



IHB File N° S3/4405

CIRCULAR LETTER 05/2013
18 January 2013

CHART SPECIFICATIONS OF THE IHO (S-4)
Adoption of a 'generic' light flare on multicoloured paper charts

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

Dear Hydrographer,

1. An increasing number of hydrographic offices are producing 'multicoloured' paper charts as defined in S-4 Specification B-147. This has allowed environmental information to be charted in green (relieving pressure on the magenta base) and also enabled light flares and sectors to be charted in the appropriate colours. The Chart Standardization and Paper Chart Working Group (CSPCWG) has developed guidance on the use of additional colours, for example at B-147, B-437.2, B-470.4, as part of its ongoing revision of S-4.

2. One issue that the CSPCWG has found difficult to resolve on multicoloured charts is how to emphasize the position of a light using a flare, when the light has several colours. Various methods appear to be in use. This includes showing no flare where coloured sectors are shown, since the coloured sectors help to highlight the position of the light. Alternatively, more than one flare is shown where two (or more) different coloured lights are charted in the same position. This could be because of scale or because the lights are exhibited from the same structure. This second case is comparatively rare.

3. A common problem is how to depict tri-coloured sectored lights where, because of chart scale, it is cartographically impossible or inappropriate to chart the actual sectors. Some CSPCWG members (who use multicoloured techniques) use three different coloured flares to mark such lights. While this is possible, the majority view is that this overemphasizes the light and causes too much chart clutter. An alternative solution, favoured by the CSPCWG membership after detailed discussion, is to chart such lights with a 'generic' magenta flare. This is the long-standing standard display recommended on 'four-colour' charts (see S-4 Specification B-470.4 b). However, on multicoloured charts, where the chart user may expect to see a coloured flare to indicate the actual colour of a light, this may have potential to cause confusion. To mitigate this possibility, and subject to the proposal to use a generic magenta flare being accepted by Member States, the CSPCWG will ask INT1 producers to include an explanation in INT1. Additionally, an explanatory note could be inserted on the chart itself, at the discretion of chart producers, in accordance with S-4 Specification B242-5.

4. The CSPCWG also propose to extend the use of a magenta generic flare to signal stations (see S-4 B-494 and B-495.4).

5. The proposed changes to the relevant specifications of S-4 are presented in **Annex A** for Member States to review.

6. According to Specification B-160, Member States should inform the IHB (info@iho.int) within three months if they have any major objections to the adoption of these proposed revised specifications, or if they have any other comments to make. Therefore, Member States' comments should reach the IHB no later than **18 April 2013**, using the Response Form at **Annex B**. If no objections are received, the IHB will announce in a follow-up Circular Letter that the revised specifications have come into force. The CSPCWG will then include them in S-4 at the next opportunity.

On behalf of the Directing Committee

Yours sincerely,



Gilles BESSERO
Director

Annex A: Draft new specifications

Annex B: Response form

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1. An additional sentence is included under the bullet points listing colours for light flares at B-470.4a, as follows:

- If the light is multicoloured and the sectors are not charted, a single magenta flare should be used.

2. The second bullet of B-142.1:

- Light flares and other means of drawing attention to lights (except on multicoloured charts)

is replaced by the following:

- Light flares for drawing attention to lights (for multicoloured charts see B-470.4a)

3. The second sentence of B-470.6:

On 'multicoloured' charts, the flare(s) should be in the colour(s) of the light, see B-470.4.

is replaced by the following:

On 'multicoloured' charts, the flare(s) should normally be in the colour(s) of the light, see B-470.4a.

4. The last two sentences of B-494:

If required to be charted, the position of the station should be represented by a position circle (**B22** - see B-305.1) with a light flare, unless it is known that the signals are not lights. A standard form of presentation has yet to be developed for multicoloured charts (2009).

are replaced by the following:

If required to be charted, the position of the station should be represented by a position circle (**B22** - see B-305.1) with a magenta light flare, unless it is known that the signals are not lights.

5. The last two sentences of B-495.4:

A light flare must be added to the position circle. A standard form of presentation has yet to be developed for multicoloured charts (2009).

are replaced by the following:

A magenta light flare must be added to the position circle.

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Response Form

(comments, if any, to be returned to the IHB by 18 April 2013)

E-mail: info@iho.int - Fax: +377 93 10 81 40)

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

Member State:

Contact:

E-mail:

Do you agree with the revised specifications for use of a 'generic' light flare'? If you answer 'No', please explain your reasons in the comment section below the table.

No	S-4 references	Title	Yes	No
1	B-470.4a	Colours of lights		
2	B-142.1	To draw attention to certain features ...		
3	B-470.6	Light flares		
4	B-494	Signal stations - general		
5	B-495.4	International traffic signals		

Comments :

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Supplementary questions (to assist in interpreting responses)		Yes	No
1	Does your HO produce 'multicoloured'* paper charts (including coloured light flares and sectors)?		
2	Does your HO plan to produce 'multicoloured'* paper charts (including coloured light flares and sectors) in the future?		

* See S-4 Specification B-147.

Signature :

Date :
