

FEBRUARY 2024

THE ST HELENA AMBASSADOR



Editorial

Hi, welcome to the St Helena Ambassador!

In this edition you can read about a workshop that the GIS team attended in the UK, and the Safety, Security and Home Affairs Portfolios Awards Evening. We also shine a spotlight on the milestone of SHG selecting a bidder for phase 1 and 2 of the civil works for the Fibre Optic Cable Project.

If you'd like to contribute a story to the St Helena Ambassador, please feel free to contact me on tel: 22470 or via email:

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GIS team attends UKHO Hydrographic Governance Workshop



In January 2024, members of St Helena Government's (SHG) Geographic Information System (GIS) team, Devlin Yon and Jamie Phillips, attended the Hydrographic Governance Workshop for Overseas Territories in the UK.

The UK Hydrographic Office (UKHO), based in Taunton, hosted the workshop between 22 January and 26 January 2024, as part of the wider Maritime obligations remit Representatives from 13 Overseas Territories attended.

The main aim of the workshop was to provide territories with the further understanding of the hydrographic aspects of the international convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS). This covers a variety of maritime safety provisions with its origins being a response to the sinking of the *RMS Titanic*.

St Helena is signatory to the SOLAS convention and our Maritime Authority is working to meet the convention's Safety of Navigation requirements. GIS directly supports the Maritime Authority in doing this.

The workshop covered a wide scope of information, ranging from international conventions, regulations, standards of data collection, dissemination of information, through to individual job profiles, and who's accountable for what.

SHG's GIS Manager, Devlin Yon, explained: *"From St Helena's perspective the UKHO workshop is helping us to understand the necessary procedures and processes that need to be in place to conform to International Hydrographic Organisation (IHO) standards."*

Duties from SHG may include Maritime Safety Information (e.g. weather warning announcements), high standard collection of bathymetry data to help UKHO to aid safe navigation, identification and reporting of potential hazards to UKHO for dissemination to mariners, and ensuring navigation lights and markers are operational and represent what charts indicate.

Devlin added: *"The marine environment is often overlooked by so many, especially since some of our main aims are to develop the terrestrial environment. With only 2% of the maritime environment mapped globally, it is crucial to ensure we mitigate risks for mariners as far as practical, thus safeguarding our environment to ensure future sustainability for all."*

Devlin concluded: *"The workshop was an enjoyable and eye opening experience for both of us and it really did put into perspective how important GIS is in this area of expertise, and how critical it is to underpin informed evidence-based decision making. Networking with other Overseas Territories officials was also of huge benefit, especially with technical knowledge sharing and understanding our own capabilities compared to other Overseas Territories. I would like to thank the UKHO for their hospitality during the workshop and I look forward to working with them in the future."*



St Helena's Fibre Optic Cable Project – Selecting a preferred bidder for Phase 1 and 2 of the Civil Works



St Helena's Fibre Optic Cable Project (delivering high-speed internet connectivity to St Helena) was completed, following the final commissioning works in June 2023.

The six-year long cable project has been one of the most significant projects the island has ever undertaken, and there were a number of significant milestones which had to be reached in order for the project to progress.

In last month's edition of the Ambassador we focused on SHG signing a contract with Google to connect St Helena to the Equiano Subsea Cable, and in this month's edition we will focus on St Helena Government (SHG) selecting a preferred bidder for Phase 1 and 2 of the civil works.

In May 2020, following an open procurement exercise, AMD Engineering was selected as the preferred bidder for Phase 1 of civil works.

The civil works took place in lower Rupert's Valley and the main scope of work was to construct the Modular Cable Landing Station (MCLS) and associated works to facilitate the landing of the Fibre Optic Cable.

Phase 1 of the civil works commenced in May 2020 at the site of the MCLS and Rupert's beach. The works included the excavation and fence removal at the MCLS site and also included the trenching and ducting works, which saw a tunnel dug from the MCLS site, under the sea wall, and to Rupert's beach. Phase 1 of the civil works concluded in August 2020.

On 8 October 2020 AMD Engineering was selected as preferred bidder for Phase 2 of the civil works, following an open procurement exercise.

Phase 2 of civil works was for the construction of the MCLS. The works commenced in November 2020 and concluded in December 2021. The scope of works included construction of the MCLS transformer room, roofing, electrical and cabling works, and erection of the perimeter fencing.

In the next edition of the St Helena Ambassador newsletter we will shine a spotlight on the milestone of SHG signing agreement for connection to Telecom Egypt's subsea system that enables connection to Equiano subsea cable.



Safety, Security and Home Affairs Portfolio hosts annual awards and recognition evening



The Safety, Security and Home Affairs Portfolio (SS&HA) held their annual Recognition Event on the evening of Friday 16 February 2024, at Marble Hall in Ladder Hill.

The previous two occasions had been about recognizing people's length of service and their achievements throughout the year. This year, as the Portfolio had expanded to include new teams, it was the perfect opportunity to also formally welcome into the Portfolio the Roads Section, Building Maintenance and the Rock Guards.

Over 40 people were recognized for either their length of service (almost 200 years combined) or were nominated by colleagues, Heads of Service

or others in the Portfolio who noted their achievements. Whether that was a personal achievement, a group effort, or simply going above and beyond their normal duties.

SS&HA Portfolio Director, Alex Mitham, commented:

"The evening was all about one thing. It's something which is very simple to do, and say, but it often gets forgotten about, and that is saying 'thank you'."

"Thank you for your hard work, patience and commitment. Whilst the island may have gotten over Covid, we continue to face other financial and logistical constraints, therefore it becomes even more important to show our gratitude for your efforts."

"So once again thank you to everyone in your teams, and all the others across the portfolios, and within the community who support us."

The photos are of personnel who received certificates and tokens/gifts for their years' service and certificates for their achievements.

