

AHS

News

A combined AHS Annual General Meeting and General Meeting of the East Australia Region was held on Tuesday 27th September 2005 in The Wardroom, HMAS Kuttabul, Sydney. We had the pleasure of reuniting with our more distant members from New Zealand and Western Australia, namely Kevin Smith, chairman of the NZR, AHS honorary secretary, Mal Jones, and WAR chairman, Bill Russell Cargill. The incumbent president, Paul Hornsby, honorary secretary, Mal Jones and honorary treasurer Ron Furness were re-elected as the AHS executive officers.

The AHS had never before declared for Society purposes its definition of hydrography. But a proposal had been put to Council that it should adopt the definition decided upon by The Hydrographic Society in 1998, before devolution: "The use and application of technology in the measurement and presentation of spatial data in the marine and freshwater environments." As there was a representative number of the general membership present it was put as a formal proposal and unanimously accepted, this definition being considered modern, clear and concise, whilst still generally all-embracing of all types, aspects and activities encountered in hydrography today. The adoption is very gratifying in the light of our advance towards a closer relationship with our essentially freshwater colleagues, the Australian Hydrographic Association, and the West Australia Region's programme of co-operation with the Western Australian Division of the Society of Underwater Technology, previously reported upon.

After all reports and other routine AGM matters had been put to the meeting, our president brought us up to date with the current and developing situation with regard to the International Federation of Hydrographic Societies, which was accepted as being a pleasingly progressive state. After the meeting we all settled down to a splendid dinner provided by The Wardroom staff. This was all in all a useful meeting and a great reunion of colleagues from near and far.

New Zealand Region

The NZR report the completion of assignment of Zones of Confidence (ZOCs) to all hydrographic data relating to New Zealand chart folios. On behalf of Land Information New Zealand (LINZ), the national charting authority, work was commenced by HSA Systems Ltd, in Wellington, NZ in July 2004 to create and populate the database to facilitate conversion to the ZOC system of the qualitative aspects of hydrographic data held. This required all data to be reassessed in accordance with various internationally agreed accuracy standards, whilst conforming to defined surveying practices re. sea-floor coverage, data handling techniques et cetera, and then encoded in relation to IHO Publication S57, keeping Feature Object CATZOC particularly in mind. The work involved assessing 1,792 hydrographic survey Fair Charts and the allocation of 1,465 ZOCs to survey areas incorporated within 138 published navigational charts, and was completed in eighteen months. ZOC metadata and polygon coordinates were captured data in IHO S57 Version 3.1 format, prior to export in eXtensible Markup Language (XML). Anyone requiring closer details of the task and experience gained is referred to the paper by Kevin Smith, manager, HSA Systems Ltd, Wellington, e-mail: ksmith@hsa.co.nz.

The original development of ZOCs by the Australian Hydrographic Service in the second half of the 1990s arose from their being tasked by the IHO with review of IHO Publication S44, IHO Standards for Hydrographic Surveys-Classification Criteria for Deep water Soundings-Procedures for Elimination of Doubtful Data. It became abundantly clear during this review that very few mariners had an adequate understanding of source or reliability diagrams then displayed on the paper charts. They in turn did little more than display metadata related to hydrographic practises that had been involved in the surveys employed therein. ZOCs were firstly developed employing a holistic approach to the assessment of hydrographic data, but demonstrating in simple, navigational, qualitative terms the answer to mariners'™ basic question: "Is it safe for me to take my ship into this area in her present state of lading?" Of course, benefits of ZOC-ing have subsequently far exceeded this original purpose.

NZR Committee

At the AGM held on 12th October the following officers and committee members were elected or re-elected:

- chairman: Maurice Perwick; hon. secretary: Julian Dukes; hon. treasurer: Kevin Smith.
- members: Neville Ching, Cedric Trounson, Peter Knight, Gary Chisholm and Steve Lumb.

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