

**COOK ISLANDS  
NATIONAL REPORT**



**13<sup>th</sup> SOUTH WEST PACIFIC  
HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION MEETING  
Rarotonga, Cook Islands  
25<sup>th</sup> -27<sup>th</sup> February 2015**

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## 1.0 Geography



The Cook Islands is a self-governing nation in free associated with New Zealand, and comprises a series of islands located in the western equatorial Pacific Ocean scattered between 8° and 23° latitude S and 156° and 167° longitude W as specified in the Constitution of the Cook Islands.

The Cook Islands comprises two groups of islands as follows:

- the northern group including Manihiki, Nassau, Rakahanga, Penrhyn, Pukapuka, Suvarrow; and
- The southern group including Aitutaki, Atiu, Mangaia, Manuae, Mauke, Mitiaro Palmerston, Rarotonga, Takutea.

## 2.0 Government Structure

Infrastructure Cook government agency who have been approved by the Cook Islands government to establish national hydrographic governance structure in 2012/13 which will:

- Determine how best to meet hydrographic obligations
- Appoint a designated MSI coordinator
- Establish a National Hydrographic Priorities consultative Committee

In order for the Cook Islands to meet its hydrographic obligations is through bilateral cooperation with formal arrangements with New Zealand (LINZ) our charting authority however the overall responsibility and obligations to ensure that a national hydrographic service is provided remains with the Cook Islands government.

The Cook Islands yet to appointment a Maritime Safety Information coordinator to be responsible in ensuring that when intelligence of any dangers is receive from whatever reliable source, it shall be promptly brought to the knowledge of those concerned and communicated to other interested governments and for the purpose of ensuring safe navigation.

The establishment of a National Hydrographic Priorities consultative Committee will consist of government agencies and private organisations to coordinate hydrographic activities and to provide input to the programme and help set priorities. In this way, the stakeholders will be in a position to contribute to long term plans and perhaps also to the programme budget.

The Cook Islands became an associate member of the SWPHC in 2012 and approve by government in 2012.



GOVERNMENT OF THE COOK ISLANDS  
OFFICE OF THE CABINET SERVICES  
GOVERNMENT BUILDING  
RAROTONGA, COOK ISLANDS

**MEMORANDUM**

DATE: 28 February 2012

TO: Acting Secretary, Ministry of Infrastructure and Planning ✓  
Public Service Commissioner, Office of the Public Service Commission  
Chief of Staff, Office of the Prime Minister  
Solicitor General, Crown Law Office  
Financial Secretary, Ministry of Finance and Economic Management

SUBJECT: ASSOCIATE MEMBERSHIP OF THE SOUTH WEST PACIFIC HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION – COOK ISLANDS

At a Cabinet meeting held on Tuesday, 28 February 2012, Cabinet gave consideration to matters relevant to your Department/Ministry in reference to the above-mentioned subject.

CM (12) 069

Paper dated 21 February 2012

Submitted by the Minister for Infrastructure and Planning, the Hon. Teariki Heather

Approved 1. the membership of the Cook Islands as an Associate Member of the South West Pacific Hydrographic Commission

Noted 2. that the Ministry of Infrastructure & Planning (MOIP) hopes to establish a national hydrographic governance structure in 2012/13 which will:

- Determine how best to meet hydrographic obligations
- Appoint a designated MSI Coordinator
- Establish a National Hydrographic Priorities Consultative Committee

Taivero Isamaela  
SECRETARY TO CABINET

Fig 1: MOU from the government of the Cook Islands

### 3.0 IHO Technical Visit

- A technical visit to the Cook Islands by Commodore Rod Nairn and Adam Greenland (LINZ) in February 2012 and the emphasis was the value and importance of hydrography services concern have been raised on the status of charting in the SW Pacific

- Inform about Cook Islands obligation for provision of Hydrographic services arising from international conventions
- Encourage Cook Islands recognise Hydrographic responsibilities and implement governance arrangement to meet these obligation

#### 4.0 Cook Islands Risk Assessments

LINZ has concluded an MOU (Pacific Regional Hydrography Programme) with NZAID and a contract with Marico Marine to participate in a hydrographic risk assessment programme for a selected number of Pacific Island countries including the Cook Islands. LINZ is the New Zealand Hydrographic Authority and has charting coverage in the SW Pacific region. This includes the maintenance and production of the Cook Islands official nautical charts. Marico Marine is a New Zealand based company that undertakes marine risk assessments.

It is envisaged that once the assessment is done, it will allow the Cook Islands Government to come to a conclusion about the nature and scope of marine chart improvements in the Cook Islands. It will allow the Cook Islands to prioritize areas for the provision of accurate and adequate nautical charts to meet the needs of contemporary shipping

Nautical charts and hydrography underpin every human activity in, on or under the sea, including:

- Safety of navigation
- Maritime boundaries and policing
- Seaborne tourism
- Maritime trade

#### 5.0 Risk Model

The risk model being used by the Team will identify shipping routes at risk, in relation to traffic type, size and volume, when considered against a large number of consequences impact criteria.

The risk model approach is reliant on quality of input datasets and the island visits will provide some of the information necessary for this model.

