

Capacity Building and Hydrographic Training in Canada - The CIDCO's category B program in hydrographic surveying

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In 2022, the CIDCO (Interdisciplinary Center for the Development of Ocean Mapping) program “Course in Hydrographic Surveying” has been recognized for the second time by the International Board on Standards of Competence for Hydrographic Surveyors and Nautical Cartographers (IBSC) as a category B program under the “Standards of competence for Hydrographic Surveyors” S-5 Edition 11.0.1.

The CIDCO Course in Hydrographic Surveying is provided over a period of 40 weeks and it is composed of two main parts, which are the theoretical part and the Comprehensive Final Field Project (CFFP). The theoretical part of the course is given in an "e-learning" formula. The on-line platform we are using is among the best Learning Management System (LMS), it allows us to manage course activities and post course materials and electronic documents. This type of format makes the teaching resources and materials accessible to students any time from any computer anywhere in the world. In addition, this gives students the opportunity to complete the online activities in their own time without the same pressures as in-class activities. Over the past 4 years, 24 students from 15 different countries have completed the online program (Figure 1).



Figure 1 Origin of students who have participated in the CIDCO Cat-B program since 2016

Given that the training is offered via e-learning formula and because the students should have to perform hands-on exercises throughout all the period of the training, CIDCO have made available to them many materials and practical exercises to consolidate the learning outcomes of the modules. Simulations using hydrographic acquisition and processing softwares and simulators make it possible for students to perform simulated fieldwork exercises. These simulations are complemented by videos, images and other additional materials.

The CIDCO is committed to capacity building and our program provides the theoretical foundation and practical field experience that enables future hydrographers to execute hydrographic surveys, monitor and evaluate survey data quality in accordance with the newest IHO standards. Graduate students will be able to work as hydrographers on large survey operations such as nautical charting surveys, offshore surveys or on small survey units, utilized for ports, coastal engineering, inland waters and surveys launches in support of a large-scale survey operation.