

Australasian Hydrographic Society

News

The East Australian Region held a General Meeting on 19th August 2003 at the offices of HSA Systems in North Sydney, who very generously hosted the refreshments we enjoyed. The Australasian Hydrographic Society (AHS) Hon Treasurer, Michael Calder, confirmed that the first AHS Education Award would be worth A\$ 2500 for 2004. This award is available to anyone, whether a member of AHS or not, from Australasia, Papua/New Guinea, the Solomon Islands, Vanuatu and Fiji. They must be undertaking courses or research in Hydrography in its broadest definition, within the syllabi of the FIG/IHO Standards of Competence for Hydrographic Surveyors, Publication M-5. It is hoped that this award will be increased in value over the coming years.

Bruce Kafer, The Hydrographer for Australia, reported on the Australian Hydrographic Service's significant contribution to the conferences, 'Shallow Water 2003', to be held in Sydney between 17th-20th November, and 'Hydro 2003' to be held in Christchurch, New Zealand between 24-26th November. HMA Surveying Ship Melville will be in attendance at both conferences and will be open to delegates for inspection.

The AGM of AHS will be held on 25th November at 18.00hrs, in Christchurch.

On completion of the General Meeting attendees witnessed a demonstration in real time of the shipping traffic monitoring and reporting system in the navigationally complex part of the Great Barrier Reef, from Cairns around the north eastern tip of the continent. This was a system developed by our hosts for the evening, HSA Systems, in conjunction with the Australian Maritime Safety Authority.

It is a very valuable development for masters and pilots in transit of this part of the reef, whereby they know what other traffic they can expect to meet, with details of vessel name, tonnage, speed and projected time of meeting. The monitoring centre also advises any vessels if they look like standing into danger and recommends appropriate remedial action. REEFREP, as the system is known, operates by using their own radar installations in conjunction with dGPS and ships reporting their positions and intentions as they pass through various control points.

The Australian Hydrographic Service, one of our Corporate Members, has developed a new Great Barrier Reef passage, known as LADS Passage because the surveys have been undertaken by Laser Airborne Depth Sounder techniques, assisted by RAN survey motor launches. This new passage, which joins on to the existing Fairway Channel and borders the inner edge of the Outer Reef, together gives a total of 90 miles of much less complex route than that via Princess Charlotte Bay and the Claremont Isles and keeps shipping clear of fishing grounds. In addition, it shortens the passage through that part of the Reef by 21 miles, thereby reducing ship running costs. But most importantly the reduced complexity allows Masters and Pilots the opportunity to obtain between three and four hours of relaxation. The LADS Passage is currently in limited use but is expected to be formally opened to all appropriate shipping in 2004, by which time the Australian Maritime Safety Authority will have established all the necessary navigation aids. It is assessed that the use of this new route will reduce the navigation risk by 30 per cent.

Contact

Hydrographic Society Australasia

Att. E.R.Whitmore

4/6 Carrington Street

Wahroonga,

New South Wales 2076

Australia

Tel: +61 2 94892091

Fax: +61 2 94892048