

## **The Brussels Conference and the Development of Marine Meteorological Services in Norway.**

By Johannes Guddal, co-president of JCOMM.

Although the Brussels Conference in 1853 was major inspiration to systemize marine meteorology, the historical perspective is also interesting. Norwegians have been seafarers as long as there have been historical records. We must admit, though, that we are not in the midst of the world events. The most ancient European and world maps remind us of that fact. The Northern regions, Scandinavia, as well as the famous Thule, was as far as mankind could ever come. Consequently, the maps of the time became less and less accurate with the distance from the Mediterranean.

Still, it is astonishing to study ancient records of the dramatic weather at sea, the waves and the mysterious maelstroms. The example presented from the wave incident in 864 is probably not the most extreme event, but the existence of this record is probably thanks to its lyrical form. Lyrics helped to convey the tale from generation to generation until it finally was written down.

The Norwegian attendance at the Brussels Conference was well prepared, and we believe its conclusions were followed up appropriately at home. Although the Norwegian representative later became the director of a Classification Society, the respectable Det norske Veritas, there is no doubt that Norway took up the challenges from Brussels.

The Bergen School of meteorology, along with other, parallel advances in meteorology, made operational forecasting possible. Well known is the 'revolution of numerical meteorology', while numerical and operational oceanography came into existence about half a generation later.

Today, forecasting services to marine operations and planning can be claimed to be a balanced mixture of marine meteorology and oceanography. A specialized Marine Forecasting Center applying modern type Quality Control systems has been established in Norway. The emphasis today is the efficient, onboard or onsite delivery of tailored information products.

The spectrum of services varies from regular wave forecasting for offshore operations to the monitoring of coastal current in heavily trafficked areas, and to prediction of pollution events, such as major oil spills.

Annex: Power Points show.