eNav International

Over half of the accidents taking place in merchant shipping are due to navigational errors, often of human origin, and the number of accidents is increasing.

It is therefore fully justified and not a day too early for the International Maritime Organization to try to form the concept of e-Navigation, together with all stakeholders. Gurpreet Singhota, head of the Operational Safety Section, Maritime Safety Division, is taking the lead in the process of developing the concept of e-Navigation. *Hydro International* is carrying an interview with him, see page 14. Singhota defines the strategy for e-Navigation as integrating existing and new navigation aids, particularly electronic aids to navigation, in an all-embracing transparent, user-friendly, cost-effective and compatible system that will contribute to enhanced navigational safety while simultaneously reducing the burden on the navigator. In other words: a fully computerised bridge!

This definition and IMO's attitude towards developing it, holds two promises for hydrography. First of all, the IMO has involved the International Hydrographic Organization to a great extent in the process and will most likely decide to take on the IHO S-100 Geospatial Standard for Hydrographic Data as the baseline for exchanging real-time information and data. This is a standard well known to our community – which makes it easy to play a high-profile role in the development of e-Navigation. Secondly, Singhota calls upon the industry to make itself heard in the process through the international non-governmental organisations with a consultative status at the IMO. This approach by the IMO is a reaction to criticism that technique is often three steps ahead of rigid rules. The open invitation in this Hydro International offers opportunities.

e-Navigation and its predecessors have always been covered by *Hydro International*. By nature, it is a topic to keep a sharp eye on, from a hydrographic point of view. The same nature has resulted in the choice for S-100 as starting point for data-exchange in e-Navigation. However, we want to take our coverage one level up. A dedicated website www.enav-international.com will keep track of all news, articles, events and training, demos and courses and much more, and is now live. An e-newsletter will keep subscribers up to date with the latest news and the website will contain an archive. The website is powered by *Hydro International* and already provides various content previously published in Hydro on the topic. This issue of *Hydro International* supports the launch of this website with various content relating to e-Navigation. I would like to invite all those interested to visit the website or to subscribe to the newsletter in order to keep track of this extremely interesting phase in the development of e-Navigation so as to identify opportunities for your own business and to capture them.

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