

Big Data, Satellites and Artificial Intelligence



Every year, Geomares, the publisher of Hydro International, analyses the user data and behaviour of thousands of members of our global hydrographic and oceanographic communities. According to the latest findings of our survey, the use of big data, and the application of satellites and artificial intelligence will influence the market and operational activities and are expected to leave their mark on hydrographic and oceanographic work in the coming decade.

Ocean Data and Mapping

As in the last few years, market research and the opinions of our readers show that the USV market will continue to grow. With North America being the sector leader, the worldwide growing demand for USVs is related to a range of applications, e.g. ocean data and mapping, maritime security and the protection of shallow waters. In the Asia-Pacific region, USVs are also intensively used to protect maritime assets, economic zones, maritime borders and deep-sea mining activities.

Unmanned Surface Vehicle

Compared to the American market, the development and manufacture of SUVs and ASVs in Europe are also undergoing turbulent times. In the September/October issue of Hydro International, we published an article on the first circumnavigation of Arctic waters by an unmanned surface vehicle. I also remember a report on the first crossing of the Dover Strait between the UK and France - one of the busiest seaways in the world - by an unmanned and remotely controlled vehicle. In the near future, our readers expect strong growth in these kinds of expeditions.

Computers, Screens and Joysticks

For seafarers who fear that their jobs will be jeopardized, interesting new opportunities are arising due to the growing use of autonomous vessels. In this way, they will be able to exchange their positions on the bridge for a job on shore, where they can determine the course of UAVs with the aid of computers, screens and joysticks. Our annual questionnaire also shows that Hydro International readers expect AUVs, USVs and their applications to dominate the market increasingly.

Hydrographic and Oceanographic World

In his Business Guide editorial last year, my predecessor, Wim van Wegen, predicted that the hydrographic industry would not be entering calm waters. He was expecting exciting times ahead and was obviously looking at it from a visionary perspective. I would like to add that 2020 will, in every sense, again be a challenging year for the hydrographic and oceanographic world.