



# ISTITUTO IDROGRAFICO DELLA MARINA

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The Italian Hydrographic Institute is the National Agency for nautical cartography under the Italian Navy, and is located in Genova since its foundation in 1872. Its tasks include the production of nautical charts and documents aimed at the safety of navigation, and extend to the processing of all the data - scientific, technological and environmental – connected with the sea. Furthermore, it performs research and experimentation within the nautical domain.

Therefore the activity of the Italian Hydrographic Institute mainly develops within three fields: production, applied research and formation. In the domain of production, of primary relevance, the Hydrographic Institute provides users with the official nautical documents and disseminates nautical information, both at a national and international level, in order to contribute to the safety of navigation and to the safeguard of human life at sea.

As regards oceanography our Institute sees to the collection and processing of the physical and chemical parameters of the water masses and of particular hydrologic features. This is one of the domains where the Institute is most active and resourceful.

Our activities include the experimentation of prototypes of nautical, oceanographic and meteorological instruments. Mass production for use of the Navy is generally entrusted to commercial firms.

Furthermore, the Institute sees to the testing of instruments issued both to the Navy and to merchant ships, and does research to further the advancement of nautical sciences, in cooperation with Universities and scientific institutions.

Our Hydrographic Institute has a specialized library, open to the public, of about 35 thousand books. These include modern texts on the various marine themes, and various collections of historic pilot books, atlases and charts, and quite a large corpus of scientific reports of the most celebrated voyages of exploration.

The Institute represents Italy within the International Hydrographic Organization, which is appointed to coordinate the activity of the National Hydrographic services, to see to the standardization of nautical documents, and to promote international cooperation in the development of the hydro-oceanographic techniques and surveys.

The executive office of the IHO is located in the Principality of Monaco. The activity of the Italian Hydrographic service within the IHO is mostly aimed at the production of international charts of the Mediterranean, and at the technical assistance to the hydrographic services of emerging Mediterranean countries. To these it is given admittance to the specialization courses in hydrography, held at our premises and on board our hydro-oceanographic vessels.

To accomplish its mandate on site, that is to say hydrographic, topographic and oceanographic surveys, the Institute operates a flotilla inclusive of three hydro-oceanographic ships: the “Magnaghi”, operating on the high-sea, recently modernized; and two new coastal catamarans, Aretusa and Galatea, technologically advanced, with a reinforced plastic and fibreglass hull.

The vessels are complemented by two expeditions – hydrographic and geodetic – mostly manned by naval personnel. Both the units and the expeditions are equipped with the most advanced systems, and with the scientific and electronic instruments apt to collect and process in real time all hydro-oceanographic data, from the chemical and physical parameters of the water masses and of the sea beds, to the values of the magnetic field, to the meteorological data.

All the data are stored in apposite databases and are used for various studies and applications finalized to various fields of both naval and civil interest, with special regard to environmental protection, which is a field of growing relevance.

All surveys are pooled together, and are processed and managed by the Institute.



A special mention is due of our activity in Antarctica within the Italian Programme of Research in Antarctica, where the Hydrographic Institute has continually participated with a team of hydrographers performing geodetic, topographic and hydrologic surveys, in a region which is still unexplored. Of special international relevance are the production and experimentation of a portfolio of electronic charts, equivalent and complementary to the traditional ones, which represent a field of activity in which Italian Industry enjoys a prominent position the world over.

Finally, we like to mention that in June 2002 the Italian Hydrographic Institute was amongst the first Hydrographic concerns in the world, and amongst the first Italian State institutions, to obtain the ISO 9001 2000 quality certification.

