



NATIONAL REPORT ST.KITTS AND NEVIS TO THE RHC AT THE MACHC 18 MEETING IN VARADERO CUBA NOV29-DEC2 2017

As a contracting party to the SOLAS Convention, St. Kitts and Nevis is determined to fulfil its obligations of providing timely and adequate hydrography information to guide mariners and support other activities such as Maritime Boundary Delimitation.

St. Kitts and Nevis does not have a direct Hydrography Department whose sole responsibility is hydrography, due to lack of resources the development of charts for the federation has been delegated to the UKHO, which is the federation's primary charting authority.

The Directorate of Maritime Affairs has been responsible for the co-ordination of all maritime activities in St Kitts and Nevis, since its establishment in 1999. He is support by a staff of five personnel who perform duties of Flag, Port and Coastal responsibilities. The Merchant Shipping Act (Chapter 7.05), Revised Edition, 31st December 2002, is the primary piece of legislation that governs the responsibility of the DMA including SOLAS Chapter V - Regulation 9 responsibilities as it relates to Hydrography.

In relation MSDI, DMA has a National Hydrography Coordinator and hydrography Committee who is responsible for collection and dissemination of hydrographic data for the safety of navigation, supported by GIS staff from the office of Physical Planning. The office Physical Planning is responsible for the technical aspects of hydrography and data gathering. The National Hydrographic Coordinator liaises with local agencies to ensure timely supply of plans and co-ordinates of new developments for disseminating to the primary charting authority, UKHO. In some cases of development this information has not been forth coming.

As it relates to Navigation warnings, the Department of Maritime Affairs delegates the promulgation of local Notices to Mariners to the St. Christopher Air & Seaports Authority (SCASPA), Nevis Air & Seaports Authority (NASPA) and the Coast Guard.

Surveys:

The United States Navy conducted Multibeam Echo sounder surveys in the Main Ports of Basseterre St. Kitts, and Charlestown and Long Point Port Nevis in November 2016. The primary objective of this hydrographic survey operation was to collect environmental and navigational data in Basseterre Bay which will support safety of navigation via nautical charts and Sailing Directions updates. The data is expected to be delivered in February 2018.

Problems encountered

The lack of equipment and trained personnel to conduct survey is a big hindrance to up to date and timely surveys. St Christopher Air and Seaports Authority, Nevis Air and Seaports Authority and Port Zante Marina are dredged yearly by a local contractor (St. Kitts Marine Works), but do not have the modern equipment to provide accurate survey data. Soundings are normally carried out to verify the depth data in their berths.

New charts & updates

St. Kitts and Nevis is presently awaiting the survey data from the surveys conducted by the U.S Navy in November 2016. Once in receipt, the data will be forwarded to the UKHO to update the ENC's. INT charts – Int'l charts available are 484, 485, 1025

National paper charts – 487, 489. Chart 489 was updated with information pertaining to the approaches to the Christophe Harbour Mariner.

The processing of survey data is time consuming; this affects the ability to frequently update charts and publications. All publications and updates are done by the charting authority.

MSI

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GDMSS Status – As it relates to coastal navigational warning and SAR, St. Kitts and Nevis received assistance through MRCC Martinique. The Department of Maritime Affairs Mr Wayne Edmeade is the National Coordinator for World Wide Navigational Warning Service.

Some problems encountered – Small vessels are not equipped with AIS thus becomes difficult to locate during SAR.

Capacity Building

An employee of the Department of Maritime Affairs attended the Meso American and Caribbean Hydrographic Commission (MACHC) MSI course in Morgan Bay, St Lucia, on 16-18 August 2016.

St. Kitts and Nevis has expressed a mutual desire to promote cooperation in the field of hydrography with the UKHO. There is presently a draft arrangement under review. In addition, St. Kitts and Nevis has participated in OECS Hydrographic Project Scoping study.

The DMA in conjunction with the SKASPA is in the process of installing aids to navigation as we speak.

St Kitts hosted an IALA risk management regional Workshop earlier this year.

Oceanographic activities

Tide gauge networks. One tide gauge is installed at the St. Kitts Nevis Coast Guard Pier, which is presently been monitored by the Department of Physical Planning.

Other activities

Meteorological data is collected and disseminated through the Aeronautical office at the Saint Christopher Air and Seaports Authority. The National Emergency Disaster Management Agency coordinates response to natural disasters through the National emergency Plan.

The Government of St Kitts and Nevis will establish a network of marine protected areas, implementing, where practicable, the Caribbean Challenge Initiative to which it is a signatory to.

Activities:

- Undertake an assessment of existing MPAs in St Kitts and Nevis
- Develop a strategy for a national network of Marine Protected Areas
- Strengthen management systems and capacities
- Establish management plans for MPA Zones
- Establish mechanisms for sustained financing of MPAs through the establishment of a national biodiversity fund

Conclusion

St. Kitts and Nevis has developed a national maritime policy to ensure a more integrated approach to managing the marine resources of St. Kitts and Nevis. As being aware of the constraints and challenges, St. Kitts and Nevis remain committed to fulfilling its obligation under SOLAS Chapter V, recognizing that modern and reliable data is fundamental to the development of hydrographic capability within the federation.

Any assistance that can be rendered by developing states or organizations to improve hydrography within the federation of St. Kitts and Nevis would be greatly appreciated.

By Nigel Williams