Hong Kong’s Hydrographic Office has updated the 2003 Digital Tidal Stream Atlas with seven new important features to provide harbour pilots, mariners and port operators with the latest tidal stream information to enhance its quality.

The new features added to the application include:
◆ Comprehensive tidal stream prediction functions;
◆ User-friendly mapping interfaces;
◆ 15 minutes tidal prediction at any places within Hong Kong waters;
◆ Visualization of the direction and magnitude of the tidal stream by simply placing the mouse over a shown current vector;
◆ Choosing of vectors density;
◆ Pan, zoom (in and out), position marking and digital file output; and,
◆ Pre-view of tidal level at a selected tidal station.

Based on users feedback, the enhanced 2003 version of the digital atlas has updated the first edition of the 2002 digital tidal stream atlas.

Using IT technology advances, the Hydrographic Office converted pre-calculated results of the mathematical hydraulic model to produce a digitized format of tidal stream atlas in 2001.

The development of the Hong Kong digital atlas shows that by applying readily available information technology, a low cost application can be easily developed to help improve port safety and enhance efficiency.

To share the experience with other port authorities, the digital atlas has been nominated to the International Association of Ports and Harbours IT Award 2003 competition.

The year 2003 Digital Tidal Stream Atlas is now available in CD-ROM at a cost of HK$75 at the Marine Department or the Government Publications Sale outlet.

HK port users get enhanced 2003 Digital Tidal Stream Atlas

Results orientated cleansing contract for cleaning HK waters

Full mission ship simulator for training and assessment of Marine personnel

Shipowners awarded for strong support to HK Shipping Register

Special Task Force to assess training needs of local vessels
Results orientated cleansing contract for cleaning HK waters

The Marine Department has begun to introduce an “objective-based” — result orientated — mode of marine cleansing contract for cleaning the sea surface within Hong Kong waters.

This new mode of contract was introduced following a pilot scheme in Cheung Chau Typhoon Shelter that was found to be quite successful.

“Under the ‘objective-based’ mode of contract, the contractors are simply required to keep the prescribed areas of sea surface clean,” said Marine Officer Captain Andrew L. H. Ng, head of Pollution Control Unit.

To carry out their task, the contractors are allowed to adopt any cleaning method, use the most appropriate type of equipment and manpower they consider best fitted to do the job.

MD officials make spot checks to evaluate the contractor’s work and if the result is found to be unsatisfactory, a default notice is issued and rectification work is carried out immediately.

Since July, 2002, marine refuse scavenging and collection services in four typhoon shelters — Causeway Bay, Shau Kei Wan, Tuen Mun and Cheung Chau - have been brought under the “objective-based” contract system.

The results have proven to be satisfactory and there has been no need to issue any default notice. At the same time, the community feels that the level of cleanliness in the typhoon shelters have improved.

MD plans to bring other cleansing contractors under this “objective-based” mode of contract as well.

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HK port users get enhanced 2003 Digital Tidal Stream Atlas

Free Internet access remains available to users who want only two days’ basic tidal stream information (http://www.hydro.gov.hk/tidal/district.htm.) Further enhancements such as tidal level calculation, phases of the moon and other useful features will be made to future products.
A full mission ship simulator has recently been installed in the Marine Department Training Centre. The system comprises a visual display on a curved screen with a 210 degree angle of view, a mock up bridge and an instructor station. It fully complies with the STCW 95 requirement and is capable of conducting IMO model courses.

The mock up bridge is equipped with navigational and control consoles such as Auto Pilot, Radar, DGPS, ECDIS, Echo Sounder, Doppler Log and GMDSS. Preparation of exercise scenarios and monitoring of the progress of the exercise is performed at the instructor station.

“The advantage of using simulator for training and assessment is that various navigational situations and traffic conditions can be created,” said Steven Lam, Head of Marine Department Training Centre. “These include unfavourable visibility, current, wind, tide, traffic density as well as various marine emergencies. Having training and assessment on board a real ship under these conditions are obviously risky, and are difficult to achieve and control,” he added.

“WeWith the dedicated software, the 3D port model database can be modified to incorporate any changes of port infrastructures. Ship models used in the system can also be created or modified to suit specific training and assessment purpose,” said Mr Lam.

Presently, the ship simulator is used for training of departmental officers. In the longer term, opportunities of using the ship simulator for training and assessment will be extended to other government departments as well as other marine personnel such as pilots and ship officers.
Shipowners awarded for strong support to HK Shipping Register

The Marine Department and the Hong Kong Shipowners Association (HKSOA) jointly presented various awards to shipowners on January 23, 2003, for their strong support to the Hong Kong Shipping Register (HKSR).

HKSOA chairman K. H. Koo presented the awards witnessed by Director of Marine Tsui Shung-yiu.

Mr Xu Zunwu, managing director of COSCO (H.K.) Shipping Co Ltd received COSCO (Hong Kong) Group’s award for having the most gross tonnage on the HKSR while Mr Vincent Tsang, director of World-wide Shipping Agency Ltd accepted the largest gross tonnage ship to join the HKSR award that went to his company’s vessel m.t. NESS.

