

Minutes of Workshop on Pathways to Professionalism

Held on 10th October 2006 during the XIII International FIG Congress,
Munich Congress Centre, Munich, Germany

Present were:

Bill Graham		Fugro Offshore Survey UK
David Neale		University of the West Indies, Trinidad and Tobago
Jerry Mills		U.S. NOAA Hydrographic Surveys
Andy Armstrong		US NOAA Joint Hydrographic Center, UNH
Steve Shipman	IHB	
Hugo Gorziolia	IHB	
Vanessa O'Connell		Sydney Port authority
Wilfried Ellmer		Bundesamt fur Seeschifffahrt und Hydrographie
Gordon Johnston		Venture Geomatics Limited
Adam Greenland		Land Information New Zealand, Chair Commission 4
Andrew Leyzack		Canadian Hydrographic Service, Vice Chair Commission 4
Ignatious Nhnyere		Tanzania Ports Authority
Ross Ritchie		Lauveston City Council, Tasmania Australia
John Mc Carthy		Mapping and Hydrographic Surveys, Australia
Innocent Egbuh		Nigerian Institute of Surveyors
C.H. Teo		Malaysia

The workshop began at 1615 hrs in the Konigsee Room of the Munich Congress Centre

Mr. Adam Greenland, Chair of Commission 4, introduced the workshop and described the workshop arrangements.

Two short presentations were made, the first by Andy Armstrong who spoke of the current work of the IHO/FIG/ICA International Advisory Board on the Standards of Competence of Hydrographic Surveyors and Nautical Cartographic in terms of Category A and Category B recognition. He explained that currently the Board's accreditation recognizes agencies or institutions rather than individuals. He further detailed the challenges that such an approach creates and the kind of effort that would be involved if the IHO were to consider recognizing individuals.

The second presentation was by Andrew Leyzack who sought to give an overview of the a proposed Canadian system of professional recognition, developed by the Association of Canada Lands Surveyors and the Canadian Hydrographic Association.

A question was posed to the group: What constitutes a qualified hydrographic surveyor? The workshop held discussion on the theme issue for about forty minutes with several participants offering views. The following are some of the main views expressed.

- Whereas a category-A accreditation is granted to an educational program which focuses on providing the tools to solve non-routine problems and a category B

accreditation applies to solving technical issues, the IAB may want to consider changing the category A and Category B titles to use some other terminology in order to address a perception that one category (A) was 'better' than the other. The current situation is such that far more people are electing to enroll in category-A programs resulting in a shortage of technicians.

- That clear criteria should be set out to define each category of accreditation.
- Education alone does not constitute a qualified hydrographic surveyor. The criteria for qualifying an individual would include a combination of education, experience, continued training and some measure of competence.
- Competencies will change over time and it would be essential that surveyors maintain their qualifications through continuing professional development.
- A national or regional organization could monitor experience and continued training (CPD) criteria but there would have to be some baselines for international interchange.
- The Australasian Hydrographic Certification Panel (AHCP) and International Marine Contractor's Association (IMCA) have established certification programs and both organizations have applied to the IAB for recognition. The IMCA submitted their proposal in 2003 and the AHCP in 2005.
- The AHCP cite the benefits of their program as improved career paths and rates of pay. Under Keel Clearance issues, increased responsibility and potential liability are driving a demand for some measurement of competence for hydrographic surveyors.

The subject of individual recognition or certification is contentious as it may conflict with standards and guidelines set out by existing national surveying authorities and programs at state or regional levels. There has to be a mandate from sponsoring organizations to support these certification programs and the costs associated with administering them.