

# Inherent Value

An inherent value of hydrography that governments and other public authorities often forget, is the economic one. They are not to blame, the economic value of hydrography is a derivative and not so easy to recognise. But it is therefore good to mention that hydrographic surveying makes a distinct contribution to economic growth, in times where the economic recession is the main topic. Andrew Leyzack, as chair of Commission 4 on Hydrography of the International Federation of Surveyors (FIG), states this point in the Insider's View article in this issue of Hydro International. Leyzack points out that Commission 4 is raising awareness for the fact that hydrographic and bathymetric surveying is causing an economic impulse. At the 7th FIG Regional Conference, that took place in October 2009 in Hanoi (Vietnam), Brian Cannon from the United States and Rod Nairn from Australia presented a paper which advocated the same. They know also that convincing governments to invest in hydrography and bathymetry is difficult. But even without quantitative analysis, there is strong rational argument that is recognising the economic value of hydrographic services, way beyond an up-to-date nautical chart. Maritime activities in a region that is well surveyed will increase. The same applies for oil & gas and other exploring activities. But also tourism, offshore aquaculture and infrastructural development in the coastal zones can grow in areas where state of the art surveys are at hand.

One example where the Australian government recognises the importance of this, is found in the paper mentioned above. In 2007, the government of Australia ordered the Australian Hydrographic Service (AHS) to carry out one of the biggest surveys in its history, that of the Torres Strait. This narrow, only 70km wide, sea strait between the most northern tip of Australia, Cape York and Papua New Guinea, where the Indian and the Pacific Ocean meet, needed to gain more economic weight by ensuring safer navigation for merchant vessels in this highly malicious stretch of sea. The AHS set out to undertake this big project together with Fugro Pelagos in one of the largest contracted coastal Lidar surveys in recent years. Three years later it has been done. You can read about this enormous and complex logistic survey which brought to light unusual seabed features in this issue of Hydro International.

You will be accustomed to this column being written by editor-in-chief Roosmarijn Haring. Having guided Hydro international for almost two years, Roosmarijn has moved on to new challenges. I would like to take this opportunity of thanking her and wishing her all the best for the future! Although I have been meeting many of you at conferences and tradeshowes all over the globe, I am also happy to share my views on our business here as well. Please, in return, share your thoughts, remarks, suggestions and questions with me via [duik.haarsma@geomares.nl](mailto:duik.haarsma@geomares.nl). I would like to end with the wish that we will be able to show that inherent value of hydrography to the benefit of our business!