1. WEND-100 Principles and Guidelines – finalized and presented to IRCC for release.

- IRCC17 endorsed the revised “Guidelines on the Implementation of the WEND100 Principles” to be approved under IHO resolution 01/2021.

- The revised guidelines will be submitted by the IRCC Chair to C-9 for endorsement

2. S-11 Part C – provides harmonisation guidance for Phase 1 products (S-101, S-102, etc.); final version expected at IRCC18.

3. ENDS (*Electronic Navigational Data Service*) Definition – description drafted and forwarded to HSSC for integration into S-66.

4. S-100 Communication Strategy – draft strategy to raise awareness of S-100 among mariners, OEMs, and IMO.

4. ENC Overlap and Transition Challenges

- Current Situation: Over 500 ENC overlaps exist globally, often caused by geopolitical issues.
- Risk: These overlaps will likely persist in S-101 when S-57 data are directly converted.
- Solutions Discussed:
 1. Do not publish overlapping datasets (risk of data gaps).
 2. Introduce hidden datasets defining responsibilities (considered unrealistic).
 3. Develop a technical solution in S-98 to guide ECDIS manufacturers (preferred by mariners).
- Conclusion (WENDWG15):
 - A harmonised technical approach is needed to ensure safe navigation and acceptance of S-100 products. The WENDWG Chair submitted an appropriate paper to HSSC (May 2025) for consideration.

5. Distribution of S-100 Products

- Industry representatives (NAVTOR, ChartWorld) argued for a flexible, market-driven distribution model using PAYS-based systems.
- AMSA presented an alternative concept using SECOM/MCP standards for near real-time distribution of S-124 and S-129.
- Diverging views (standardisation vs. industry-driven solutions) discussed at HSSC17.

6. Future of S-57 and Transition to S-101

- It was noted, that one Hydrographic Office plans to begin S-101 production only in 2035, implying a long coexistence of S-57 and S-101.
- WENDWG suggests starting guidance paper on the S-57 phase-out around 2028, aiming for completion by 2030.

7. Other Issues of Note

- INTToGIS III Development: Progress is slower than expected; prototype exists but release is delayed.
- S-128 Catalogue: Recognized as essential for automated INTToGIS III updates. Multiple versions may exist in the distribution chain.
- Meeting format: WENDWG emphasizes the value of in-person meetings for resolving technical and political challenges.

8. Recommendations and Actions

- Continue updating S-100 product coverage and production schedules.
- Consider establishing dedicated S-100 coordination working groups.
- Avoid “patchy” S-100 coverage that forces mariners to switch between legacy S-57 and new products.
- Support IHO’s communication strategy to improve awareness among stakeholders.
- Respond to ongoing S-100 readiness surveys.

9. Conclusions

The WENDWG has made substantial progress in preparing the transition to the S-100 era, particularly through finalising guidelines, harmonisation frameworks, and readiness surveys. However, several challenges remain:

- Low and uneven readiness levels among regions.
- Unresolved overlap issues, which risk undermining mariner confidence.
- Diverging views on distribution frameworks.
- Some delays in technical enablers such as INTOGIS III.

Link to BSHC report to WENDWG15 [WENDWG15 BSHC Report](#)

The next meeting (WENDWG 16) will be held in China (Hong Kong) 25-27 February 2026.

Actions for the 30th BSHC Conference

- Note this report.
- BSHC members are encouraged to actively respond to surveys and to participate in relevant task/working groups.
- Give further guidance to BSHC WENDWG representative.

