



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE  
The Under Secretary of Commerce  
for Oceans and Atmosphere  
Washington, D.C. 20230

AUG 25 2016

Mr. William Hanson  
Chair  
Hydrographic Services Review Panel  
330 13th Street, N. E.  
Washington, DC 20002

Dear Mr. Hanson:

Thank you for your letter providing the Hydrographic Services Review Panel (HSRP) recommendations from the Galveston public meeting and for sending the issue papers that provided further insight into the meeting. The Panel clearly invested a great deal of time and thought into its advice on National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) navigation services programs.

I congratulate you in your new role as Chair, Joyce Miller in her new role as Vice Chair, and the five new members of the HSRP. I rely on NOAA's Federal advisory committees to provide forward-looking strategic advice on issues of science and technology. You are leaders in your areas of expertise and collectively offer advice to NOAA that will ensure our navigation data, services, and products effectively meet the needs of our citizenry.

In response to the HSRP recommendation on recapitalizing hydrographic capacity in the NOAA fleet, while we may not directly replace hydrographic vessels one for one, your emphasis on maintaining survey capacity is noted. As part of the ongoing fleet recapitalization efforts, NOAA has initiated an Independent Review Team (IRT) to examine current and future fleet composition. The IRT analysis final report is expected in September 2016; I will share their recommendations following review. You may consider reviewing this analysis at a future HSRP meeting.

While the President's current budget does not include any new initiatives for charting, geodesy, or related ocean observations, these activities in the U.S. Arctic will continue to be a NOAA priority as we make progress using existing resources.

I would hope you will take advantage of the opportunity to communicate HSRP priorities to the incoming NOAA leadership team in the coming year, as you will provide valuable continuity between this Administration and the next.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "KDS", with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Kathryn D. Sullivan, Ph.D.  
Under Secretary of Commerce  
for Oceans and Atmosphere

THE ADMINISTRATOR

