

MESO-AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION

National Report (October 2006) - Jamaica

1. HYDROGRAPHIC OFFICE:

- **Reorganization**

Jamaica is a member State of the IHO and the Meso-America and Caribbean Hydrographic Commission (MACHC). A National Hydrographic Committee (NHC) constituted of membership from key maritime interest groups and stakeholders including the Hydrographic office (NLA), Jamaica Defence Force Coast Guards (JDFCG), Port Authority of Jamaica (PAJ), Maritime Authority of Jamaica (MAJ), Caribbean Maritime Institute (CMI), Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Foreign Trade (MOFF&T), The University of Technology (UTech) and the Centre for Marine Sciences at the University of the West Indies was established in 2006 as a committee of the National Council on Ocean and Coastal Zone Management. This council is an advisory body to the Cabinet and is chaired by the Minister of State in the MFA&FT.

Terms of reference for the National Hydrographic Commission (NHC) were developed based on the framework provided by the IHB.

The National Land Agency of Jamaica (NLA) has responsibility for hydrographic surveying. The NLA was recently re-assigned to the Office of the Prime minister, from the Ministry of Agriculture, under Government's restructuring arrangements. There has been no significant impact on the operations of the NLA or the Hydrographic Unit as a result of this reorganization.

2. SURVEYS:

- **Coverage of new surveys.**

Since our last report to the MACHC, surveys of two major ports – Ocho Rios and Montego Bay – were carried out: with assistance from the US Naval Oceanographic Office. Other small surveys carried out include:

- a. Depth verification surveys at Gypsum Pier in Kingston Harbour (bulk loading) as a result of small scale dredging operations.
- b. Pre-feasibility study survey for the proposed plant expansion of the Petrojam Oil Refinery in Kingston Harbour.
- c. Post-dredge surveys at Berths 8 and 9, Kingston Wharves Container Port, Port Bustamante in Kingston Harbour.
- d. Routine investigative surveys in the main ship channel in Kingston Harbour

- **New technologies and /or equipment**

The NLA has improved its hydrographic survey capacity with the acquisition a new ODOM Echotrac MKIII echo sounder and Hypack Max hydrographic software.

- **New ships**

Currently Jamaica has no vessels dedicated to carrying out hydrographic survey work

3. CHARTS AND PUBLICATIONS:

a. Charts

Charts for Jamaica are produced by the UKHO. The PAJ and the NLA provide new data as it becomes available for chart updating. Paper charts for Ocho Rios and Montego Bay harbours were recently updated. The UKHO can speak more authoritatively to the production of ENC's, RNC's and other charts

US charting agencies also produce a number of charts for general use in Jamaica's maritime space.

There has been a demand for charts for pleasure boat users for quite some time. Discussions have been taking place within the NHC to address this deficiency.

b. Publications

- **New publications**
No update on new publications is available at this time.
- **Updated publications**
Information for updating of hydrographic publications are routinely dispatched to the UKHO.

4. MSI

- **Existing infrastructure for transmission**
The JDF Coast Guard (JDFCG) broadcasts marine weather information and navigational safety warnings five times daily on both marine VHF and HF. This is done from their 24X7 operational centre in Kingston. Over the 12 months period preceeding this report, the JDFCG promulgated seven CQ broadcasts relating to various extinguished buoy lights, activation of new lights or other matters of interest to navigation.

Notices to Mariners are generated by the Port Authority of Jamaica (PAJ) and promulgated locally and internationally in keeping with our obligations under SOLAS V, regulation 9. MSI notices are conveyed to the JDFCG for immediate broadcast in the interest of safety of ships and small crafts. In addition these notices are also communicated directly to yacht clubs, Fisheries Department agents and other known interest groups to ensure the widest possible distribution.

The timely passage of relevant information to both the JDFCG and the PAJ can be improved and the NHC will address this deficiency. Arrangements to expand transmission to include standard WWNWS methods are being pursued with JDFCG as the lead entity.

- **New infrastructure in accordance with GMDSS Master Plan.**
There is now a proposal to broadcast MSI through the NAVAREA 4 safety net. This came about after the IHO/UKHO team visit in April 2006. The necessary information has been passed to the UKHO team, who is making the necessary arrangements with NAVAREA 4. However, the Master Plan for Jamaica has not been implemented due to a lack of resources. Jamaica will now establish a SafetyNET Coastal Warning Area. The JDFCG has been formally designated as the national coordinator with the NAVAREA 4 coordinator in the USA.

5. CAPACITY BUILDING

- **Offer of and/or demand for Capacity Building**

The hydrographic office continues to experience some degree of difficulty in programming hydrographic survey activities due to the lack of a dedicated survey vessel.

- **Training received, needed, offered**

Jamaica continues to benefit from the training of personnel in hydrography through various bi-lateral cooperative arrangements as well as through the IHO and MACHC.

The Caribbean Maritime Institute (CMI) in Jamaica hosted the CPRNW/MSI training course for the region, which was organized by the IHO – CBC and the WWNWS Commission, in June, 2007. The course was attended by twenty five participants from countries in the region. The JDFCG, as National MSI coordinator for Jamaica, participated in this course.

One participant from the NLA attended a course in Ocean Observation and Hydrographic Surveying, courtesy of the Korean International Cooperation Agency (KOICA) and the national Oceanographic Research Institute (NORI) of South Korea, in South Korea in June, 2007

The Port Authority of Jamaica (PAJ) and the Maritime Authority of Jamaica (MAJ) each had one participant in the Basic Hydrography Course in Suriname in November 2008. This course was organized by the IHO – CBC and the Maritime Authority of Suriname.

Jamaica also participated in the course on Practical Hydrographic surveying and Basic Elements of Nautical cartography, in Venezuela, which was organized by the IHO-CBC, MACHC and the Venezuelan DHN, in March, 2009.

- **Status of national, bilateral, multilateral or regional development projects with hydrographic component. (In progress, planned, under evaluation or study)**

Dredging works are currently on-going in Falmouth Harbour (north coast of Jamaica) in relation to the development of a new cruise ship pier facility. The pre-dredge and pre-feasibility study hydrographic surveys was done by the NLA. On completion, surveys for chart updates will be carried out.

6. S-55 LATEST UPDATE

The UKHO provides the information for the updating of the S-55 database. This data is current.

7. OCEANOGRAPHIC ACTIVITIES

- General
- GEBCO/IBC's activities - Nil
- Tide gauge network
Efforts to reinstate/improve Jamaica's tide gauge network continues. A new automatic tide gauge system was installed at the JDFCG base at Port Royal in Kingston and plans are advanced to install others at Port Kaiser and Montego Bay.
- New equipment- Nil

8. CONCLUSIONS

The coordination of activities relating to hydrographic work and MSI in Jamaica are now being facilitated much better with the oversight by the NHC which conducts regular meetings with the key stakeholders in Jamaica.

The hydrographic office, the NLA, continues to play its part in providing hydrographic data to facilitate safety of navigation in Jamaica's territorial waters, within the resources available. The pressing need for a dedicated craft will be articulated by the NHC to the Government so that critical close-shore work can be carried out in accordance with the prioritized programme of surveys.

Jamaica's capability to disseminate MSI is better coordinated and focused through the JDFCG with oversight provided by the NHC. Concerted efforts will also be made to identify funding to implement the obligations for GMDSS within Area 1.