

INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC
ORGANIZATION



ORGANISATION HYDROGRAPHIQUE
INTERNATIONALE

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CIRCULAR LETTER 25/2007
26 February 2007

NEW IALA EMERGENCY WRECK BUOY

Reference: a) Circular Letter 42/2006 dated 24 May

Dear Hydrographer,

1 As reported in reference a), the IHB was informed by the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA) of the introduction on a trial basis of a new Emergency Wreck Marking Buoy.

2 Subsequently, the Chart Standardization and Paper Chart Working Group (CSPCWG) has considered the symbolization for such buoys and has reached provisional conclusions on this, but considers it would be premature to publish them before the trials of the buoy have been completed. Nevertheless, some nations have already deployed this buoy, and others may do so. There is therefore a need to advise the mariner of the description and purpose of the buoy, to enable appropriate action when one is encountered.

3 If there is a possibility of such a buoy being laid within waters covered by a hydrographic office's chart, the CSPCWG recommends that office to promulgate details, preferably in Notices to Mariners. The text of Annual NM 14 issued by the UK Hydrographic Office is attached at Annex. It was originally issued as NM 3085(T)/06, and is itself derived from IALA 'Recommendation O-133'. Recommendation O-133 was also repeated in IMO SN.1/circ.259. It is suggested that hydrographic offices may find this example useful as a model.

On behalf of the Directing Committee
Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'K. Barbor', is written over a horizontal line.

Rear Admiral Kenneth BARBOR
Director

Annex A: UK Hydrographic Office Annual NM 14.

14. IALA EMERGENCY WRECK MARKING BUOY

Source: UK Hydrographic Office

1. At present new dangers are generally marked by cardinal or lateral buoys, although it is recognised that a number of authorities also deploy isolated danger marks. Recent groundings and collisions have indicated a need for a revision of how new dangers are marked, especially in an emergency.
2. To provide a possible means of ensuring clear and unambiguous marking of dangerous new wrecks, IALA has recently adopted "Recommendation O-133", which introduces, on a trial basis, a new emergency wreck marking buoy. Both the Guidelines and Recommendation are available at the IALA web site (www.iala-aism.org). Results from the trials will be assessed during the 2006 - 2010 IALA work term, under the direction of the IALA Aids to Navigation Management Committee. It is envisaged that any such buoy will be a temporary response, typically to be used for the first 24-72 hours. Its deployment will be promulgated through usual maritime safety information systems i.e. the World-wide Navigational Warning Service (see Annual Notice to Mariners No 13).
3. The emergency wreck marking buoy is designed to provide high visual and radio aid to navigation recognition. It will be placed as close to the wreck as possible, or in a pattern around the wreck, and within any other marks that may be subsequently deployed.
4. The emergency wreck marking buoy will be maintained in position until:
 - a. The wreck is well known and has been promulgated in nautical publications i.e. Notices to Mariners.
 - b. The wreck has been fully surveyed and exact details such as position and least depth above the wreck are known.
 - c. A permanent form of marking of the wreck has been carried out.
5. The buoy has the following characteristics (see diagram at Annex):
 - a. A pillar or spar buoy, with size dependent on location.
 - b. Coloured in equal number and dimensions of blue and yellow vertical stripes (minimum of 4 stripes and maximum of 8 stripes).
 - c. Fitted with an alternating blue and yellow flashing light with a nominal range of 4 nautical miles (authorities may alter the range depending upon local conditions) where the blue and yellow 1 second flashes are alternated with an interval of 0.5 seconds i.e. Bu 1.0s + 0.5s + Y 1.0s + 0.5s = 3.0s.
 - d. If multiple buoys are deployed then the lights will be synchronised.
 - e. The buoy may be fitted with a Racon (Morse Code "D") and/or an AIS transponder.
 - f. The topmark, if fitted, is a standing/upright yellow cross.

