

Report on the 2019 World Marine Aids to Navigation Day

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The inaugural World Marine Aids to Navigation Day events were held in Busan, Republic of Korea, on July 1 - 2, 2019. Busan is Korea's second largest city with its port - Korea's busiest and also is a city which has Gadeokdo Lighthouse, Korean Lighthouse of the Year.

The IALA General Assembly last year in Incheon, Republic of Korea, having considered an objective of promoting a greater awareness to mariners and the wider public of the vital role of Marine Aids to Navigation (AtoN) in ensuring the safety and efficiency of navigation, decided to establish the World Marine Aids to Navigation Day to be held on July 1 each year.

The Ministry of Oceans and Fisheries in association with Korea Institute of Aids to Navigation held the '2019 World Marine Aids to Navigation Day' ceremony at BEXCO on July 2 in the presence of the Vice Minister, honored guests and about 300 AtoN professionals past and present.

The ceremony included a celebratory performance, a promotional video screening, men of merit and honorary lighthouse keeper awards ceremony. KIM Yangsoo, Vice Minister of the Ministry, said in his opening remarks, "I am very honored to mark the inaugural World Marine Aids to Navigation Day, giving us an opportunity to promote greater awareness to mariners and the wider public regarding the crucial role of Aids to Navigation to facilitate the safe and efficient navigation of vessels and to enhance the protection of the marine environment."

AtoN Professionals Reception brought together past and present professionals on the evening of July 1. Attendees made new connections, shared ideas, and expanded their networks in a relaxed setting. Industry professionals from AtoN industry also were in attendance to provide career experiences and insight.

To mark the inaugural World Marine Aids to Navigation Day and to raise interest in lighthouse heritage, the Lighthouse Heritage Forum on the subject of the conservation and sustainable use of lighthouse was held at BEXCO on Tuesday, July 2, participated in by approximately 100 representatives from all over Korea who are involved in the running of lighthouses and associated projects as well as international guests from China and France. A series of 5 presentations and heated discussion were given under the 3 sessions: (Session 1) Policy cases on lighthouse heritage conservation and sustainable use around the world / (Session 2) Interpretation on the value of Gadeokdo Lighthouse and the role in the local community / (Session 3) Comprehensive discussion.

Over the 2 days of July 1 - 2 at BEXCO, the Ministry in association with the National Lighthouse Museum of Korea ran a lighthouse heritage exhibition and lighthouse experience programs as special events. The exhibition was the opportunity to recognize the lighthouse's vital role in the safe navigation of shipping over the centuries and its value to the seafarers and others as a symbol of hope and safety. Also, lighthouse experience programs were the education place for kids to shape lighthouse models made of paper and to make various lighthouse candles. Thanks to the ardent interest and support from more than 1,200 participants for two days, those events were the huge success.

On July 1, a tour to Korean Lighthouse of the Year took place at Gadeokdo Lighthouse and its environs. During this guided tour, 40 participants learned about the rich maritime history of this impressive structure and get to walk around and through it to explore and photograph it up close.



World Marine Aids to Navigation Day Ceremony



Men of Merit Awards



Honorary Lighthouse Keeper Awards



AtoN Professionals Reception



Lighthouse Heritage Forum group photo



Lighthouse Heritage Forum (Session 1)



Lighthouse Heritage Forum (Session 3)



Lighthouse Experience Program for kids



Tour to Lighthouse of the Year