



IHB File No. S3/4405

CIRCULAR LETTER 69/2014  
20 October 2014

**S-4 - CHART SPECIFICATIONS OF THE IHO**  
**Revision 4.5.0**

References:

- A. IHO CL 38/2014 dated 13 May - *Chart Specifications of the IHO (S-4) Section B-500 - Text: Language, Numbers, Abbreviations, Names, Styles and Fonts*
- B. IHO CL 49/2014 dated 23 June - *Chart Specifications of the IHO (S-4) - Revised Specifications related to Section A-204 International Chart Numbering*
- C. IHO CL 34/2014 dated 28 April - *Chart Specifications of the IHO (S-4) - Approval of Revised Specifications related to Sections B-400 and C-400 Hydrography and Aids to Navigation*
- D. IHO CL 32/2014 dated 14 April - *Chart Specifications of the IHO (S-4) – Approval of new and revised Specifications related to Sections B-100 – General and B-400 – Hydrography and Aids to Navigation*
- E. IHO CL 47/2014 dated 18 June - *Hydrographic Dictionary (S-32) – Adoption of New Definitions*
- F. IHO CL 55/2013 dated 3 October - *S-4 - Chart Specifications of the IHO - Revision 4.4.0 (English version)*

Dear Hydrographer,

1. This Circular Letter is to inform Member States that the latest revision of IHO Publication S-4 (Edition 4.5.0), *Regulations of the IHO for International (INT) Charts and Chart Specifications of the IHO* has been published. The English version is now available on the IHO website at: [www.iho.int](http://www.iho.int) → Standards & Publications → download IHO Publications → S-4.

2. The main reason for this revision is the inclusion of the revised Section B-500 – ‘Text: Language, Numbers, Abbreviations, Names, Styles and Fonts’. Approval by Member States was reported in Reference A.

3. The approval of 5-digit INT numbers and other clarifications in A-204, as detailed in Reference B, is the final element included in this revision. All 38 Member States (Algeria, Argentina, Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Brazil, Chile, Colombia, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Denmark, Ecuador, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Guatemala, Iceland, India, Italy, Japan, Korea (Rep. of), Malaysia, Norway, Peru, Portugal, Qatar, Romania, Singapore, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Tunisia, UK, USA) who responded supported the proposal. Germany suggested modifying the naming of one major area in Table A-204.2 to read “East side of the North Atlantic and Baltic Sea” rather than “East side of the North Atlantic”. This suggestion has been taken into account.

4. The revision includes other new and revised specifications approved by Member States as reported in Reference C:

- a. Showing limits of surveys on charts (B-415.2)
- b. Discontinuities between surveys (B-416.1)
- c. Reported dangers (B-424.5, C-404.2-3)

and in Reference D:

- a. Updating order of charts according to scale (B-100.5)
- b. Selection of soundings (B-410)
- c. Definition of major lights (B-470.2)
- d. Specification of direction lights (B-475.7)
- e. ‘Highlighting’ of navigation lights (B-478.4),
- f. Status of ‘Large Automatic Navigational Buoy’ (LANBY) (B-460.4b).

5. The following additional clarifications, resulting from discussions within the CSPCWG and listed in the appropriate 'Record of Updates', have been included in the revision:

B-120.2: Clarification on use of full stops.

B-122.1 and B-471.2: Removal of abbreviations IQ and IVQ.

Note: these former abbreviations caused some confusion, as they were not easily distinguished from group quick (Q) and group very quick (VQ) lights. Consequently, IALA has removed them from their list of approved light descriptions. Member States should replace any such light descriptions on their charts at next revision by Q( ) or VQ( ) as appropriate, providing the number of flashes per group in the parentheses. This change will be reflected in the future edition(s) of the IHO publication INT1 as opportunity allows. It should also be reflected in national versions of INT1.

B-160: Revised updating procedure for S-4.

B-330: Clarification on definition of 'Hulk'.

B-447: Adoption of latest definition of 'Aquaculture' (Reference E).

B-470.4b: Restoration of the paragraph which was inadvertently deleted in the edition 4.4.0.

B-471.5: Adoption of latest definition of 'phase' (of a navigational light – Reference E).

B-478.2: Clarification on abbreviation 'illum'.

B-486.3: Clarification on depiction of Racon in ENC.

B-633.6: Completion of example note.

Consequential changes to cross references and some minor editorial corrections (such as changing 'eg' to 'for example' throughout) have also been applied as necessary.

6. This new edition of the English version of S-4 has been prepared by the Secretary (from the UK Hydrographic Office - UKHO) of the IHO Chart Standardization and Paper Chart Working Group (CSPCWG) under the supervision of the Chair (from the Australian Hydrographic Service -AHS). The Directing Committee acknowledges their continuing contribution and reiterates its gratitude to the AHS and the UKHO for making their personnel available.

7. This new edition supersedes Edition 4.4.0 which was published in September 2013 (see Reference F). The corresponding French and Spanish versions will be published in due course. The publication of Edition 4.5.0 marks the end of the major revision of S-4 that has taken about nine years to complete since the adoption of its current format. From now on, and in accordance with section B-160 as amended, the maintenance of S-4 will be carried out in accordance with IHO Resolutions 11/2002 and 2/2007 as amended, rather than the special procedures that were in place during the major revision process.

On behalf of the Directing Committee  
Yours sincerely,



Gilles BESSERO  
Director