Title abstract: Whenever e-navigation lost its holistic edge – the challenges for international organisations to deal with holistic concepts and a proposed way forward

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Abstract:

E-navigation is essentially holistic: It not only overarches, comprises and connects shipboard, shore, and link functions. A holistic view is also suggested by e-navigation when considering the flow of relevant maritime domain data from its ultimate data source to its final point of usage through many stages of transmission and/or processing.

However, when a holistic concept like e-navigation arrives at the international harmonisation and regulation domain, it seems to be in trouble: Each international organisation involved seems to focus only on their specific 'piece of the cake,' due to their specific remit and mandate. The same holds true even within a single organisation when holistic issues need to be resolved between different committees of that same organisation. The treatment of 'Automated Ship Reporting' serves as an example: This allegedly highly desired e-navigation application – it was prioritised at IMO and elsewhere - would comprise shipboard automated compilation of data reports on the reporting vessel by automatically pulling together data from different shipboard sources, automated transmission by a proper radio communications connectivity ship-shore, automated data distribution by receiving shore-based systems and (potentially) at least semi-automated evaluation of the data onshore at relevant bodies for their decision making. Considering the present state of work, this apparently 'straightforward' vision is not even near to realisation presently. Again, not a single organisation or committee is to be blamed, since they all operate according to their remits and mandates. It rather seems that there appears to be lack of co-ordination: a co-ordination that is inspired by the holistic vision of the e-navigation application under consideration.

Thus, a solution must be sought beyond and above the remits of individual international organisations, and this is the solution proposed here: Not by yet another international organisation, but rather by an agreement which would determine the specific contribution of each international organisation involved. Such a 'hyper-strategy' could be called Maritime Digital Package. The presentation introduces this notion and its features.

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