

NEW CHIEF HYDROGRAPHER OF JAPAN



Dr. Kunio YASHIMA
New Chief Hydrographer of Japan

Dr. Kunio YASHIMA was appointed Chief Hydrographer of Japan on April 1, 2004, after serving as Deputy Commander of the 9th Regional Coast Guard Headquarters. He was born in 1948 and graduated from the Faculty of Science of the Tohoku University in 1970. After graduating from University, in 1971 he joined the Hydrographic Department of the Maritime Safety Agency (Hydrographic and Oceanographic Department (JHOD) of the Japan Coast Guard, present name). He obtained a Ph.D. in Submarine Geomorphology from the Tohoku University in 1993.

During more than thirty years of service in the Department, he was mainly involved in nautical charting and bathymetric charting. He also participated in important projects when holding the following posts:

- 1989 – 1990: Director of Hydrographic Department, 5th Regional Headquarters;
- 1992 – 1994: Head of Territorial Sea Baselines Research Office, Hydrographic Department;
- 1998 – 1999: Director of Coastal Survey and Cartography Division, Hydrographic Department;
- 2000 – 2001: Director of Planning Division, Hydrographic Department.

In particular while he was Head of the Territorial Sea Baselines Research Office, he contributed to the establishment of the baseline of the territorial sea, which is the base used for the delimitation of territorial sea, EEZ, and the continental shelf of Japan.

In addition to his work on a national level, he was involved in international relations as follows:

- 1977 – 1982: Joint Production of Common Datum Chart of the Straits of Malacca and Singapore;
- 1998 – 2001: He was deeply involved in the ENC publication issue in the Straits after the above-mentioned Joint Production;
- 1993 to date: Joint IOC/IHO Guiding Committee for GEBCO (GEBCO G.C.);
- 1993 – 2002: GEBCO Sub-Committee on Undersea Feature Names (GEBCO SCUFN);

- 1998 – 2000: WEND.

He contributed to the revision of the deepest depth of 11,034m in the world, recorded by R/V "VITYAZ" U.S.S.R. in 1957, to 10,920±10m, which the Japanese S/V "TAKUYO" surveyed in 1987 in the Mariana Trench (Challenger Deep) as GEBCO G.C. member. He also effectively contributed to the international standardization of undersea feature names of the northwestern Pacific Ocean as SCUFN member.

JHOD has carried out its continental shelf surveys in cooperation with related governmental organizations and it has been decided that the scientific data for the continental shelf extension will be submitted to the United Nations by May 2009. This continental shelf project is expected to reach a successful conclusion under the new Chief Hydrographer's leadership.