

Activity Completion Report: South-West Pacific Regional Hydrography Programme (May 2015)

Activity information

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| Activity Title | South-West Pacific Regional Hydrography Programme (SWPRHP) |
| Goal | Accurate and adequate charting coverage in the South West Pacific |
| Intended outcomes | Improved navigational and maritime safety in the South West Pacific Expansion of the cruise ship industry in the South West Pacific. |

Executive Summary

This Activity resulted in the electronic conversion of the full folio of 60 paper charts in the South West Pacific that is held by Land Information New Zealand (LINZ), the New Zealand Hydrographic Authority (NZHA). While there are issues with the quality of the original data, which means that the same inaccuracies are carried over to the Electronic Navigation Charts (ENCs), the charts are now at least compliant with Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) Convention mandatory Electronic Chart Display & Information System (ECDIS) requirement. All vessels over 500 Gross Tonnes (GT) are required to carry ECDIS which use ENCs, so the chart conversion is a crucial first step. Ongoing work to improve the quality of the information contained in the electronic charts is now required (and will be addressed by the MFAT-funded Pacific Regional Navigation Initiative (PRNI), 2015-2020). While the production of ENCs will go some way to improve maritime safety, the real benefit will come from accessing known relevant maritime data, providing regular navigational-related updates as well as other factors influencing maritime safety. (Note that the Activity did not provide training to mariners, assess the seaworthiness of vessels, or fund mitigations or similar measures).

The Activity also resulted in an agreed methodology being developed to undertake hydrographic risk assessments (that include a cost benefit analysis and a maritime economic analysis). Risk assessment work was successfully undertaken in Vanuatu and also in the Cook Islands and Tonga. The Activity was initially overly ambitious in geographic scope and during implementation it was decided to limit the number of countries. This will be picked up in a subsequent Activity focussing on regional navigation (i.e. the PRNI), which will include three additional countries (Niue, Samoa and Tokelau).

The Government of Vanuatu, private sector and other development partners were also actively engaged in the risk assessment work in Vanuatu and this led to a proof-of-concept being implemented. Noting the importance of the cruise ship industry in Vanuatu, the level of timely engagement by these relevant stakeholders will lead to joint commitment of these parties to maintain and support the longer term sustainability. It is likely that the experience in Vanuatu will spread to other PICs, as was successfully achieved in the Cook Islands and Tonga, as the various players come to hear and fully understand what occurred, and how their country could have undertaken a similar process.

The scope for the Activity was amended to focus the risk assessment in just three countries (Vanuatu, Tonga and the Cook Islands) and to extend the period by a year (i.e. from two years to three years). The agreed outputs were delivered to a high standard. The risk assessment

methodology has provided a model that can be replicated and have benefit far beyond the life of this Activity.

The main lessons learned related to the importance of early engagement with the full range of stakeholders and this was borne out by what happened in Vanuatu where the Government, private sector and development partners worked in partnership. Spending time and effort to get the methodology correct and the partnerships in place was crucial to overall success.

The Activity was well managed by LINZ, who managed contracts with the Marico Marine NZ Ltd, as Supplier of the risk assessment methodology and implementation. The steering committee provided an appropriate level of guidance and oversight. LINZ's interaction with MFAT was productive and positive and issues that arose were promptly worked through and resolved.

At the outset and during implementation the Activity identified 24 risks that were actively managed. The key risks primarily focused on ensuring reliable and replicable risk assessment methodology, stakeholder engagement and the linkage of ENCs and mitigation measures to wider maritime safety.