



IHB File N° S3/3057

**CIRCULAR LETTER 109/2005
3 November 2005**

REPORTING AND PUBLICATION OF DANGERS TO NAVIGATION

Dear Hydrographer,

Safety of Navigation requires that all known dangers are shown on charts used for navigation. It is essential that the appropriate action is taken by the relevant authorities to ensure that any new information relating to dangers to safe navigation is passed to mariners and authorities who need to know about it as quickly as possible. Where appropriate this information should be transferred to the published chart without further undue delay.

Information relating to navigational dangers may arrive from many sources. Specific obligations are placed on vessels subject to the International Convention on Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) where Chapter V Regulation 31 paragraph 1 requires that: "The master of every ship which meets with....or any other direct danger to navigation....is bound to communicate the information by all means at his disposal to ships in the vicinity, and also to the competent authorities." Regulation 31, paragraph 2 also requires that "Each contracting government will take all steps necessary to ensure that when intelligence of any of the dangers specified in paragraph 1 is received, it will be promptly brought to the knowledge of those concerned and communicated to other interested Governments."

Urgent navigational information can be broadcast to ships by radio. Coastal States may broadcast Maritime Safety Information (MSI) via the Internationally Coordinated World-wide Navigational Warning Service (WWNWS) and /or via a purely national service. The decision as to whether to use a purely national service or both will depend on the nature of the safety information and the ships which need to receive that information.

Guidance on the transmission of "internationally coordinated" MSI is provided in 4 publications:

- The IHO/IMO World-wide Navigational Warning Service - Guidance Document - published by the IHO as Publication S-53 and adopted by IMO Resolution A.706(17) as amended.
- The Joint IMO/IHO/WMO Manual on Maritime Safety Information (MSI) - published by the IHO as Publication S-53 Appendix 1 and by IMO under sales number I910E.
- The Navtex Manual - published by IMO under sales number IMO-951E.
- The International SafetyNET Manual - published by IMO under sales number IA908E.

Paragraph 4.2.1.3.7 of the WNWNS, contained in Annex 4 of the NAVTEX Manual, lists “the presence of newly discovered rocks, shoals, reefs and wrecks likely to constitute a danger to shipping and, if relevant, their marking;” as an item suitable for inclusion as a NAVAREA warning. Also paragraph 4.2.2.2 states that “Coastal warnings should include, at a minimum, the types of information required for NAVAREA warnings in 4.2.1.3” Some reports will also require the issuing of Notice to Mariners (NtM) and possibly the conduct of hydrographic surveys and new editions of charts or even new charts. Information regarding NtMs is included as Chapter F of The Resolutions of the International Hydrographic Organization (M-3).

At Annex A the IHB has produced a draft text providing some guidance on the events that need to happen when a danger to navigation is reported. Member States are requested to provide comments on the draft text and also to state whether they consider that such a text should be included as a new Technical Resolution in Chapter A of the “Resolutions of the IHO” (M-3). Member States are requested to complete and return the form at Annex B to reach the IHB by 12 December 2005.

On behalf of the Directing Committee
Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to be 'A. Maratos', written over a light blue horizontal line.

Vice Admiral Alexandros MARATOS
President

Annex A: Actions to be taken following the report of depths less than charted or the existence of obstacles dangerous to navigation.

Annex B: Response form.

Actions to be taken following the report of depths less than charted or the existence of obstacles dangerous to navigation.

The following is a list of the actions that should be considered by the relevant authorities. Not every action will be appropriate in every case. Whilst the actions below are set out in a logical sequence it is likely that some of these steps will take place simultaneously or in a different order.

1. Authority (e.g. harbourmaster, hydrographic office etc.) receives message indicating the presence of a danger to navigation.
2. Relevant authority issues local warning to all ships in the vicinity if appropriate.
3. Authority informs National Coordinator (see S-53 for definition).
4. National Coordinator informs Sub-area Coordinator and Navarea Coordinator (see S-53 for definition).
5. Coordinators at 3 and 4 above issue navigational warnings via national and international services.
6. HO issues NtM for affected chart(s).
7. HO / MSA / Port Authority organises hydrographic survey.
8. HO revises / cancels NtM based on results of survey.
9. HO considers need for new edition / new chart.
10. Information passed to other interested governments (e.g. HOs producing world-wide chart coverage).

Actions to be taken following the report of depths less than charted or the existence of obstacles dangerous to navigation.

Response Form
(to be returned to the IHB by 12 December 2005
E-mail: info@ihb.mc - Fax: +377 93 10 81 40)

Member State:

1. Do you agree with the list of actions set out in Annex A.

Yes No

Comments (if any):

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2. Do you consider that such a text should be included in the Resolutions of the IHO (M-3)

Yes No

Name: E-mail:

Signature: Date: