

NAUTICAL INSTITUTE SEMINAR – MARINE SPATIAL PLANNING

➔ The Hong Kong Branch of The Nautical Institute held a one day seminar on the topic of Marine Spatial Planning, attracting a wide range of speakers and delegates from many sectors of the maritime industry representing Hong Kong, regional and international interests.

The event was opened by Captain Luca Ferrerio, Hon Chairman of the Branch, who welcomed all participants aboard the *MV Star Pisces*, and introduced the concept of MSP. He stressed its importance, particularly in and around Hong Kong, saying: 'Maritime professionals need to engage with other users of ocean space from both a seagoing and shore perspective, and to take part in international, regional and local MSP debates, to ensure that the needs of all sectors are taken into full consideration.'

The keynote address was given by Ivan Tung, Acting Director of Marine for Hong Kong, who explained the significance of MSP in maintaining safety: 'Over the last ten years, there were on average about 340 vessel traffic incidents against hundreds of thousands of vessel movements per year. Most of the incidents were minor in nature, but there have been exceptional and individual

cases of serious accidents. The main reason for the low incidence rate, we believe, is that we have a high level of cooperation with responsible players in the industry. We work in partnership with them, frequently exchanging views and exploring new initiatives so that we can make appropriate plans, policies and decisions that best suit the needs of our port as well as maritime businesses.' He concluded that 'marine spatial planning can only be effective and efficient if we act together as one. Let us then be united in our purpose and be as one in promoting excellence in marine spatial planning.'

Richard Colwill of BMT Asia Pacific outlined a wide range of formal and sophisticated tools for assessing current use of sea areas, modelling future use and assessing possible risk. He explained that there is an enormous amount of current data that can be used for planning and that such data needs to be converted to information for knowledgeable decision-making. 'Tools have already been developed to ensure feasible, safe and efficient navigation,' he stressed. He went on to say that such tools can open opportunities for commercial and recreational development.

With regards to commercial shipping, Arthur

Bowring of the HK Shipowners Association, spoke about how vital shipping was to the world economy and survival, and stressed the importance of UNCLOS. He quoted from the preamble "*Recognizing the desirability of establishing through this convention, with due regards to the sovereignty of all States, a legal order for the Seas and oceans which will facilitate international communication, and will promote the peaceful use of the seas and oceans, the equitable and efficient utilization of their resources, the conservation of their living resources and the study, protection and preservation of the marine environment*". In conclusion he stated that shipping recognises and is addressing its environmental obligations, responsibilities and the increasing demand for maritime space.

The seminar ended with the launch of The Nautical Institute's Guide written by and co-presented by David Patraiko, NI Director of Projects, and Paul Holthus, Founding CEO and President of the World Ocean Council, part of which appears on pp8-12 of this issue of *Seaway*. For details on how to find the full version online or to order a print copy, see p11.

David Patraiko FNI