

COOK ISLANDS
NATIONAL REPORT



9th SOUTH WESTERN PACIFIC
HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION MEETING
PORT MORESBY, PAPUA NEW GUINEA
10th -11th MARCH 2009

COOK ISLANDS HYDROGRAPHIC SERVICES

The Ministry of Transport & Tourism is currently the government agency responsible for hydrographic services in the Cook Islands. However the Ministry lack the capacity and skill personnel in undertaking hydrography surveying. The Ministry of Infrastructure & Planning, Survey Land Information Division carried out shallow water hydrographic survey mainly for harbour development and for safety of navigation both in the Northern and the Southern group islands. The dissemination of Marine Safety Information in the past was the responsible of the Survey Land Information division (formerly Department of Survey), however during the 1996-97 economic crisis many of our technical staff were made redundant and migrate overseas and hydrographic services were phase out and no longer exist.

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.

Under SOLAS V/9 – It is an obligation for Government of the Cook Islands to collect and compile of hydrographic data and the publication, dissemination and keeping up to date of all nautical information necessary for safe navigation.

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 Land Information New Zealand. These charts are published on the World Geodetic system 1984 (WGS84).

PROJECTS

Maritime Boundary Delimitation

The Ministry of Infrastructure & Planning, Survey Land Information division is involved in the National Maritime Boundary delimitation project along with the assistance from South Pacific Geoscience (SOPAC) and Geoscience Australia. In this project three provisional boundaries yet to be negotiated with our neighbours i.e. Tokerau, Kiribati and Niue.

Cook Islands Extended Continental Shelf

The Cook Islands also involved in this project along with other pacific island countries who will be submitting their submission of their extended continental shelf to United Nation Law of the Sea Convention by May 13th 2009. The Cook Islands is in the process of completing its Executive Summary.

Conclusion

The Cook Islands will be making a request to the SWPHC for technical support from IMO members for a urgent review and assess the Cook Islands Hydrographic Surveying capacity in the Cook Islands, and provide guidelines for the development of local hydrographic capabilities and to discuss and advise of technical issues in regards to hydrography capacity in the Cook Islands.

Capacity building is another area of concern where Cook Islands have no technical personnel in hydrography surveying, I therefore seek the urgent assistance from the SWPHC, IHO and IMO to address this issue in the near future and for us to be successful in providing MSI to our stakeholders for the safety of navigation and to comply with SOLAS convention.