



Foreword

Ruth Farre (BSc. Cert. Nat. Sci.)
South African Navy Hydrographic Office, Private Bag X1, Tokai, 7966



The South African Navy Hydrographic Office (SANHO) has over the years received several requests from neighbouring countries to assist them with the installation of their tide gauges as well as to teach their technical staff to maintain and repair these tide gauges. IHO Technical Visits in the Southern Africa and Islands Hydrographic Commission (SAIHC) region identified that there were several functioning tide gauges in the region; however none of them were tied to a common national datum. Tide data was being acquired by the relevant organisation for their own specific needs, negating the needs of the greater maritime community. These organisations had no understanding of the importance of tying their tide data to a common national datum or the wider uses of tidal data. It became evident that a need existed for members of the SAIHC region to undertake a basic tidal course.

As an introductory workshop, the Tides and Water Levels Technical Workshop is aimed at countries wishing to develop their tidal capabilities. The ultimate aim is to ensure that tide gauges within a region are installed and referenced correctly to a common national datum thus allowing Member States to provide reliable, accurate tidal data to the international community.

This week long workshop provides an introduction to basic tidal theory and the factors that affect the tides and tidal stream/ current. An overview of various types of equipment used to measure tides and tidal stream leads into the considerations to be taken into account when looking at possible locations to install a tide gauges. An explanation and demonstrations on how to correctly install a tide gauge, find the tide gauge zero and calibrate the equipment give the attendees the tools to develop their own tidal networks. An introduction into tidal analysis and prediction methods is also touched on however the emphasis at this point is on gathering and storing of the best quality data possible. A practical session gives first-hand knowledge of the equipment used to level a tide gauge into the national benchmark system, as well as how to carry out basic maintenance and repairs. The attendees are encouraged to share their experiences and open dialogues with each other, creating a network of colleagues.