

Canada's Offshore. Jurisdiction, Rights and Management, 3rd Edition, by Bruce Calderbank, Alec M. McLeod, Ted L. McDorman and David H. Gray, Trafford Publishing, 2006, Colour, ISBN 1-4120-7816-4. 328 pp.

This is a comprehensive and well-illustrated book which focuses on Canada's national interests in its offshore area. It includes an almost textbook description of matters of boundary jurisdiction governed by the Law of the Sea in general. One might question whether much of this general description could not be found in the more general and well known texts on the subject, leaving this book to concentrate on particularly Canadian situations. However it may be convenient for the practising offshore surveyor, for whom this book is clearly intended, to have all the information at hand in one publication. To the non-Canadian reader the book describes the peculiarities of Canadian land administration. This includes what is meant by Canada Lands and the role of the Canada Lands Surveyor. It explains the somewhat confusing distinction between a hydrographic surveyor and an offshore surveyor. Interestingly, in outlining the tasks of the latter, it emphasises work required by the oil and gas industry but fails to give much attention to the support that surveyors working in the offshore now give to the fisheries and other environmental interests. This is no doubt the result of the historical development of survey law in Canada, in particular in the development of the Canada Land Surveys Act.

Chapters 2 to 5 concentrate on maritime international law in a broad sense, through the development of the latest UNCLOS Treaty of 1982 and interpretations of articles dealing with boundary delimitation. Chapters 6 to 8 discuss the particular Canadian situation and herein lies the considerable value of the book. Here it describes some of Canada's more relatively recent legislation, such as the 1964 Territorial Sea and Fishing Zones Act and the Oceans Act. It also describes some of the particularly interesting boundary judgements that include the Gulf of Maine and St. Pierre et Miquelon. Much still remains to be resolved, particularly in the Arctic, and these issues are outlined clearly. The determination of the outer limits of Canada's continental shelf, although noted, does not get the space that one might expect given the country's very active campaign to claim this area. Here the quite detailed references tend to provide the story.

Chapters 9 to 11 discuss the administration of Canada's Offshore Oil and Gas Resources. The difficulties of this task in a constitutional framework, which involves a complex regime of provincial and federal laws, are addressed. With ever-rising oil prices the need to develop offshore resources increases, and with it the ongoing struggle between the provinces and the federal government for rights to administer these precious resources. This publication provides a good insight into the legislative base that continues to develop. Examples of this can be seen in the Canada-Newfoundland Atlantic Accord, and much the same for Nova Scotia. With three maritime coasts, each having its own problems, legislation is discussed which not only concerns the federal rights and responsibilities but also those of the particular regions or provinces, such as the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Act. Chapter 10 discusses the idea of a Marine Cadastre, in terms of its traditional role and how it may be extended seaward. The chapter devoted to this discussion appears more speculative than the rest of the book which focuses on the law and its interpretation as it stands.

Several appendices complete the book. These include a glossary that contains a mixture of generally accepted international terms and some specific Canadian terms. Appendix A is useful in providing a list of Canadian Government Departments and Related Legislation. This should be particularly helpful to the non-Canadian reader. Appendix B outlines Conventions and Case Lists Related to Law of the Sea. Appendix C provides a list of Canadian Offshore Oil and Gas Events. Finally there is a useful but selective Bibliography, which is broken down into references to several well-known survey and hydrographic journals. Given that the subjects of Law of the Sea and even maritime boundary delimitation are now very well developed in the literature, a complete bibliography could be much longer. Nevertheless the references given do cite those that will provide the practising surveyor with a very good background to matters discussed in this publication.

In summary, it can be said that this publication provides a comprehensive and easily read description of just what is happening in Canada's Offshore with respect to legislation, rights and management. To the Canadian surveyor and marine scientist it will provide a useful reference to the whole field of offshore boundary making and associated legislation. To the non-Canadian reader it will provide a helpful insight into what the country has done and is doing to manage its territory surrounding its very long coast.

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