National Initiatives affecting Hydrography – UK Initiatives:
UK Marine Bill and Marine Data & Information Partnership (MDIP)

UK Marine Bill

On 30 March 2006, the UK Government published a consultation document seeking views on a proposed Marine Bill that will introduce a new framework for the seas; based on marine spatial planning, that balances conservation, energy and resource needs.
The UK Government is developing policy for the Bill in five significant areas. None of these stand alone, there are close and complex links between them all.
1. Managing marine fisheries
2. Planning in the marine area
3. Licensing marine activities
4. Improving marine nature conservation
5. The potential for a new marine management organisation

The UKHO provided a comprehensive response on all marine data related aspects of the Marine Bill consultation. We highlighted our key involvement in the Marine Data Information Partnership (MDIP) and intention to become a Data Archive Centre (DAC). Current UKHO work on the Vertical Offshore Reference Framework and the Hydrographic Database are well aligned with the aspirations of the Bill.

Marine Data & Information Partnership (MDIP)

MDIP was established in March 2005, with partners from the private and public sector, to work towards agreed "public good" goals:
- Provide a data management & access framework for the UK marine data community.
- Develop marine data management standards, and protocols.
- Contribute to the marine component of the geospatial strategy for the UK
- Recommend actions and map progress towards achieving coordination of management of UK Marine Data.

MDIP has identified an initial set of three marine Data Archive Centres (DACs) who are able to conform to a set of requirements which ensure adherence to best practice:
1. United kingdom Hydrographic Office - Bathymetric and Seabed Data
2. British Oceanographic Data Centre – Water Column Oceanography
3. Data Archive for Seabed Species and Habitats – Benthic Marine Life

Additional marine DACs will be added in due course. The MDIP DAC Working Group is responsible for this activity and further plans for the DAC Working Group include:
- Establish standardized metadata describing DAC holdings.
- Publish DAC present practices and standards.
- Assess thematic coverage and bring in new MDIP DACs.