

Monaco Heads Towards Fifth E-IHC



From 6-10 October 2014, over 250 delegates from the 82 Member States of the IHO, together with representatives from international and non-governmental organisations and observers from industry, will meet in the Auditorium Rainier III in Monaco for the 5th Extraordinary International Hydrographic Conference. The Conference is the same as an Assembly in other inter-governmental organisations and is the highest decision-making authority of the Organisation. As at previous Conferences, it is anticipated that HSH Prince Albert of Monaco will open the Conference at 10 a.m. on 6 October.

The 5th Extraordinary International Hydrographic Conference will live up to its name not just because it is occurring in addition to the normal cycle of ordinary Conferences. It will be extraordinary because of the level of participation both from coastal States that are

already IHO members, and from those in the process of becoming members. This is proof of the growing awareness by governments of the relevance of hydrography and nautical charting and their contribution to the proper management of our predominantly Blue Planet - two thirds of our planet is covered by the seas and oceans and mankind's dependence on the sea is constantly increasing. Extraordinary too, because of the variety of subjects to be presented and discussed, not only by the leaders of national hydrographic services but also by the principal stakeholder communities - industry, partner organisations, users, etc.

Four topics that will be addressed specifically in dedicated sessions are:

- The place of hydrographic data in a geospatial world;
- E-navigation - its impact on the IHO and Member States;
- New and emerging technologies;
- Capacity building.

And last but not least, it will be extraordinary because it will be the first time that the media and specialist journalists have been invited to observe these sessions to be held on Tuesday 7 October starting at 14:00 and Wednesday 8 October from 09:00 to 12:30.

A dedicated media briefing will be held on Thursday 9 October at 15:30 to describe the main outcomes of the Conference. This briefing, provided by the President of the Conference and the three Co-Directors of the IHO secretariat, will be followed by a reception in the Conference Auditorium from 18:00-20:00, to which all media representatives and Conference participants are invited.

An extensive poster exhibition illustrating IHO activities related to its capacity building programme will be displayed in the entrance of the Auditorium and manned by alumni from the programme.

Two visiting survey vessels are expected in Port Hercules for the duration of the Conference: the *Sibiryakov* (Russian Federation) and HMS *Echo* (UK).

The International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) is the inter-governmental consultative and technical organization whose principal aim is to ensure that all the world's seas, oceans and navigable waters are surveyed and charted. The Principality of Monaco has been host to the permanent secretariat of the IHO since its creation in 1921.