

Reaching Our Delegates



Even with only the first quarter of 2009 gone, it is clear to all of those in hydrography – whether surveyors engaged in private industry or government – that we too are not exempt from the budget cuts that seem to have descended on every other industry. Some of us are already challenged in finding departmental funds to hire and retain staff, to engage in research and development, to participate in training programmes – to say nothing of attending conferences.

The FIG Working Week 2009 in Eilat (Israel; see website 1) and the 7th FIG Regional Conference in Hanoi (Vietnam; see website 2) may test our ability to find creative ways to participate. Some institutions have turned to e-mail, blogs, net-meetings, video-conferencing and other internet-based means of meeting. This Commission 4 publication

strives to reach our delegates and a wider audience who might not otherwise be able to attend our conferences and regional meetings. However we meet, the issues of hydrography are likely to remain the same: the use of measurements, analysis and presentation of data on the marine environment in a manner that promotes and benefits, directly or indirectly, a better life for all of us on the planet.

Working Week

The Working Week theme is, not surprisingly, the 'Surveyors Key Role in Accelerated Development'. Here, Commission 4 collaborates with Commission 8 (Spatial Planning and Development) to present a session on coastal zone management. We will also chair a second session on hydrographic surveying in practice. Our Israeli national delegate, Barry Grinker, has prepared a paper on hydrographic education for a Commission 2 session. The papers listed will hopefully highlight the links between hydrography and spatial planning and development.

No doubt, some of the discussions that follow each presentation will pursue the matters of how we, as hydrographic surveyors, should react to the economic belt-tightening that is likely to consume us in the months ahead. We need to stay abreast of technology and training, and to continue to market the profession so as to demonstrate the economic benefits of hydrography. FIG brings surveyors from all disciplines together so efficiencies can be realised. The Working Week is an opportunity to demonstrate the hydrographic surveyor's role in spatial planning and development.

Hydrography Courses

As reported in the last FIG Publications, the FIG/IHO/ICA International Advisory Board (IAB) will meet in Genoa (Italy) in mid-April to discuss the accreditation of courses in hydrography around the world. In Genoa, the IAB will also consider how to better manage the accreditation of these courses as well as how the IAB could manage individual accreditation. The results of that meeting will be reported at the Working Week in Eilat and the next IHO Extraordinary Conference.

Regional Meeting

For the 7th FIG Regional Meeting in Vietnam this October entitled 'Spatial Data Serving People: Land Governance and the Environment - Building the Capacity', Commission 4 will strive to contribute to the hydrographer's role in spatial data infrastructure (SDI) and the environment including coastal and marine resource management. This theme fits well with the work of our chair-elect Dr Michael Sutherland and his Working Group on the Administration of Marine Spaces. Jointly, Working Groups from Commissions 4, 5 and 8 will manage a technical session on coastal zone development policy at this conference as well as pursue both a FIG publication and a technical session at the 2010 FIG Congress. This meeting will be the last FIG event prior to the FIG Congress and Working Week in 2010.