

Founded in 1878 in Paris, the **Fédération International des Géomètres (FIG)** is an international umbrella organisation for national surveying associations which covers all disciplines of the surveying profession. **Commission 4 (Hydrography)** has been active since 1968. **Ruth Adams** is the new UK RICS delegate to this Commission and reports from their latest meeting at **Hydro2002**.



FIG's Hydrographic Surveyors rally at Hydro2002

By Ruth Adams

Commission 4 of FIG consists of an international group of surveying professional and academics that freely give their time to FIG and its hydrographic objectives – full details of which are contained in a comprehensive workplan. We aim to represent hydrographers from all disciplines worldwide.

The current work plan includes four working groups:

- Working Group 4.1 – Strategic Partnerships, led by Adam Kerr (UK)
- Working Group 4.2 – Vertical Reference Frame, led by Dr Ahmed El-Rabbang (Canada)
- Working Group 4.3 – The Marine Environment and Coastal Zone Management, led by Michael Sutherland (Canada)
- Working Group 4.4 – Hydrographic education, training & CPD, led by Adam Greenland (UK)

But Commission 4's remit covers many other areas such as hydrographic surveying, data processing and management, and nautical charting and bathymetric maps. For background reading on FIG and Commission 4 I recommend reading Adam Greenland's recent article in *HYDRO International*, Oct 02 edition. The FIG website www.fig.net is well worth a visit too.

Hydro2002

Hydro2002 was held a few weeks ago in Kiel, Germany, from 8–10 October. Around 300 delegates from around the world met to discuss and debate

hydrographic issues covering subjects such as the accuracy of multibeam systems, nautical charting, database management and manipulation, navigation, environmental monitoring, coastal zone management and a plethora of other topics.

Forty presentations were made from a diverse range of speakers such as the German Minister of Economic Affairs, numerous research students, equipment manufacturers and hydrographic surveyors. Dr Peter Ehlers, President of the Federal Maritime and Hydrographic Agency, Germany, gave a challenging keynote speech about the latest developments to the International SOLAS (Safety of Life at Sea) agreement. In particular he highlighted the recent revision of Chapter V and its implications to the international hydrographic community.

Alongside this was a comprehensive equipment exhibition for which we were allotted ample time to browse.

Obviously, no conference would be complete without the social side and, as expected, we hydrographers used our time valuably networking over a stein or two of German lager. At the Conference Dinner we were entertained by the Kiel Harbour Pilots singing sea shanties which brought a smile to many a salty hydrographer's face!

Further details of the proceedings and papers can be obtained from the International Federation of Hydrographic Societies for £60 (contact Helen Atkinson helen@hydrographicsociety.org). There will also be a complimentary copy of the papers on CDROM with the January 2003 issue of the *Hydrographic Journal*.

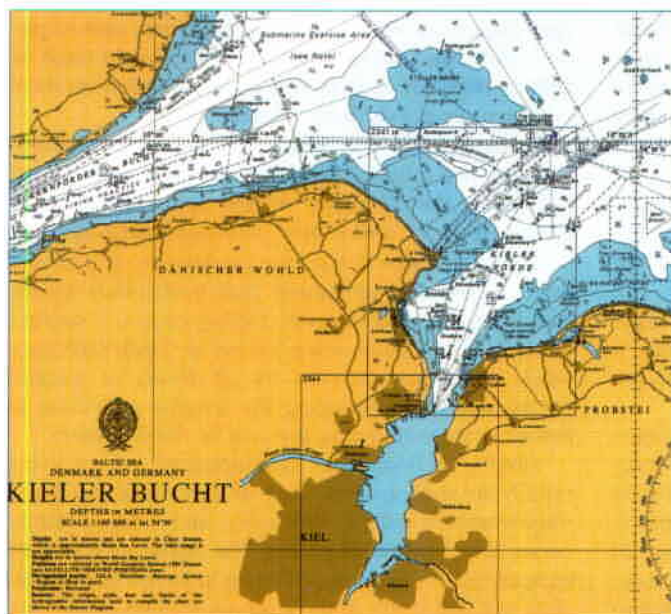
FIG Meeting

On the Wednesday, 19 hydrographers met to discuss the latest issues concerning Commission 4. Adam Greenland, Commission Chair, started by giving an overview presentation of FIG, for those new to the Commission and its work.

Strategic Partnerships

Adam Kerr, chairman of Working Group 4.1, provided an update concerning closer links with other international hydrographic societies and organisations, in particular the International Hydrographic Organisation (IHO) and the newly formed International Federation of Hydrographic Societies (IFHS), formally The Hydrographic Society.

The IHO is currently undergoing a major strategic review of its activities into



Kiel in Germany was the venue for Hydro2002. For those coming by sea this Admiralty chart would have been useful.
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which Commission 4 aims to make a valued contribution. The IHO review committee is not expected to report in the near future but in the meantime Commission 4 will maintain its links through the FIG/IHO/ICA International Advisory Board. A new agreement is being drawn up between FIG and IHO which should be in place by the end of the year.

The IFHS has just come into being and FIG Commission 4 is committed to working closely with this newly formed body.

TACC (Technical Assistance and Cooperation Coordination Committee)

Dr Wilfried Schlieder (German Waterways) and Dirk Bakker (The Hydrographic Society) gave a presentation on this joint FIG/IHO committee. Unfortunately, this committee, formed in 1989, can no longer be supported by FIG due to funding constraints. However, the IHO will continue with TACC activities into the future. The meeting acknowledged the time and effort which Schlieder and Bakker have put into TACC over the years.

With no further business, the meeting adjourned. The next meeting of Commission 4 is scheduled for the FIG Working Week in Paris in April 2003. In the meantime, Commission 4 activity continues via the working groups. **GW**



Adam Greenland (left) who chairs Commission 4, makes a presentation. Below: Commission 4 members meet.



Biography

Ruth Adams works for the UK Hydrographic Office based in Taunton heading up the Geodesy, Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing sections. She has a degree in Surveying Sciences from the University of Newcastle upon Tyne and is a chartered surveyor.