



Admiralty Future of Navigation Event Highlights Business Efficiencies of Digital Navigation

Hamburg stages first UKHO-led event to support mariners and shipping companies in the transition from paper to digital navigation

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Shipping companies in Germany are adopting digital navigation because it will deliver real business efficiency and support their retention of skilled crew in a challenging business environment.

These were the key findings at the first of a series of international events lead by the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office (UKHO) focused on the strategic and operational issues raised by the fundamental shift in maritime navigation from paper charts to digital technology. The majority of attendees at the event in Hamburg also said they are on schedule to meet their relevant deadline as required by the ECDIS mandate.

The events are part of the UKHO's programme to provide international mariners with timely information and practical guidance which enables them to plan effectively for a future world of digital navigation.

Feedback from attendees at the event, that was co-hosted by Admiralty distributor, Hansenautech, underlined just how challenging a business environment the shipping industry is today. Over 80% of the attendees felt it is harder than ever to make a profit in shipping while satisfying the demands of environmental and safety regulation. The business challenges are exacerbated by the difficulty of retaining crew and staff, a problem which was identified at the event as being the most significant threat to the business today.

However, attendees felt that digital navigation would help directly address both of these issues. Almost 80% of them agreed that there are real benefits in moving their crew from protective to proactive digital navigation, a move that will see crews not just navigating for safety, but enabling them to travel more efficiently, more quickly, and with less impact on the environment. Nearly half (43%) felt that digital navigation will increase the efficiency of their crew, and a quarter expect electronic navigation to reduce the administrative burden. Over half agreed that delivering a modern on-board communications infrastructure and adopting a forward-looking company approach were key factors in retaining crew.

The majority of attendees are also already significantly advanced in their ECDIS compliance planning process, with nearly 65% saying they have everything in place to address the mandatory use of ECDIS or have an implementation plan that is currently on schedule.

Tom Leander, Lloyd's List editor and the event host said, "The focus of this event was to look in detail at the issues mariners and shipping companies face in the adoption of e-navigation, and it offers a fascinating snapshot of the industry in Germany. The audience here clearly recognises the potential that digital navigation offers in support of their business in a tough economic climate, and how it can help move the industry forward as a whole".

Mike Robinson, UKHO chief executive says, "The shipping industry is under mounting pressure to develop and implement plans to guide it through the mandatory transition to digital navigation. The UKHO believes that collaboration plays a key part in helping mariners and shipping companies best prepare. We are working closely with a wide range of stakeholders, including the international hydrographic community, ECDIS manufacturers and distributors and end-users to deliver both the closely integrated bridge technology and in-depth information on achieving compliance which together will help shipping companies plan successfully for a digital future of navigation."

The next event in the series will take place on the 30th June at the landmark Marina Bay Sands Hotel, Singapore. Visit www.futureofnavigation.com for more information.

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About UKHO

1. UKHO, a Government agency owned by the Ministry of Defence, has been charting the world's oceans for more than 200 years with the primary aim of providing navigational services for the Royal Navy and merchant mariners to save and protect lives at sea. In addition it serves small craft and leisure mariners and provides a range of consultancy services.
2. UKHO is a Trading Fund which means it has the freedom to trade commercially to generate revenue and cover running costs.
3. UKHO also plays a central role, in support of the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, in discharging the navigation element of the UK's Safety of Life at Sea Treaty obligations for waters of UK national responsibility.
4. UKHO produces a worldwide series of some 3,300 paper nautical charts and 160 publications under the Admiralty brand and has a growing portfolio of Electronic Navigational Charts (ENCs). These charts are sold globally and used by nearly 70 per cent of international shipping.
5. AVCS brings together Electronic Navigational Charts (ENCs) from national hydrographic offices around the world and new ENC coverage produced by UKHO in co-operation with Foreign Governments to provide comprehensive, official, worldwide coverage.

6. e-Navigator back of bridge application will incorporate the current functionality of the well proven MARIS Maritime Digital Services (MDS) which has been accredited by many ship-owners as the means by which they were able to make the transition from analogue to electronic navigation. e-Navigator will build upon this platform and include extensive new features.

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