



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE
The Under Secretary of Commerce
for Oceans and Atmosphere
Washington, D.C. 20230

Mr. Scott Perkins
Chair, Hydrographic Services Review Panel
Surveying and Mapping, LLC
9393 West 110th Street, 51 Corporate Woods
Overland Park, KS 66210

DEC - 3 2015

Dear Mr. Perkins:

Thank you for your letter following the Hydrographic Services Review Panel's (HSRP) recent meeting in Silver Spring, Maryland. I was pleased that I could join you for a robust conversation, and found the Panel's questions and interest areas insightful. The direct dialogue between the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) and the Panel is important, and I encourage you to continue the positive discussions from September.

I would like to commend the Panel's Emerging Arctic Priorities Working Group (EAP), ably led by Lawson Brigham, for the time and effort put into assessing NOAA's role in, and prioritization of, Arctic surveying and charting. The EAP's report and recommendations are a good example of the deeper dive we were seeking to receive from the Panel when we provided our questions for consideration at the Long Beach meeting in April 2015.

As you know, NOAA has placed a high priority on Arctic navigation services since the 2009 release of the U.S. Arctic Region Policy, the subsequent Arctic focus in the 2012 National Ocean Policy, and the 2014 National Strategy on the Arctic Region. Hydrography, charting, and geodetic positioning have featured prominently in every implementation plan; the EAP's recommendations to accelerate Arctic hydrography, tide gauge installation, and gravity data acquisition to improve the Alaska geoid model are useful to support the justification for increased focus.

I also echo the Panel's continued concern regarding the challenges facing the hydrographic fleet. NOAA values our fleet, and continues to pursue a number of initiatives to address the issues the Panel identified.

Please extend my appreciation to all the Panel members for their time and contributions to improving NOAA's Navigation Services. The recommendations of this Federal Advisory Committee provide an important perspective on how we should move forward with these programs. I look forward to NOAA's continued work with the entire HSRP, and staying informed on the progress our partnership is making for improved products, service, and information.

Sincerely,

Kathryn D. Sullivan, Ph.D.
Under Secretary of Commerce
for Oceans and Atmosphere

