

ATOSSE 2008

The Advance Technology in Offshore Surveying Seminar and Exhibition (ATOSSE) 2008 was held at the Palace Beach & Spa Hotel of the Mines Resort City from 18 to 20 February 2008 and was officially opened by the President of the Institution of Surveyors, Malaysia (ISM). This unique event was attended by more than 150 participants, the 13 exhibition booths were occupied by various organisations and 20 seminar presentations were successfully delivered.<P>

'Where surveying is more than measuring-up...' was the catch-phrase in conjunction with the event's title. The objective was to show that surveying is not only an important subject on its own, but also encompasses the people and technology behind it. One group that is often forgotten is offshore surveyors. While offshore surveyors are busy offshore, the rest of the surveying community has no clear knowledge of what offshore surveying is all about – in the past and present, and also in the future.

The theme is not unfamiliar to us. It is about our offshore survey profession. It is more than just measuring and plotting. It is about managing resources: time, money, vessel, equipment, data, samples and personnel. It is about doing it right the first time. Offshore surveying is a very expensive, risky business and is also full of unnecessary stress. Minimise downtime, maximise profit and minimise stress!

The Venue

If it was not for the beautiful waterfront lake at the Palace Beach & Spa Hotel (8 1), ATOSSE 2008 could have been held elsewhere. No event related to offshore or hydrographic surveying is complete without water, in which equipment can be demonstrated. The venue is also about 7km outside the busy Klang Valley and Kuala Lumpur city centre. The seminar was held at the Hang Li Po Hall, which can easily accommodate about 130 people sitting in a classroom arrangement.

The Organisers

The ISM was the organiser of the event. The ISM itself represents four major divisions of professional surveying bodies and it was ISM's Geomatic and Land Surveying (GLS) Division that was responsible for the event, represented by Sr Abdul Hadi Abdul Samad. ISM-GLS invited Sr Safaruddin of Kertau Resources to chair and steer the event.

The Seminar Papers/Speakers

The papers touched on all the important and relevant aspects of offshore hydrography, such as the necessity to have surveyors of at least IHO Category B for offshore projects, the lack of these surveyors, and the available training and education aspects. In addition, there were interesting papers on technical advances and experience such as underwater positioning, autonomous underwater vehicles, production of electronic navigational charts, multi-beam echosounders and side-scan sonar, as well as their use for archaeological surveys.

The Demonstration Boats

The organizers hired two cruise boats, dedicated to the live demonstrations on the water during the seminar. More than 20 demonstration trips were safely performed.

Maju Geohydro Malaysia (MGH) and Hydronav Singapore (Hydronav) were two major sponsors of demonstrations of the multi-beam system. MGH sponsored their latest acquired multi-beam survey system, consisting of Kongsberg EM3002, Meridian Gyrocompass, TSS motion sensor and QINSy. Hydronav sponsored the ODOM ES-3 system on the second boat.

The Visitors

The most special visitors were 25 high school students and two teachers from the Tuanku Jaafar Technical School, Port Dickson. They were new to hydrography and the organising committee received positive feedback from them. These visitors were fortunate enough to be able to take part in the demonstrations and experience for themselves a little bit of the hydrographic surveying adventure (minus the sea conditions). Each of them was presented with a t-shirt that had a hydrographic theme printed on it. The wording on the favourite t-shirts was 'World Hydrography Day 21st June', complete with the Monaco IHO logo and hydrography terminology. This was also in order to popularise the hydrographic surveyor.