

## REPORT

### IHO/HCA PARTICIPATION AT THE ANNUAL IAATO MEETING

The International Association of Antarctic Tour Operators (IAATO) is a global network of tour operators that banded together in 1991 to advocate, promote and practice safe and environmentally responsible private-sector travel to the Antarctic. At its 21<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting of IAATO that took place in Turin, Italy, 21-24 June 2010, the IHO/HCA made a presentation on the Importance of Hydrographic Activities in Antarctica.

Close to 100 IAATO Members and Observers were present. The IHO participated with its HCA Chairman and IHB Director, Captain Hugo Gorziglia, together with Mr. Andy Willett, member of the UK delegation to the HCA and Chair of the HCA Hydrographic Survey Prioritization Working Group, respectively.

The objective of the presentation was to raise awareness at the operational level on the importance of hydrographic activity in the Antarctica; to achieve a better understanding of IAATO on the existing risks associated to the present status of charting in the region and what IHO/HCA is doing to fill the gaps and finally, to jointly explore on WHAT and HOW IAATO can contribute to IHO/HCA efforts to improve the situation.

The first presentation covered IHO and IHO/HCA involvement in Antarctic; the role, priorities and achievements of HCA; SOLAS V Regulation 9 and the Antarctica and IHO/IAATO relationship. A second presentation included a description of the Maritime Shipping Routes (MSRs) and approach to charting priorities; work done and future work plans. Some case studies were offered as well as how hydrographic knowledge reduces the risk. Finally some proposals were considered as they could be put in practice by IAATO to contribute to improve availability of reliable nautical charts of Antarctic waters. Particularly the Guidelines for the Collection and Rendering of Hydrographic Data obtained by "Ships of Opportunity" in Antarctic Water was explained.

The presentation was followed by an interesting discussion. Participants appreciated the opportunity to discuss in detail matters concerning safety to navigation and their potential involvement in contributing to improve the hydrographic knowledge of Antarctic waters.

Particular interest was expressed with regard to technologies to be incorporated to cruise ships. Data collected was felt to be a concrete potential contribution from IAATO to the IHO/HCA, if such data is collected following standards. It was confirmed that IAATO stands ready to continue cooperating with and participating at IHO/HCA meetings. In conclusion, the participation of the IHO/HCA representatives at the IAATO Annual Meeting has opened new opportunities for mutual cooperation and collaboration aiming at improving safety to navigation and protection of the marine environment in Antarctic waters.

Monaco, 06 July 2010.

