

NATIONAL REPORT (ST.KITTS AND NEVIS)

MESO-AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION CONFERENCE

NOVEMBER 3-6, 2009
BRIDGETOWN, BARBADOS



INTRODUCTION

Cognizant of the need to fulfill its obligations under SOLAS V, the Government of St.Kitts and Nevis has moved to ensure its involvement in the evolutions of the MESO-American and Caribbean Hydrographic Commission. While in previous years we were mere observers and at these conferences, I am proud to indicate today that we have now attained the status of associate member of the MESO-American and Caribbean Hydrographic Commission. This to my mind signifies as small as we are, there is definitely the will and commitment to meet the requirements of SOLAS V in St.Kitts and Nevis and to be in a position to help the Commission to fulfill its mandate as it relates member states providing effective hydrographic service in support of trade and the conservation of living and non - living marine resources.

We believe effective hydrographic service depends on ongoing efforts at building capacity and the provision of adequate and updated equipment. Often the biggest problem for many small states including St.Kitts and Nevis in meeting the requirements of SOLAS V has to do with Funding. We are certain however, with technical assistance from the more developed states in the area of hydrography, that small developing states can meet their obligations under SOLAS

HYDROGRAPHIC OFFICE

There are currently no hydrographic office in St.Kitts and Nevis dedicated to providing hydrographic services, instead the intention is that this service will be provided by the Department of Maritime Affairs as one of its many functions in support of the safety of Shipping. In the mean time a focal point to address matters pertaining to hydrography is appointed on St.Kitts and One in Nevis. Their activities are coordinated by the Director of Maritime Affairs.

SURVEYS

Apart from occasional surveys by private contractors mostly to determine water depths, St.Kitts and Nevis have not had a formal survey in a number years. The most recent survey to establish mooring facilities was carried out in the Port of Basseterre on the February 18, 2009 by Hydro Data Inc. of the USA in conjunction with the Venezuelan Navy.

CHARTS

Charts for St.Kitts and Nevis are currently produced by the UKHO. The data for updates are provided by the national focal points. Updating is an ongoing process. For example when there are new construction of Piers or Jettys and the establishment of new aids to navigation the National Focal points would collate the relevant data and convey to the UKHO Office. Paper charts currently

provide coverage for St.Kitts and Nevis. Electronic coverage will be provided in the near future by UKHO.

Charts of St.Kitts and Nevis is also produced by NOAA of the USA. Paper charts are provided for marinas as a service by the Department of Maritime Affairs of St.Kitts and Nevis.

MSI

The broadcast of the weather information is done daily by the Met Office and by the many FM and AM stations of St.Kitts and Nevis. Marinas would usually extract the relevant information pertaining to sea conditions from the weather forecast. When notices to mariners are requires, these are usually announced by the Port Authorities through the various electronic and print media in St.Kitts and Nevis

GMDSS

The Department of Maritime Affairs is in possession of a GMDSS Plan for St.Kitts and Nevis but is awaiting Funding to activate this plan.

CAPACITY BUILDING

Training in the area of Hydrography is in demand. To effectively fulfill our functions under SOLAS V capacity building is priority for St.Kitts and Nevis. Last year two persons attended the IMO training in hydrography in Suriname. Currently we are open to any form of training in this area that might become available as a result of this conference. In addition we are badly in need of the basic equipment to conduct hydrography.

OCEANOGRAPHIC ACTIVITIES

The Department of Physical Planning and the environment establish a tide gauge in February this year. Tide Data is now available in support of maritime activities.

CONCLUSION

The Federation of St.Kitts and Nevis clearly understands its obligation under SOLAS as it pertains to the provision and dissemination of up to date accurate Hydrographic information to the National and International Shipping Community. We are fully aware of the challenges involved and are making a concerted effort to overcome these challenges. We would like to in concluding, appeal to this

forum for any assistance particularly in the area of capacity building and technical assistance.