



IHB File No. S3/4405

CIRCULAR LETTER 82/2007  
19 September 2007

CHART SPECIFICATIONS OF THE IHO (M-4)  
USE OF ENGLISH ON CHARTS

Dear Hydrographer,

1 At the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Chart Standardization and Paper Chart Working Group (CSPCWG) in November 2006, IHB drew attention to the XVth International Hydrographic Conference (1997) Decision No 9:

*'It is proposed that each Hydrographic Office which does not issue charts in the English language give all legends on charts affecting its territorial waters in its national language and in English.'*

The proposal had been passed to the former Chart Standardization Committee for consideration of technical references. However, no new or revised technical resolution was issued, so IHB invited the CSPCWG to consider Decision 9 in the context of M-4 (Chart Specifications of the IHO).

2 Consequently, after researching the background of the 1997 IHC decision, the CSPCWG has drafted a new specification to place in the 'language' section of M-4, at B-510. The draft specification is provided in Annex A. It will result in the re-numbering of the subsequent two paragraphs, which are specifically for printed versions of INT charts. If the proposed new specification is accepted, there will be no need to add a new Technical Resolution to M-3.

3 There will also be some minor consequential changes to M-4 when the new B-510.4 has been published:

- B110.5 will be slightly modified so that the first sentence reads: 'Standardization of language and names in B-500 conforms to relevant international practice'.
- A cross reference will be added at B-122.
- The title of Section 500 will be changed to: 'Text: Language, Numbers, Names, Type Styles'.

All these changes combined should help the cartographer to easily locate the guidance on use of language.

4 Member States are requested to review the proposed specification. According to Specification B-160, Member States should inform the IHB (info@ihb.mc) if they have any major objections to this specification being adopted, or provide any other comments, within three months. Therefore, Member States' comments should reach the IHB no later than **19 December 2007**. If no objections are received, the IHB will announce in a follow-up Circular Letter that the new specification has come into force. CSPCWG will then include it in M-4 at the next opportunity.

On behalf of the Directing Committee  
Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Robert Ward', is written over a white background.

Captain Robert WARD  
Director

Annex A: Draft specification M-4 B-510.4: Language on charts

New specification B-510.4  
Draft

**B-510.4**      **Language on charts.** English is the accepted international language for navigational purposes and for communication at sea (SOLAS Chapter V Regulation 14 refers). See also B-122.

The XVth International Hydrographic Conference (1997) decided that each Hydrographic Office which does not issue charts in the English language should give all legends on charts affecting its territorial waters in its national language and in English (Decision 9).

Consequent to this decision, English language versions of all notes should be included on all non-English charts. Navigationally significant legends should also be given in English, or if more convenient, listed in a glossary (key) on the chart. English language versions of notes and legends are particularly appropriate on charts used for international shipping.

Existing paragraphs B-510.4(I) and B-510.5(I) will be renumbered B-510.5(I) and B-510.6(I) respectively.