AHS is pleased to announce that Vice Admiral Chris Ritchie, former Chief of the Royal Australian Navy, AOTM chairman and patron of the Australasian Hydrographic Society, will represent AHS and be a keynote speaker at the forthcoming Hydro 2006 conference in Antwerp. Admiral Ritchie has recently been re-engaged by the Australian Defence Department as part of a small but highly eminent group to review many aspects of Defence Force management. A major supporter of hydrography, and well placed to address the strategic future of the industry, Admiral Ritchie will devote a week of his busy schedule to attending Hydro 2006. He is very keen to garner international community ideas regarding what should be done to promote the science.

In other news, Mr Kevin Smith, chairman of the AHS Awards Panel, has advised us that nominations for the 2006–2007 Australasian awards are now open. This scheme has enjoyed growing recognition since its inception five years ago, with a number of governments paying tribute this year to the prestigious nature of the awards. Also this year the scheme has been expanded to allow public contributions to the ‘Australia On The Map’ commemorations, with Emeritus Professor Victor Prescott joining the AHS Board of Selectors. Details of how to nominate worthy individuals, organisations and companies can be obtained from the AHS website at www.ahs.asn.au.

AHS is also reviewing many aspects of its strategic plans, with a view to improving services to members. These are to be discussed at the Annual General Meeting of the Society to be held on Thursday 14th September 2006.

The AHS (West Australia Region) and the Society for Underwater Technology will be jointly hosting a seminar and technical workshop entitled ‘AUVs - Emerging Technologies™’ on Thursday 26th October 2006 at the Hotel Ibis in Perth, Western Australia. Bookings and details can be made through the AHS website.