



IHB File No. S3/4000

CIRCULAR LETTER 22/2013
14 March 2013

COUNTERFEIT CHARTS AND NAUTICAL PUBLICATIONS

Dear Hydrographer,

1. The UKHO has informed the Directing Committee of the circulation of counterfeit copies of its Admiralty charts and publications. No examples of counterfeit versions of paper charts or publications produced by other Hydrographic Offices have been identified so far.
2. The Directing Committee is also aware that the IMO has recently alerted the distributors of its publications of instances of counterfeit copies of IMO publications. If UKHO and IMO products are being copied illegally it may be possible that products from other Member States' Hydrographic Offices are also at risk.
3. Counterfeit products are, by definition, not issued officially by or on the authority of a Government, authorised Hydrographic Office or other relevant government institution. Consequently, they do not satisfy the carriage requirements of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (Chapter V, Regulations 2.2 and 19.2.1.4 of the Convention refer). They may also be out of date or contain errors or omissions caused by the counterfeiting process.
4. Counterfeit products deny government chart and publications producers, and any other States that may receive royalties for data being included in the charts or publications, from recovering money that is normally used to continue to maintain and improve the products, for example, through revisions and Notices to Mariners services.
5. The circulation and use of counterfeit copies of charts and nautical publications therefore have potentially serious consequences both for safety of navigation and chart carriage compliance and as a loss of valuable funding for the producer nation and any of its data contributors that may receive royalties.
6. The Directing Committee invites Member States to consider alerting chart and nautical publications users, ship inspectors, regulators and product distributors to exercise vigilance and to inform the official originator of a chart or publication and the Directing Committee of any instances of counterfeiting.
7. The UKHO has published a simple guide to help confirm the authenticity of its own Admiralty products. The guide can be downloaded from <http://bit.ly/admiralty-genuine>. A number of the guidelines that help identify counterfeit Admiralty products apply equally to chart and nautical products published by other Hydrographic Offices.

On behalf of the Directing Committee
Yours sincerely,



Robert WARD
President