



## Editorial

This issue offers a mixed bag of papers. It is getting increasingly difficult to obtain good original papers. This is for various reasons. One is the fact that prospective authors and their organisations will generally favour offering a paper to be presented at a conference than directly to a publication, as perhaps it gives their subject more immediate exposure. However such papers given at conferences mainly directed at a regional or national audience will sometimes benefit from reproduction in an international journal. A further difficulty is that many authors favour the shorter presentations as a means to getting their subject to their audience as quickly as possible. This matter is addressed by directing such papers to Hydro International. The importance of publishing scholarly papers that reflect the ongoing development and provide an historic record of hydrographic technology remains and will hopefully be continued to be supported by the profession.

In this issue some of the papers are directed towards Law of the Sea matters, in particular towards the definition of the Continental Shelf as defined by Article 76. As the deadline for States to submit their claims to the area beyond 200 nautical miles comes steadily closer there is increasing interest in the process and the work to be done in defining such items as the foot of the slope, the position of the 2,500 metre isobath and the national prolongation of the adjacent land. Those interested in this subject, besides reading the articles in this issue may also wish to attend the ABLOS Conference to be held in Monaco in October.

An interesting paper in this issue that has a much wider interest than just hydrography discusses the matter of access to marine resources by land-locked African states. This paper ties in conveniently with the worldwide interest that exists at the moment on the poor state of economy of many of the African countries and particularly those with no maritime coast. Another paper is by an international group that has been examining the idea of a navigation surface. Undoubtedly, with increasing data available hydrographers are moving away from the idea of discrete data points to a complete interpreted surface. Hydrographers have been reluctant to move away from point values, which originated in the days of the leadline but slowly the idea of a surface is perhaps catching on. Interestingly another paper, although dealing with quite another area of data management, also deals with the subject of generalising data points. This is a paper on generalisation of linear features that is a long standing research topic of cartographers. It is increasingly important today with the need to zoom images up and down. Finally we may note a paper that has been already presented at two recent hydrographic conferences and an updated version is reproduced here. This paper describes the interesting survey programme of the UK Maritime & Coastguard Agency, that is responsible for all surveys for commercial shipping in home waters. Perhaps to the surprise of many people there is an ongoing requirement to refine the surveys and consequently update the charts in British waters.

Adam J. Kerr, Editor