



IHB File No. S3/4405

CIRCULAR LETTER 30/2006
8 March 2006

REVISED SECTION B-400 OF THE
CHART SPECIFICATIONS OF THE IHO (M-4)

Reference: Publication M-4 - Part B: Chart Specifications of the IHO.

Dear Hydrographer,

1. The Chart Standardization and Paper Chart Working Group (CSPCWG) is continuing with the review and revision of Part B of M-4. Following the revision of Sections B-100 and B-200, which have now been included in the M-4 version 3.002 on the IHO website, the CSPCWG has now commenced the revision of Section B-400. Because of the length and complexity of this section, it has been divided into smaller sub-sections. Draft revised Specifications B-400 to B-429 are now available on the IHO website (www.iho.shom.fr > Committees > CHRIS > CSPCWG > IHO Publication M-4), for Member States to examine.
2. This revision includes many improvements to the text to make it more consistent with other parts of M-4, and numerous amendments, amplifications and updates. Noteworthy changes to the existing specifications are listed in Annex A.
3. The CSPCWG also proposes a standard format for geographical positions (based on ISO Standard 6709), and new symbols for a reporting line and a Differential GPS station. See Annex B.
4. Member States are requested to review the CSPCWG's revision and proposals. According to Specification B-160, Member States should inform the IHB (info@ihb.mc) if they have any major objections to the adoption of the revised specifications and proposed symbols, or any other comments, within three months. Therefore, Member States' comments should reach the IHB no later than **8 June 2006**. If no objections are received, the IHB will announce in a follow-up Circular Letter that the revised specifications have come into force.

On behalf of the Directing Committee
Yours sincerely,


Rear Admiral Kenneth BARBOR
Director

Annex A: Revised Specifications B-400 to B-429 for Chart Specifications of the IHO (M-4):
Noteworthy Changes from Existing Version.

Annex B: Additional Chart Specifications and Symbols for Member States' Approval

**REVISED SPECIFICATIONS B-400 TO B-429
OF THE CHART SPECIFICATIONS OF THE IHO (M-4)**

NOTEWORTHY CHANGES TO EXISTING VERSION

- B-405. Updated to reflect the changes to Technical Resolution (TR) A2.5, announced in IHO CL 34/2005.
- B-407. Updated to reflect the wording in TRs A2.8 and 2.9.
- B-413.3. A new symbol for a natural watercourse in intertidal areas has been introduced.
- B-414. The difference between dredged and maintained areas has been clarified, turning basins have been included and advice provided about soundings within dredged areas.
- B-416. A method of depicting discontinuities between surveys has been included.
- B-417 and B-418. Definitions have been provided for 'Inadequately surveyed' and 'Unsurveyed' areas and the detailed specifications split into two.
- B-421. The specification for underwater rocks has been reworded, as 20m is not necessarily the dividing line between dangerous and non-dangerous, because in some areas vessels with deeper draughts may navigate in the vicinity (see also B-422 below).
- B-422. This is the area which has the most significant revision; the outcome is the result of very extensive discussion and careful drafting by CSPCWG:
 - It has long been recognized that there is a need for enhanced standardization of the symbols K28 (dangerous wreck) and K29 (so-called non-dangerous wreck). The existing specification (adopted in 1982, but written much earlier) uses 20m as a dividing criterion; however, some MS have used different values e.g. increasing this criterion up to 28m to reflect the increasing draughts of some ships. Consequently, the same symbols may have different meanings on different MS' charts, sometimes different meanings on the same MS's charts (if old wrecks have not been re-assessed), and sometimes even differences within one chart (e.g. where it covers more than one nation's waters). This could be misleading to the user, who may wrongly assume that K29 is always safe for surface vessels to pass over. Therefore, it has been judged necessary to address this important matter by amending the specifications relating to such wrecks.
 - The revised specifications provide an order of preference for using the various symbols available.
 - A simplified system for estimating safe clearance depths has been provided, with its use extended to other obstructions. A generic version of the symbol  will be included at K3 in INT 1, in due course.
 - The subjective and potentially misleading terms 'dangerous' and 'non-dangerous' wrecks have been removed, with a recommendation to avoid, if possible, the use of K29 (except in deep water).
 - Advice has been given on how to deal with the legacy of existing chart symbols that may be misleading.
 - A cut-off depth of 100m is advised for the use of blue tint over obstructions of unknown depth.

- B-425. The nature of the seabed type 'Boulders' has been introduced, usually for use in intertidal areas. The table on size criteria has been removed, as it is now more appropriately provided in the new M-13 (announced in IHO CL 05/2006) at paragraph 3.1.5.3 (and which already includes boulders).
- B-428. Guidance on the use of the sandwave symbol has been provided.
- B-429. Guidance on the charting of oceanic dangers has been provided.

**ADDITIONAL CHART SPECIFICATIONS AND SYMBOLS
FOR MEMBER STATES' APPROVAL**

1. Draft Standard Format for Quoting Geographical Positions on Charts

The CSPCWG has agreed that the entry for M-4 B-131 should be replaced by:

Geographical positions quoted on charts and in related publications should be:

- expressed in degrees, minutes and decimals of a minute
- with a single space between the coordinates and no other spaces
- without punctuation
- with a decimal separator according to national practice (comma, decimal point or full stop – comma is the preferred ISO sign)
- with leading zeros for single number minutes, but not for degrees
- with the minute tick following the fractional part

eg: 51°42,03'N 5°07,14'E
51°42'03"N 5°07'14"E
51°42.03'N 5°07.14'E

Exception:

- Degrees, minutes and seconds may be used if the graduation of the chart concerned is in that format, to avoid confusion.

2. Reporting Lines

The CSPCWG has agreed on the need for a 'Reporting Line symbol'.

It will consist of small 'Reporting point' symbols (INT 1 M-40) superimposed on the area limit line, usually 'General maritime limit of non-restricted area' (INT 1 N-1.2). The actual limit symbol may be varied if it coincides with another area (e.g. Territorial Waters, PSSA).

It will be inserted in INT 1 at M40.2. (M40 to be renumbered M40.1). See German INT 1 national symbol Mg for an example of the proposed symbol.

Specifications will be included at M-4 B-488.1.

3. DGPS station symbol

The CSPCWG has agreed that DGPS stations may be charted if required.

It will consist of the magenta 'radio circle' (INT 1 Section S refers) with associated magenta upright legend 'DGPS'.

It will be inserted in INT 1 at S51. See German INT 1 national symbol Sa for an example of the proposed symbol.

Specifications will be included at M-4 B-481.5.