

Awarding Safety inÂ MH370 Search



The inaugural Hydrography Commission's Workplace Health and Safety Representative Award for 2015 was presented to Mr Malcolm Howard from Fugro Systems Pty Ltd at the recent West Australian Spatial Excellence Awards at Joondalup Resort, Perth, Australia. This was in recognition of his endeavours and commitment to safety and leadership in the ongoing search for Malaysia Airlines Flight MH370.

This award recognises those individuals or team members working in the field of hydrography across the various hydrographic disciplines, who have made an outstanding contribution to health and safety in the workplace, whether it be at sea or ashore through professionalism or services above and beyond normal expectations. The ongoing search for MH370 in the Southern Indian Ocean involves a coordinated international effort in

undertaking a deep tow side scan survey of an area encompassing 120,000 km² within one of the world's most remote and unforgiving ocean environments.

Over-the-side Equipment

Embarked in the MV *Fugro Equator*, Malcolm's role as the lead deep-tow supervisor involved overseeing the safe operation of various over-the-side sensors and equipment. Recognised as one of the most hazardous of all shipboard activities during the search, was the deployment and recovery of significant and expensive components, including the sonar towfish and depressor. Working at extreme depths in challenging sea and weather conditions, with the constant potential for injury to personnel, Malcolm's professionalism, experience and adherence to safety standards enabled him to successfully manage and lead a deck team without incident.

His supervisor responsibilities required he undertake a thorough risk analysis for each activity and for a high degree of directional, effective leadership and attention to detail to ensure all deep-tow operations were executed in a safe and controlled manner. Under his stewardship, Malcolm ensured his team were at all times appropriately equipped and that personnel had been fully briefed ahead of the activity and debriefed on completion in order to identify any lessons learnt.

Malcolm's commitment to and focus on, workplace health and safety for these very complex hydrographic surveying activities was recognised and is commended. His efforts proved integral in ensuring a safe onboard working environment which enabled the MV *Fugro Equator* to remain on task to obtain the required sonar outcome. Such results have greatly contributed to the international search effort.

Malcolm's commendable performance is in keeping with the finest traditions of the hydrographic surveyor. Such performance brings great credit upon himself, his company's safety philosophy, the survey team and reflects the core values of the Surveying and Spatial Sciences Institute.

Australasia's Surveying and Spatial Sciences Institute (SSSI) has, within its structure, representative Commissions which promote and advocate with the strength of its entire professional membership. One of those Commissions is the Hydrography Commission which has grown in strength and influence since inception. With the growth in the Hydrography Commission's standing in promoting and conducting certification of hydrographic surveyors via the Australasian Hydrographic Surveyors Certification Panel (AHSCP), the Commission Committee identified a need to encourage safe work practice within the profession.

Further information on Awards or Certification for employees or fellow hydrographic surveyors can be obtained from the [Hydrography Commission web pages](#).