

FRENCH NAVAL HYDROGRAPHIC OFFICE

IHB Note. — An article on the organization of the French Naval Hydrographic Office appeared in the November 1949 issue of the Hydrographic Review. The Ministry for the Armed Forces has just passed a decree modifying the organization and powers of this Office; the text of this decree is given below.

1. The Central Hydrographic Office of the French Navy functions in conformity with the orders of the Naval Chief of Staff.

2. The Central Hydrographic Office of the Navy is in charge of :

— drawing and keeping up-to-date, for the whole of the world, documents of every kind necessary for navigation, either using original hydrographic work or documents from abroad and all nautical information;

— providing marine and naval aviation forces with documents and nautical and aeronautical instruments, and ensuring the issue to the public of certain nautical documents;

— carrying out hydrographic surveys and missions or research of a scientific or technical nature, of general or military interest, concerning navigation, oceanography and the physics of the globe;

— the administration of the hydrographic surveying corps and the corps of engineers under the operational departments of the Hydrographic Office and the direct control of the corps of technicians dealing with research and manufacture in the Hydrographic Office.

3. The Central Hydrographic Office comprises :

I. — The Secretariat of the Director.

II. — The " Production-Supply-Distribution " Group, composed of :

1) sections in charge of the preparation of documents :

a) the " Cartography " section, in charge of preparing and keeping up-to-date of nautical charts,

b) the " Publications and Nautical Information " section in charge of preparing and keeping up-to-date of general nautical publications, as well as the collection and promulgation of nautical information,

c) the " Tides and Geophysics " section in charge of the preparation of tide tables, the collection and use of all data on physical oceanography and marine geophysics.

2) sections in charge of supplies :

a) the " Printing " section in charge of the printing of charts and books and of supplying documents for the store,

- b) the " Scientific Instruments and Equipment " section, in charge of studying, acquiring and maintaining scientific equipment and instruments for hydrography, maritime navigation and naval aviation, with the object of furnishing supplies for the store,
- 3) the Central Hydrographic Office's store,
- 4) the public supply service.
- III. — The " Research and Operational " Group, comprising :
- 1) the " Missions " section, in charge of personnel organization, equipment and technical services for hydrographic and oceanographic missions, and control of their work,
- 2) the " Studies and Research " section, in charge of general research, scientific or technical studies and research not included in the normal activities of other sections, documents and other publications,
- 3) the Training School of the Hydrographic Office,
- 4) the library.
- IV. — The administrative office is in charge of the administration of the Officers of the Hydrographic Office, the direct control of the technicians dealing with research and equipment, the study of accounts and the drawing up of a budget for the Office, book-keeping and practical administration of the Office.
4. The following services are attached to the Central Hydrographic Office for purposes of technical supervision :
- the " Hydrographic and Oceanographic Missions " in charge of surveys and operations at sea;
 - the " Publications, Charts and Instruments " service existing in certain ports to supply the navy and naval aviation.
- Special instructions specify the conditions under which these organizations are formed and carry out their operations.
5. The Hydrographic Committee acts in an advisory capacity on behalf of the Central Hydrographic Service. The composition and duties of this Committee form the subject of a separate decree.