

HYDROGRAPHIC OFFICE OF THE DOMINICAN REPUBLIC

The International Hydrographic Bureau has received from the Hydrographic Office of the Dominican Republic a letter dated 11 November 1958 from which the following information concerning the origin and the organization of this Office is extracted :

Our Hydrographic Department was established by executive order on 31 March 1948. But owing to the lack of properly trained personnel, of equipment required for various phases of hydrography, etc., the Department restricted its activities to the building and maintenance of lighthouses and buoys, and in 1949 acquired for this purpose the *Capotillo*, FB-101, displacing 337 tons.

It was not until 1955 that in view of the Dominican Republic's important commercial development the Superior Government decided to modernize our hydrographic services. As a first step, two naval officers were sent to the U.S. Coast and Geodetic Survey to attend courses in hydrographic surveying, and on tides and currents. These officers were Lieutenant Jaime Vanderhorst Sidney and Lieutenant Oscar Perez Mota.

Our training lasted 16 months, as in addition to hydrographic surveying, tides and currents, which we studied during 12 months, we spent four months more on other subjects : one of us studying geodesy and the other nautical charts and cartography.

Upon our return to this country, the Department became associated with the IHB and commenced to acquire the necessary equipment, such as an electric Edo sounding machine, a 31-foot launch in which the sounder was installed, an Ozalid machine for reproducing plans, a complete set of chart-drawing equipment, tide gauges, a Wild plane table, and other essential equipment.

Immediately thereafter, the training of two groups was begun : one in topography and the other in hydrographic surveying, which operates on board the launch. The hydrographic survey group comprises the following personnel : one officer heading the group; two officers acting as observers; an officer in charge of recording and timing; one sounding-machine operator, the captain of the launch and his assistant. The topographic group operates under the supervision of Engineer Lieutenant Eliseo Papias Arjona Espinal.

After several weeks of theoretical training, practical activities were attempted, and a certain number of control points were determined in the outer harbour of Ciudad Trujillo. Then we went to sea. As may well be supposed, the first moments were fraught with many problems and confu-

sion, but as the days passed the personnel became increasingly familiar with the work and equipment. At the end of two weeks the observers handled the sextants correctly, the operator the sounding machine, and the rest of the personnel its own particular work.

After this period of training, we carried out in June of this year our first hydrographic survey, which resulted in the correction of H.O. chart 2247 : Puerto Viejo de Azua. Copies were sent to the U.S. Navy Hydrographic Office, and the correction entered in Notice to Mariners 4 October 1958.

In addition to this work, we carried out other surveys, such as that of Puerto de Haina, of which we have already sent copies for publication to the U.S.N.H.O. and to the Hydrographic Department, Admiralty. The other surveys were carried out at the ports of Cabo Rojo and Pedernales, and are now being compiled. To carry out these surveys, the Cartographic Institute of the Armed Forces supplied us with geodetic control data.

Our small Hydrographic Department so far consists of four main sections. The first two are the Hydrographic Survey Section, and the Tides and Currents Section in which a small group works on tide reductions and on the installation and maintenance of tide gauges of various types. This section is now completing the installation of a tidal station in the port of Ciudad Trujillo. The remaining sections are the Cartography and Drafting Section, and the Aids to Navigation Section which is the oldest of all.

The Cartographic Institute of the Armed Forces supplies us with geodetic and photogrammetric data, and with reproduction work.

We are now working on the publication of a list of lights for the coast of the Republic, which will be ready for printing by the middle of next December.

We have several plans for next year, including the detachment of as much personnel as possible for training abroad, a considerable increase in personnel, the creation of a Navy Oceanographic Institute with laboratories at the University of Santo Domingo, the increase and improvement of aids to navigation, and the continuation of hydrographic surveys of our country's harbours.