CARIS Asia Pacific Users Conference

This was the first time CARIS had hosted its International Users Group Conference on 5th -9th March 2007 in Asia. Having delivered the event to various cities in North America and Europe, CARIS selected Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia for its 11th Conference. The goal was to make the event more accessible to users in the Asia Pacific region.

Seventy-five CARIS users from across twenty-two countries participated in a full program of hands-on Educational Sessions and in Paper Sessions which covered the application of marine and hydrographic geomatics software across the entire "Ping to Chart" workflow. Specifically, the program addressed Hydrographic Data Processing, Bathymetric Data Management, Database-driven hydrographic production and Law of the Sea.

CARIS 2007 commenced with four concurrent, two-day hands on software Educational Sessions on March 5-6. These sessions were optional to registrants and included Bathymetric Data Management, Hydrographic Data Processing, Optimization of Database-driven Hydrographic Production Workflow, and Definition of National Maritime Limits and Boundaries.

All Educational Session were well attended. With an increasing number of hydrographic agencies transitioning to the CARIS Hydrographic Production Database (HPD) production environment, this educational session was filled to capacity. Rather than focusing on use of the software tools, this session took a unique approach of teaching participants how to move from their existing file-based production workflow to the task-centric workflow of HPD. Cartographers, System Administrators and Quality Control specialists were able to become familiar with their roles in the HPD workflow.

Indicative of the importance of the issue in Southeast Asia, the Maritime Limits and Boundaries session was also over-filled. This session focused on procedures used for Exclusive Economic Zone and Article 76 planning and work. It integrated theoretical presentations by Law of the Sea experts together with hands-on computer training where participants worked through exercises using the Article 76 software to present a full picture of variables and considerations to make in territorial claim submission.

Two days of technical papers followed on 7th – 8th March, which were broken into the following tracks: Hydrographic Survey Processing and Visualization, Hydrographic Analysis and Management, Electronic Chart Production, Law of the Sea, and Spatial Data Infrastructure and Interoperability.

Speakers represented the private, public and academic sector and their paper presentations provided a fine opportunity for users to gain insight into their diverse applications and variety of experiences with CARIS software.

The highlight of the week was the Opening Banquet where CARIS representatives took stage to unveil its latest technologies and corporate initiatives. The evening event was also accented by an opening address by CARIS Board of Directors representative, Radm (Ret) L.H. van Opstal, a welcome address by Dato' Rassip Bin Hassan on behalf of the Royal Malaysian Navy, and by a number of dance performances by traditional Malaysian dancers.

CARIS' corporate update included news of the opening of a CARIS Asian Pacific office in Adelaide, Australia and the news of a new Vice President of CARIS USA in Washington, DC, Mr. Paul Cooper. Perhaps the most noteworthy corporate announcement was that of the selection of CARIS HPD and Bathy DataBASE for the UKHO Hydrographic Database (HDB) project.

A number of technology announcements were also made during the opening. The release of Easy View received the most hype. Free for download, this spatial data viewer will allow users to users visualize and interact with 2D data such as S-57 ENC and 3D data. With a new 3D engine in the HIPS and SIPS 6.1 product was a focus. 3D features in the software now provide seamless movement over geographic area.

Released in December 2006, CARIS' solution for bathymetric data management, Bathy DataBASE, was also featured at the opening. The software will manage high volume multibeam data, combined with legacy bathymetry, while maintaining the attributes of the bathymetric sources throughout the hydrographic workflow.

The week wrapped up with a day-long group tour on Friday, March 9th to the Royal Malaysia Navy Hydrographic Office in Port Klang.

Special acknowledgement should be given to CARIS 2007 Sponsors and Exhibitors Maicons Technology, IIC Technologies, D.O.O.R. International, ATLAS Hydrographic and Kongsberg Maritime for their support.

CARIS will host its 12th International Users Conference in Bath, United Kingdom during fourth quarter 2008. All the presentations made at CARIS 2007 are available online at the website.