

IHO Hydrographic Commission on Antarctica (HCA) 11th Meeting, Hobart, Australia, 5-7 October 2011

The 11th Meeting of the Hydrographic Commission on Antarctica (HCA) took place in Hobart, Tasmania, Australia, 5-7 October 2011, organized by the Australian Hydrographic Service (AHS) with the support of the Australian Antarctic Division (AAD). The meeting was chaired by Commodore Rod NAIRN, AHS Director and HCA Vice-Chairman, in the absence of the Chairman, Captain Hugo GORZIGLIA, who was unable to attend. Ing en chef Michel Huet attended as HCA secretary and IHB representative.

Dr. Tony FLEMING, AAD Director, welcomed all participants and highlighted the strong involvement of AAD in environment protection in Antarctica and climate change. Commodore NAIRN also welcomed the fifteen IHO Member States (Australia, Brazil, Chile, Ecuador, France, Germany, Korea (Rep. of), New Zealand, Norway, South Africa, Spain, United Kingdom, USA, Uruguay and Venezuela), five observer organizations / projects (COMNAP, IAATO, IALA, GEBCO and SCAR) and two expert contributors (Fugro and Geoscience Australia) who participated actively in the event.



HCA Group photo taken at the Government House, Hobart, Tasmania, Australia

As the Commission is composed of 23 IHO Member States, the 15 representatives present constituted an appropriate quorum. The Commission re-elected Commodore NAIRN as Vice-Chairman of the HCA.

The Commission reviewed the status of the actions agreed at the last meeting and discussed the progress achieved so far, noting that almost all actions had been completed. Those subjects requiring further discussion were considered under various agenda items during the meeting. The reports provided by COMNAP, IAATO, IALA, GEBCO and SCAR, as well as by IHO Member States, were considered. The reports on the progress made regarding the scheming and production of INT charts and ENCs, and an Antarctic GIS under development at the IHB, were also considered and discussed. The Commission regretted that there were no representatives nor any reports from IMO, IOC and the AT Secretariat.

Two ad hoc sub working groups were set up to address the following topics:

- Development of an Antarctic appendix of a proposed IMO SN Circular on “*Precautions in Using Navigational Charts in Polar Waters*”. This was completed during the meeting.
- New strategic approach for raising awareness on safety of navigation and environmental protection in Antarctica. This resulted in a proposed HCA Strategic Statement and Strategic Direction, as well as several proposed new HCA tasks for inclusion in the IHO Work Programme.

The HCA Hydrographic Survey Prioritisation Working Group Chair (UK) reported that the HCA diagram on Maritime Shipping Routes had been updated following IAATO assessment and input. As a result, two new INT charts were proposed for inclusion in the scheme.

Following a kind invitation from the *Servicio de Oceanografía, Hidrografía y Meteorología de la Armada (SOHMA)* of Uruguay, the Commission decided to hold the 12th HCA meeting in that country (Montevideo or Punta Del Este) in the week commencing 8 October 2012.