



IHB File No. S3/4405

CIRCULAR LETTER 03/2013  
14 January 2013

REVISION OF THE CHART SPECIFICATIONS OF THE IHO (S-4)  
SECTION B-300 - TOPOGRAPHY

- References:
- A. IHO Publication S-4, Part B: *Chart Specifications of the IHO*.
  - B. IHO Circular Letter 102/2012 dated 29 November 2012 - *Outcome of the Fourth Meeting of the Hydrographic Services and Standards Committee (HSSC) and Associated IHO ECDIS Stakeholders' Forum*.

Dear Hydrographer,

1. In accordance with its Terms of Reference and Work Plan, the IHO Chart Standardization and Paper Chart Working Group (CSPCWG) is continuing with the review and revision of Part B of IHO Publication S-4 (Reference A). CSPCWG has now prepared a draft revision of the section B-300 - Topography. A copy of the draft is available for inspection on the IHO website at [http://www.iho.int/iho\\_pubs/draft\\_pubs/Draft\\_S-4\\_B-300\\_Topography\\_Ed4.4.0\\_clean\\_copy.pdf](http://www.iho.int/iho_pubs/draft_pubs/Draft_S-4_B-300_Topography_Ed4.4.0_clean_copy.pdf) (clean copy). A complementary copy, with changes highlighted in blue text or via strike-through text, is also available at [http://www.iho.int/iho\\_pubs/draft\\_pubs/Draft\\_S-4\\_B-300\\_Topography\\_Ed4.4.0\\_changes\\_highlighted.pdf](http://www.iho.int/iho_pubs/draft_pubs/Draft_S-4_B-300_Topography_Ed4.4.0_changes_highlighted.pdf). This working document was prepared to assist translators, but may be useful in identifying the areas of change. However, as the format in this version has not been updated and the graphics have been removed, it should be used with caution.
2. The revision of S-4 B-300 includes many improvements to the text to make it more consistent with other parts of S-4, as well as numerous amendments, amplifications and updates based on feedback from chart producers. Noteworthy changes to the existing specifications are listed in **Annex A**.
3. Member States are requested to review the CSPCWG's revision. In accordance with S-4 Specification B-160, Member States should inform the IHB ([info@iho.int](mailto:info@iho.int)) within three months if they have any major objections to the adoption of the revised specifications, or any other comments that they wish to make. Member States' comments should therefore reach the IHB by **14 April 2013, using the Response Form at Annex B**. If no objection is received, the IHB will issue a follow-up Circular Letter indicating that the revised specifications have come into force.
4. In accordance with the 2013-2014 Work Plan approved by the Hydrographic Services and Standards Committee (see reference B), the CSPCWG will now revise section 500. The publication of this section will complete the revision of S-4 Part B, which has been a principal task of the CSPCWG since its inception.



On behalf of the Directing Committee  
Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Gilles Bessero', is written over a light blue circular stamp or watermark.

Gilles BESSERO  
Director

**NOTEWORTHY CHANGES TO CHART SPECIFICATIONS OF THE IHO (S-4)  
SECTION B-300 - TOPOGRAPHY**

- B-300:** A new introductory section explaining the purpose and importance of including topographic detail on nautical charts.
- B-302:** These definitions of height and elevation reflect the current use on paper charts. They differ from those promulgated in IHO CL 76/2012 which HSSC has asked the HDWG to reconsider.
- B-304:** It is considered no longer useful to chart observation spots and benchmarks, which are of interest only to surveyors.
- B-305:** It is planned to replace the existing B-305 with more appropriately placed ‘generic’ convention on positions of symbols at B-125.3, as not all the symbols are topographic. (The draft new section B-125.3 is contained temporarily in B-300; it will be moved to the proper place once approved).
- B-312.2:** The centre version of the stony shore symbol C7 is made obsolescent, as it is not suitable as a computer generated symbol. Guidance on the charting of reed beds has been added.
- B-312.4:** The mangrove symbol has been extended to include ‘Nipa Palms’ which produce a similar impenetrable intertidal area.
- B-313.4:** The charting of groynes has been simplified.
- B-321:** All ‘berthing structures’ have been included in this sub-section (with some items moved from B-323), with improved definitions to help distinguish the various terms.
- B-324:** This sub-section has been expanded to include ramps, hards, pontoons and steps.
- B-327.5** This paragraph has been previously agreed to fit better at B-422.9. (The draft new section B-422.9 is contained temporarily in B-300; it will be moved to the proper place once approved).
- B-330:** New guidance is provided on the charting of hulks.
- B-340:** Greater clarity is provided about landmarks, particularly conspicuous ones.
- B-351:** Guidance on the use of form lines to show relief has been removed, while more modern equivalents have been added.
- B-353.8:** A more modern symbol has been included for charting glaciers.
- B-354.2:** The number of symbols available for differentiating tree varieties has been significantly reduced.
- B-355:** The brief specification on lava flows has been expanded to cover volcanic activity in general.
- B-361:** The guidance from IHO Resolution 4/1929 on canals has been captured. The deletion of this resolution will be submitted to the formal approval of Member States once the revised specification has come into force.
- B-362:** It is no longer considered useful to chart disused railways.
- B-366:** The section on Airfields (re-titled ‘Airports’) has been expanded to include heliports and provide guidance on charting navigational restrictions in the vicinity of airports.
- B-370.8:** Guidance on charting refuges has been added. This is in lieu of special symbols for charts of Antarctica, as previously agreed with HCA.
- B-372.1:** It is no longer considered useful to chart post offices.

- B-373.1:** The former symbol  listed as an alternative in E16 to distinguish a Buddhist temple or shrine (from those of other religions) has been made obsolescent. The main symbol of E16  will be the only one kept. It is also the only symbol used to display an ENC-encoded Buddhist temple or shrine on ECDIS
- B-380.2/382.1:** Greater clarity has been provided about the difference between physical and safe vertical clearance.
- B-390:** A new sub-section on pictorial representations has replaced the former sub-section on ‘views and sketches, viewpoints’.

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SECTION B-300 - TOPOGRAPHY**

**Response Form**

*(comments, if any, to be returned to the IHB by 14 April 2013)*

*E-mail: [info@iho.int](mailto:info@iho.int) - Fax: +377 93 10 81 40)*

Note: The boxes will expand as you type your entries.

**Member**

**State:**

**Contact:**

**E-mail:**


Do you agree with the revised section B-300 (see [http://www.iho.int/iho\\_pubs/draft\\_pubs/Draft\\_S-4\\_B-300\\_Topography\\_Ed4.4.0\\_clean\\_copy.pdf](http://www.iho.int/iho_pubs/draft_pubs/Draft_S-4_B-300_Topography_Ed4.4.0_clean_copy.pdf))?

Yes

No

**Comments:**

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**Signature:**

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**Date:**

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