Mini-ECDIS Workshop: Summary Review

Below is a summary of the points raised at the Mini-ECDIS Workshop of 17th October 2002 in Hull. Note: This summary is not an exhaustive list of requirements for Mini-ECDIS.

- Reasons for Mini-ECDIS
    - Fishing vessels have a poor safety record
    - Navigation in practice uses unregulated systems

- MCA Requirements
    - Navigation equipment should be fit for purpose
    - Hardware should be manufactured to recognised standards
    - Software should be written to comply with a Mini-ECDIS Specification
    - Self-certification is an acceptable route
    - ENC's (S57 Vector) charts and official national hydrographic office raster charts should be supported where appropriate.

- Functional and performance specification
    - Should be based on modified ECDIS
    - Compatible with Inland-ECDIS
    - Should generally identify functional requirements rather than solutions
    - Should use the IHO/IMO approved presentation library for official data
    - Should not rule out embedded non-keyboard systems

- Technical options
    - Mandatory support for a common format for own, local & published data
    - User defined text size
    - Dual-fuel vector / raster
    - Dual Screen operational / navigational modes should be allowed
    - AIS ready
    - Optional dead man's handle
    - Optional security levels of access
    - Optional black-box record / playback facilities
    - Permits additional information layers e.g. tides, temp, weather, depths etc.
    - Additional layers could form a potential reliability problem - the whole system should meet the standard

- Minimum Systems Requirements
    - Mini-ECDIS should be an integrated hardware / software platform
    - The operating system should be inaccessible to the user
    - Should meet IEC60945
    - Allow manual update
    - Backup Systems should be specified
    - Spare Charts or System Mini-ECDIS perhaps with relaxed criteria may be acceptable
    - Spare navigation systems should be specified e.g. GPS receiver
    - Allowance for spare power systems should be detailed

- Charts
    - UKHO timetable for production has been provided and should be adhered to
    - Charts / updates must be inexpensive or even free
    - Installation of chart data should be an easy process
    - ENC's/ Official Raster is required by regulations for navigation

- Sales Issues
    - Capable of ECS operation if ENC's are not available
    - Cost effective system
    - Help fishermen catch fish

- Manufacturers should be free to innovate
- Can use extra information layers to encourage sales

- Drawbacks of Mini-ECDIS
  - Could result in information overload, with too much information on a small screen.
  - Could increase complexity of operation, resulting in user confusion of operation.
  - Confusion with symbology with added information layers could result identification confusion.
  - Complexity could adversely affect system reliability
  - Could stagnate market by promising something which is not immediately available.