Sinotrans Shipping Ltd’s award for being the company with the largest dedicated fleet on the HKSR was received by Mr Wang Chun Lin, director and general manager of the company.

Mr Mark Harris, chief executive officer of Pacific Basin Shipping Investments Ltd received the award presented to m.v. Albany Sound for being the ship that crossed the 14 million gross tonnage (gt) mark of the HKSR.

The last two awards were for m.t. Maritime Vanessa of Vanessa Navigation Company Ltd IMC and m.t. Oriental Tiger for being the ships that crossed the 15 million and 16 million gross tonnage mark of the HKSR respectively.

Mr Frank W.K. Tsao, Group chairman of IMC Group of Companies, received the award on behalf of m.t. Maritime Vanessa and Mr Tsoi Tin-chun, chairman of Titan (Holdings) Ltd, received the award presented to m.t. Oriental Tiger.
From left – Managing Director of COSCO (H.K.) Shipping Co. Ltd. Xu Zunwu receives award from HKSOA chairman K. H. Koo, flanked by Director of Marine Tsui Shung-yiu.

From left – Group chairman of IMC Group of Companies Frank W.K. Tsao receives award from HKSOA chairman K. H. Koo, flanked by Director of Marine Tsui Shung-yiu.

From left – Pacific Basin Shipping Investments Ltd chief executive officer Mark Harris receives award from HKSOA chairman K. H. Koo, flanked by Director of Marine Tsui Shung-yiu.

From left – Titan (Holdings) Ltd chairman Tsui Tin-chun receives award from HKSOA chairman K. H. Koo, flanked by Director of Marine Tsui Shung-yiu.

From left – World-wide Shipping Agency Ltd director Vincent Tsang accepts award from HKSOA chairman K. H. Koo, flanked by Director of Marine Tsui Shung-yiu.
The Vocational Training Council’s Maritime Services Training Board (MSTB) has established a Special Task Force Group in November 2002 to assess and review the training needs of crew working on board local vessels and river trade vessels.

Besides analysing the manpower supply and demand for the local industry, the task force, chaired by Mr So Ping-chi, General Manager of Shipping Registry and Seafarers’ Branch, is required to determine the types of training programme needed to cope with the training needs and to determine the adequacy of training facilities.

In addition to developing the curricula for the relevant training programmes, the task force will assist the MSTB with the implementation of relevant training programmes and to assist in promoting the training opportunities.

When the task force has completed its task, it will report its findings to the MSTB.

Members of the Task Force Group include officers from the Marine Department, officers from the Agriculture, Fisheries and Conservation Department, representatives from the Seamen’s Training Centre, associations of local vessel’s operators and fisherman associations.
The Fire Services Department’s capability in search and rescue operations has been enhanced when it took delivery of a ‘diving support vessel’ on January 9, 2003.

The vessel, which was commissioned by the Marine Department for the Fire Services Department, is made of an aluminium hull and has a length of 20.9 metres and breadth of 4.95 metres. It has a loaded draft of 1.5 metres.

To facilitate diving efforts, the vessel has been equipped with various diving and rescue equipment including a decompression chamber unit.

In addition, two fire monitors have also been installed on board the vessel, and each monitor is capable of delivering 4 cubic metres of water per minute to a maximum distance of 50 metres.

The vessel, fitted with two MTU diesel engines with an output power of 788KW each, can operate continuously for 520 nautical miles at a speed of 21.7 knots.

Built to accommodate 26 persons, the vessel is also fitted with a smaller daughter boat to facilitate search and rescue operations in shallow waters.
The addition of two newbuildings – a tanker and a Capesize bulk carrier – to the Hong Kong Shipping Register (HKSR) recently gave the registry, the 9th largest in the world, a tremendous boost.

The Valles Group of Companies, which has been in the shipping business for nearly 100 years, has registered the 106,638 deadweight tonne tanker, the “Seaborne” that was constructed in Tsuneishi of Japan, with the HKSR.

Deputy Director of Marine Roger Tupper and General Manager of the Shipping Registry and Seafarers’ Branch, Mr So Ping-chi, attended the christening and delivery ceremony of the “Seaborne” in Japan in February this year, which was officiated by Valles Steamship Company Ltd’s Managing Director David Koo.

Separately, the newly formed Orient Steamship Group of Companies (OSC Group) of Mr John Koo, formerly from Valles, has also registered the 152,000 deadweight tonne Capesize bulk carrier, the M/V Orient Alliance with the HKSR.

Speaking at the naming and delivery ceremony of the vessel in Xingang, Tianjin, Mr Tupper congratulated Mr John Koo on the formation of his new company, OSC Group and applauded his support for the HKSR.

Following the function, Mr Tupper visited Cosco Bulk Carrier Company to promote the HKSR. The visit was also to get feedback from the company about its level of satisfaction with the HKSR, its future fleet expansion plans and the potential opportunities for gaining more tonnage in the near future.