## 6.0 Outer Islands Visits

During their visit, the team, accompanied by Mr Vaipo Mataora of ICI, and delegation have visited the Islands of the Northern and Southern Cook Islands - Penrhyn, Manihiki, Pukapuka, Aitutaki, Atiu, Mauke and Mitiaro to identify:

- Local areas of cultural significance, coastal that if affected by a ship accident would cause cultural concern.
- Local areas of environmental significance including protected areas and areas of international significance
- Local areas of economic significance
- Tourism volume and regional importance of same, etc

The Risk Assessments results and findings will be presented to the Cook Islands government officials during the 13<sup>th</sup> South West Pacific Hydrographic Commission meeting here in the Cook Islands.

## 7.0 IHO and IMO Capacity building Training

- MSI training completed in Sydney, August 2010
- Hydrographic Survey and Introduction to Chart Production 11-22 October 2010
- 9<sup>th</sup> SWPHC held in Papua New Guinea (2011)
- 10<sup>th</sup> SWPHC held in Brisbane (2012).
- Regional Training on Hydrography Surveying 24<sup>th</sup> September to 5<sup>th</sup> October 2012, Suva, Fiji.
- MSI Training Wellington New Zealand 25-27 August 2014

## 8.0 Phases of Hydrographic Capacity Building

### Preliminary

- Raise awareness of Coastal State obligations under treaty law

### Phase One

- Establish national governance structure for Hydrography

- Establish MSI service
- Establish capability for collection of nautical information to maintain existing charts and publications

#### Phase Two

- Establish capacity to conduct systematic hydrographic surveys, data gathering and processing

#### Phase Three

- Establish production and maintenance of charts and publications

## 9.0 NAUTICAL CHARTS

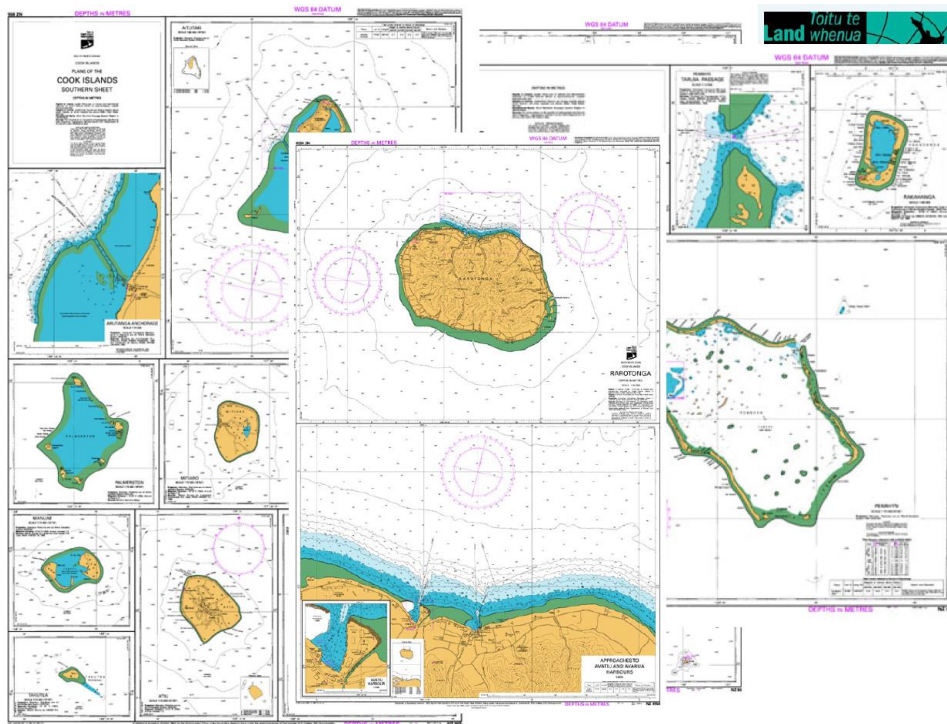
Two series of Nautical Charts of the Cook Islands were produced by the Land Information New Zealand in October 1993. The Nautical Charts shows the Southern and the Northern Group islands of the Cook Islands.

Listed in the table below are the three hydrographic Charts covering the Cook Islands

Reference	Map Title	Scale	Type	Data Produced
NZ945	Cook Islands (Northern Sheet)	Various	New Zealand Hydrographic Chart	October 1995
NZ955	Cook Islands (Southern Sheet)	Various	New Zealand Hydrographic Chart	October 1993
NZ9558	Cook Islands (Rarotonga)	1:40000	New Zealand Hydrographic Chart	October 1992

The Cook Islands has a good coverage of hydrographic charts produced by Land Information New Zealand. These charts are published on the World Geodetic system 1984 (WGS84)





## 10.0 Challenges

- Lack of political support from government
- Lack of funding from government
- Technical personnel relocate overseas no succession plan in place
- Lack of Maritime Training Institution in the Pacific Region
- Availability of hydrographic Surveying equipments and costs

## 11.0 Cook Islands way forward

- Recognise International Obligations
- Establish national Hydrographic governance structure
  - Determine how best meet hydrography obligations
  - Assign Responsibilities-Appoint MSI Coordinator
  - Formation of a National Hydrographic Priorities Consultative Committee
- Review Hydrographic support arrangement with New Zealand
- Review Hydrographic Capacity Building Requirements
- Join the Regional Hydrographic Commission and attend meetings
- Consider Joining IHO as independents State (as Cook Islands has done with IMO)

