

Alexander Dalrymple Award Presented to U.S. Office of Coast Survey



The UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO) has presented the 2021 Alexander Dalrymple Award to the U.S. Office of Coast Survey (OCS) in recognition of its outstanding contribution to global hydrography.

UK National Hydrographer Rear Admiral Rhett Hatcher handed over the award on behalf of the UKHO at the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

(NOAA) headquarters. The award was accepted by Rear Admiral Ben Evans, U.S. National Hydrographer and director of the OCS. Following delays caused by the pandemic, the award presentation took place on 5 October 2022.

As a key office within the NOAA, the OCS is responsible for surveying and charting the waters within the U.S. Exclusive Economic Zone. It has been at the forefront of hydrographic developments for many years.

New Era of Digitalization in Hydrography

The award recognizes the instrumental role played by the OCS in laying the foundations for the hydrographic community as it enters an exciting new era of digitalization. Notably, this has included its successful modernization of NOAA's chart production processes and delivery.

As a precursor to the next generation of digital navigation services, the OCS launched the NOAA Custom Chart Tool 1.0 in 2021. The dynamic map tool enables users to create and download their own custom nautical charts using Electronic Navigational Chart (ENC) data.

The OCS has also helped steer the modernization, discoverability and accessibility of hydrographic data on a global scale. From its strategic work with the International Hydrographic Organization to its unconditional support of the [Seabed 2030](#) initiative, this collaboration – combined with ongoing technological innovation – will benefit the global hydrographic community into the future.

Growing Demand for Hydrographic Data

Commenting on the award, Rear Admiral Rhett Hatcher said: "Following a thoroughly eventful and highly demanding 12-month period in 2021 related to maintaining outputs in the eye of the COVID-19 pandemic storm in particular, but also recognizing the fact that they have been at the top of their game for much longer, the significant contribution of the Office of Coast Survey to hydrographic good practice cannot be underestimated. Their successes rightly generate prominence, but, in equal measure, value-add for the rest of the international hydrographic community."

"It was an absolute pleasure to present the [Alexander Dalrymple](#) Award to the current director, Rear Admiral Ben Evans, in person during a very useful visit to the OCS headquarters in Silver Spring near Washington DC, where he and his wonderful staff fulfil a key set of tasks for the U.S. Government both in national waters and across the globe."

On behalf of the OCS, Rear Admiral Evans said: "The Alexander Dalrymple Award is a tremendous honour, which recognizes the tireless efforts of my predecessors and the entire staff of Coast Survey. I deeply appreciate Admiral Hatcher's visit to present it and the opportunity to discuss issues of common interest in hydrography and nautical charting."

"While we have made significant progress, there remains much to do as we contemplate a new era of [S-100 products](#) and the growing demand for hydrographic data for a wide range of non-navigation applications. Coast Survey values its strong ties with the UKHO and all our international partners, and I look forward to working together as we continue to improve mapping and charting of the world's oceans and the safety and efficiency of marine transportation."

Named after the first hydrographer of the British Admiralty, the Alexander Dalrymple Award has been awarded each year by the UKHO since 2006 to recognize outstanding contributions to hydrography. Recipients of the award are selected by the Executive Committee of the

UKHO for their efforts in raising the standards of hydrography, cartography and navigation around the world.



Rear Admiral Ben Evans and Rear Admiral Rhett Hatcher exchanging the 2021 Alexander Dalrymple Award. (Courtesy: UKHO)

<https://www.hydro-international.com/content/news/alexander-dalrymple-award-presented-to-us-office-of-coast-survey>
