

International Federation of Hydrographic Societies

(formerly **The Hydrographic Society**)



20 April 2005

Adam Greenland
Chairman
FIG Commission 4

Message to the Federation Internationale des Geometres (FIG)

On behalf of the International Federation of Hydrographic Societies, it is a great honour to have been invited by the Federation Internationale to present my views on the future of hydrographic enterprise. It is therefore a huge disappointment for me not to be able to address you in person, however, John McCarthy is graciously acting as emissary on behalf of the IFHS and myself.

I want to say to you that I believe that the collaboration between practitioners, customers and government interests will be the key to ensuring the right precedence is given to the development of hydrography. Too frequently, a slight divergence in our respective aims has resulted in a large divergence of effort; and as a consequence, the greater public has not had sufficient understanding of maritime surveying to allocate it the appropriate resources.

As John McCarthy will elaborate on, from the IFHS perspective (ie that of the learned customer), the role of modern maritime surveying and exploration is to facilitate greater "freedom of manoeuvre". This means the pursuit of hydrographic excellence should result in greater speed, greater size, more direct passage, faster turn around, greater automation - and greater safety. Accordingly, hydrographic practitioners must continue to strive for internationally agreed and consistent standards. To achieve this, practitioner, customer and regulatory interests must work together strategically.

In a global market place, its stating the obvious to say that hydrographic and related information increasingly facilitates the generation, sustainment, transportation and security of resources. This makes hydrography the great common denominator of all maritime enterprise. This is a challenging, perhaps vital time. It is apparent that hydrography and those skills that identify and ensure safe passage (irrespective of flag) are seen as bridging gaps in understanding, where few other lines of communication may exist.

Beyond this, I believe that the recent and extraordinary progress in oceanology has meant that the maritime industry and undersea exploration will be to this century, that which aviation and aerospace exploration was to the last. I wish the FIG every success in this conference and only wish that I were there in Cairo to discuss these important issues with you. I look forward to our increasing collaboration.

Yours Most Faithfully,

Paul Hornsby
Chairman
International Federation of Hydrographic Societies