



3 Days of Surveying at OI

By Harold Orlinsky

HYPACK recently exhibited the Oceanology International in London. Inside, HYPACK was joined by a few hundred exhibitors and a few thousand visitors. It was busy, and we met both existing clients and potential new users as we answered questions and showed off HYPACK 2014. The conference, held every two years, is an opportunity to see the latest equipment. It was also an opportunity to see some sensors in action.

I took a break from the exhibit hall, and headed outside to enjoy a bit of the unusual nice weather for London in Mid-March. There, I watched a dozen survey boats from the docks, each one running a demonstration of sonar equipment. The survey area was a small basin beside the Thames River, bounded by the City Airport and land, just 1000 meters long and 150 meters wide. It also may be the most surveyed riverbed in London. At least it *seems* that way.

FIGURE 1. Survey Area —1000 meters by 150 meters



By my estimates, 500 line miles were run during the week. Enough to survey circle Long Island twice! Another way to put it: If we put all the soundings together, we would have 15,000 soundings per square meter! (I can show my math if anyone is interested, but it really isn't the point of the article.)

FIGURE 2. Some of the Boats Along Side the Dock



And what did we expect to find? Each boat had a sonar or side scan, or some acoustic sampling mechanism. Every system covered the area well. Some were better at seeing sand

waves, the car on the bottom or the dock piles and sea floor behind the piles. The surveys gave the community an opportunity to do their own analysis, a sort of common data set, with each system's data.

At HYPACK, we interface with most (not all, but we're getting there) systems. So what do I do when asked, what sonar is the best or what should I buy? I might like one that is easy to edit,

one that is quick to install, or one that is not very expensive. But that shouldn't bias my answer to the client.

The information is out there and the decision needs to be made by taking all things into account. Start with the basics: your survey needs, then figure your budget and, finally, see the system in action. Does it do what the brochure says it can do? At OI, there were plenty out there to see. The demonstrations performed by the manufacturers gave them the opportunity to show off their sonar.

At HYPACK, we'll do the collection and processing. But don't ask me which one to buy. I have too many favorites!

