

ANTIGUA AND BARBUDA



National Report TO MESO-AMERICAN AND CARIBBEAN HYDROGRAPHIC COMMISSION (MACHC) XIII MEETING,

ANTIGUA, GUATEMALA

19 to 23 NOVEMBER 2012

1. HYDROGRAPHIC OFFICE:

The National Hydrographic Office (NHO) was established on the 21 June 2010, under the auspices of The Department of Marine Services and Merchant Shipping (ADOMS). The terms of reference for the operation of the NHO are based on the framework provided by the IHB. The NHO is still in its nascent stages of development however it is strongly committed to the hydrography capacity building program of the Caribbean, recognizing the importance of having adequate hydrographic coverage, updated hydrographic data of the territorial waters, ports, coastal area, harbours and approaches to facilitate the safe movement of maritime traffic throughout the region.

2. SURVEYS

2.1 Hydrographic Surveys

On the National Level, one hydrographic survey was carried out during mid May 2012. This survey took place with the technical assistance and the collaborative efforts of the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office's technical team, lead by the Chairman of the MACHC -, United Kingdom National Hydrographer, Rear Admiral Nick Lambert, in conjunction with the British High Commission based in Barbados. The British were at the time carrying out a survey on the port area in the neighbouring island of Montserrat, and based on the proximity of this exercise to Antigua and Barbuda these circumstances provided the perfect opportunity for NHO to engage the UKHO to assist in conducting a similar exercise in Antigua and Barbuda.

The survey of the approach to the St John's Harbour via the Sandy Island Channel was undertaken by the 'HMS Protector' and its satellite vessel the 'Teranova'. The results were communicated to the relevant stakeholders within the State of Antigua & Barbuda. This information was particularly useful for Bryson's Shipping, the agent for approximately ninety-five percent (95%) of the Cruise Lines visiting our shores.

2.2 Proposed survey of the English and Falmouth Harbours

As the SOLAS Convention clearly identifies specific navigation safety services that Contracting Governments are duty-bound to provide, the Antigua and Barbuda Department of Marine Services and Merchant Shipping is seeking to ensure that the jurisdiction is fully compliant with the Convention's provisions.

In 2011 a plan for the surveying of the English and Falmouth Harbours inclusive of the Historic Nelson's Dockyard was conceived between the UKHO and the government of Antigua & Barbuda. The main purpose of this survey is to re-map the areas which were undertaken since the late 1800's.

In addition, this area was also considered based upon (1) the high volume of yachting activities occurring in the area and (2) its small scale representation on the existing charts. As a result it was considered imperative that there should be a specific chart highlighting the bathymetry of the area and its approaches on a large scale. It is also important to gather such data for the future development of electronic navigation charts of the areas.

This proposal did not materialize due to constraints met within the projected timelines and other unforeseen circumstances. It is now air marked for mid year 2013.

2.3 TIDE STATIONS.

The tide station on the sister island of Barbuda is functioning at full capacity. This station is monitored by the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration NOAA of the USA and the Antigua & Barbuda Meteorological Office.

In our previous report it was reported that the tide Station at Camp Blizzard on the mainland of Antigua was out of commission and was under repair.

A number of agencies assisted in these repairs including crew members of the survey vessel HMS Protector and members of the UKHO. This station in Antigua and similar ones within the OECS Region are considered non functional and will be replaced in the near future as indicated by the technical staff of the local National Meteorological Office.

3. CHARTS AND PUBLICATIONS:

There is no new nautical paper chart update of Antigua & Barbuda by the UKHO within the year.

4. MSI

4.1 Existing infrastructure for transmission

Maritime Safety Information (MSI's) is generated by the Department of Marine Services and Merchant Shipping (ADOMS) in conjunction with the Antigua and Barbuda Port Authority, The Antigua and Barbuda Defense Force Coast Guard, The Fisheries Division and other local maritime interests. The information is checked by the NHO for correctness and then channeled to the UKHO for the prompt updating of maritime charts and official Notices to Mariners.

All local notices to mariners are channeled through the Antigua and Barbuda Defense Force Coast Guard who has the capacity to disseminate the information.

5. CAPACITY BUILDING

5.1 Antigua & Barbuda is now leading a campaign to promote the development of hydrography in the Wider Caribbean Region (WCR). To be more specific, the Organization of the Eastern Caribbean (OECS) has been identified as the organization to spearhead these efforts and negotiations are ongoing to determine the best way forward.

5.2 Required Training

Antigua & Barbuda will continue to focus on the development of our capacity building program, the following areas of training will be addressed in the interim.

- (1) Nautical Cartography Category “A” and “B” respectively**
- (2) Hydrography levels “1” and “2”**
- (3) Office Administration and communication**

6. S-55 LATEST UPDATE

The UKHO provides the information for the updating of the S-55 database

7. OCEANOGRAPHIC ACTIVITIES

Laying of Subsea Telecommunication Cable.

Antigua & Barbuda received communication dated 13 September 2012 from **Alcatel-Lucent Submarine Networks Ltd. based in London UK** , notifying us of the Installation of a Subsea Fibre-Optic Telecommunication Cable in the Exclusive Economic Zone of Antigua and Barbuda. It is most important to note that this cable will not cross the territorial waters of the state.

8. CONCLUSIONS

In the past year, The Department of Marine Services & Merchant Shipping (ADOMS) and the National Hydrographic Office (NHO) have been working closely with the UKHO to promote collaborative efforts between OECS Member States in relation to development of Hydrography in the region.

In the foreseeable future, the NHO wishes to continue to collaborate with other NHO's of the OECS with respect to the sharing of information, data, and equipment when acquired. The capacity building efforts already in process will continue and this will only serve to ensure that the requisite resources are in place to effectively manage and service the industry regionally.