



Partnership



LUI Wing-hong

Centenary of Wireless Broadcast of Marine Weather Forecasts

On 16 June, the Observatory and the shipping community met for the 6th meeting of the Liaison Group for the Shipping Community, and celebrated the centenary of wireless broadcast of marine weather forecasts in Hong Kong. One hundred years ago, marine weather forecasts for ships were broadcast by means of radio telegraphy for the first time when a wireless telegraphy station went into operation at Cape D'Aguilar on Hong Kong Island.

At the celebration ceremony held before the meeting, Mr SHUN Chi-ming, the Director of the Observatory, looked back on the Observatory's collaboration history with the shipping community since its establishment in 1883. He pointed out that marine weather forecasts and warning services are now disseminated through multiple channels, such as the Observatory website, the mobile application "MyObservatory" as well as the Marine Department's automated NAVTEX broadcast system. Mr ZHOU Wei, member of the Liaison Group, remarked that the celebration has marked the joint achievement between the Observatory and the shipping community in the past century as a result of partnership.



HKO and members of the Liaison Group for the Shipping Community celebrate the centenary of wireless broadcast of marine weather forecasts.



Weather Information for the Marine Community
The Observatory Website

The Observatory and the Shipping Community Working Together to Enhance Meteorological Observation over the South China Sea

LAM Hok-yin, FUNG Kwok-chu and Dickson LAU

In June, the Observatory and Orient Overseas Container Line (OOCL) Limited, a member of the Hong Kong Observatory Shipping Community Liaison Group, joined hands to conduct trial studies in making use of ocean-going vessels to enhance meteorological observation over the South China Sea. The results and outcome were very satisfactory.

From 13 to 18 June, Dr LAM Hok-yin, Scientific Officer, and Mr FUNG Kwok-chu, Senior Scientific Assistant, went aboard the OOCL container vessel "M.V. OOCL Busan". During its voyage from Hong Kong to Singapore, seven weather balloons carrying radiosondes were successively launched from a portable upper-air sounding system to collect meteorological data such as air temperature, humidity, wind direction and wind speed in the upper atmosphere over the South China Sea.



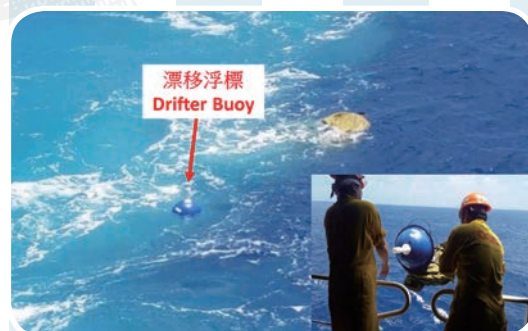
Positions of radiosonde balloon release and path of the drifter buoy



Just before its launch, the balloon carrying the radiosonde goes pear-shaped under the influence of strong winds.

Meanwhile, the Observatory engaged another OOCL container vessel "M.V. OOCL ATLANTA", to deploy a drifter buoy, equipped with air pressure and sea surface temperature sensors, over the central part of the South China Sea on 26 June. The buoy, carried along by ocean currents over a data-sparse sea area, was able to take in-situ air pressure and sea surface temperature measurements and transmitted the data to the Observatory via satellite on an hourly basis.

These two trials were the result of fruitful collaboration between the Observatory and the shipping community, and represented new milestones for the Observatory in marine meteorological observations. The gathering of more meteorological data will support weather monitoring over the South China Sea and the surrounding areas, enhance the forecasting capability of tropical cyclones and contribute to navigation safety in the region.



The drifter buoy being thrown into the sea by ship crew and carried along by ocean currents.