

General Information

OBITUARY FOR IAN HALLS



Mr Ian HALLS, Director of National Hydrography Program at the Australian Hydrographic Office (AHO), passed away suddenly at the age of 58 on 28 May 2019. He was a leading Australian geospatial professional who was at the forefront of many ground-breaking initiatives during his lengthy career.

Ian completed high school at Hurstville Boys High, Sydney, and joined the AHO in North Sydney in 1979. During his initial fifteen-year service with the AHO he held various positions – Trainee Cartographic Draftsman (1979-1982), Drafting Officer (1982-1990) and Manager Branch Development (1990-1994).

From 1994, Ian worked for ten years at L-3 Nautronix (formerly Hydrographic Sciences Australia) as both a Manager and Director; participating in the first real-time Electronic Chart Display Information Systems (ECDIS) sea trials in Australia and developing one of the world's first ECDIS systems. He also developed hydrographic cartography training materials, which influenced a generation of hydrographers.

From 2004 to 2009, Ian was self-employed and delivered on a number of key hydrographic surveying and cartographic compilation and auditing projects for a range of clients.

Since 2009, Ian held several leadership roles within the AHO, and, at the time of his passing, was Director National Hydrography Program, responsible for the establishment of the Hydrographic Industry Partnership Program – a government and industry initiative for a more agile and responsive hydrographic capability in Australia's waters.

Ian's influence extended far beyond the work place. He contributed to more than 20 articles to industry journals and publications, and had been editor of the Australasian Hydrographic Society's (AHS) Hippocampus newsletter. In 2017

Ian was awarded an Order of Merit for service to the AHS. He made an outstanding contribution to the activities of the IHO over the last decades and, in particular as the Editor in Chief of the International Hydrographic Review during the period 2010-2019. This academic engagement fulfilled one of his personal career goals: to share his knowledge to improve data, product and processes across the international hydrographic community. His opinions and advice were highly valued, but given with a unique blend of authority and humility.

Ian is survived by his wife Robyn, their three children, Alicia, Heather and Laura, and one grandchild. He was generous in sharing his time, expertise and wisdom with all those he came into contact with. The Australian and wider international hydrographic community have lost a true gentleman, a good friend and a highly valued member of the community.