

**SPEECH BY BG(NS) TAY LIM HENG
CHIEF EXECUTIVE, MARITIME AND PORT AUTHORITY OF SINGAPORE
AT THE
WORLD HYDROGRAPHY DAY CELEBRATION
AND
SIGNING OF LETTER OF INTENT BETWEEN MPA AND UKHO ON
JOINT HYDROGRAPHIC INITIATIVES
7 JULY 2006, PSAC AUDITORIUM**

Dr Wyn Williams, Chief Executive of the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

Good afternoon and a warm welcome to everyone.

2 It is my pleasure to be here today, to celebrate with you two important events. The first is the inaugural World Hydrography Day, and the second is the furthering of collaborative ties between the Maritime and Port Authority of Singapore (MPA) and the United Kingdom Hydrographic Office (UKHO).

World Hydrography Day - Importance of Hydrography in Singapore

3 Earlier this year, the International Hydrographic Organisation (IHO) announced the establishment of World Hydrography Day (WHD), an event that has received the endorsement of the United Nations General Assembly. The aim is to recognise and publicise the contributions of hydrography to safety of navigation. For its inaugural celebration, the IHO has selected the theme of **“85 Years of the IHO Contributing to Worldwide Safety of Navigation”**.

4 Singapore also has an established history in hydrographic development which spans more than 40 years. The Singapore Hydrographic Office was first established in 1964 to take over the functions of surveying and nautical charting of Singapore's waters from the Royal Navy. When the MPA was formed in 1996, ten years ago, it became a department under the MPA.

5 Indeed, with more than 1,000 ships in our port at any one time and another 50,000 ships a year transiting the Malacca and Singapore Straits, right at our doorstep, hydrography plays a crucial role in the continued success of the Singapore port. The accurate charting of our waters and the timely distribution of updated hydrographic information, enable ships to navigate safely in our busy waterways. This in turn allows our port operations to continue smoothly, efficiently and speedily, with minimal disruption.

6 It also plays an important role in our port planning and coastal development. In Singapore, where sea space is scarce, we have to undertake very careful planning to ensure that the infrastructure expansion needs of the port are balanced with other important concerns such as protection of the marine environment. The detailed and accurate nautical charts facilitate such planning by providing important information regarding the marine environment, water depth and current, among others.

7 Globally, hydrography is critical to safe shipping, which is in turn critical to the world's trade and economic growth. I am therefore glad that we now have a special day dedicated to recognising and appreciating the important contributions of hydrography. On our part, the MPA will certainly endeavour to keep this day in observance each year.

Furthering Collaboration with UKHO

8 As world trade volumes continue to expand and shipping traffic continues to grow, mariners will require faster, more efficient and cost-effective means of accessing relevant hydrographic information. To achieve this, we need to look at developing technology and exploring new ways of managing hydrographic databases and delivering the relevant information to our users in a timely manner.

9 Both the MPA and the UKHO share the same vision to constantly push the perimeters of hydrographic development and dissemination to a new level. In this regard, the UKHO has been MPA's valued and trusted partner through the years. We have worked together on a number of major initiatives, such as the Singapore-

Hong Kong Admiralty ENC Demonstration (SHARED) Programme and the organisation of two ECDIS Conferences in Singapore. Just last year, we introduced the Singapore ENC into the UKHO's worldwide Admiralty ECDIS Service.

10 I am happy to announce that the strong collaborative ties between the MPA and the UKHO will reach another milestone today. We will be joining forces once again through the signing of a Letter Of Intent between our two organisations. The letter of intent will facilitate collaboration in the research and development of new products and services that will aid the mariner and shore-based personnel in managing a range of hydrographic datasets.

11 These projects will allow us to further add value to the services that we provide to our customers. They will also help to ensure that MPA and the UKHO remain at the forefront of hydrographic technology development.

12 Before I end, I would like to thank you all for taking the time off your busy schedules to celebrate the first World Hydrography Day with us. I would especially like to thank Dr Wyn Williams and his colleagues for making the trip all the way from the UK. We have arranged a simple reception for you later on, and I hope you will enjoy yourselves.

Thank you.