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CIRCULAR LETTER 32/2014
14 April 2014

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

- References: A. IHO Circular Letter 58/2013 dated 28 October - *New and revised Specifications related to Sections B-100 – General and B-400 – Hydrography and Aids to Navigation*
B. IHO Publication S-4 Part B - *Chart Specifications of the IHO*

Dear Hydrographer,

1. Reference A proposed the adoption of revised chart specifications considered by the IHO Chart Standardization and Paper Chart Working Group (CSPCWG) for:
 - a. Updating order of charts according to scale;
 - b. Selection of soundings;
 - c. Definition of major lights;
 - d. Specification of direction lights;
 - e. 'Highlighting' of navigation lights;
 - f. Status of 'Large Automatic Navigational Buoy' (LANBY).
2. The Directing Committee would like to thank the following 36 Member States: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Cuba, Cyprus, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, India, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Monaco, Netherlands, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Saudi Arabia, Singapore, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Tunisia, Turkey, Ukraine, UK and USA, who replied to Reference A.
3. All the responses supported the proposals. The comments received and the outcome of their review by the Chair of the CSPCWG or by the IHB, as appropriate, are provided in the Annex to this letter.
4. The new and amended specifications, taking into account the comments in Annex A, will be included in the next revision of IHO Publication S-4.

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.

Gilles BESSERO
Director

Annex A: Member States' responses to CL 58/2013 and comments.

MEMBER STATES' RESPONSES TO CL 58/2013 AND COMMENTS

AUSTRALIA

The IHB intent to improve readability of Section B-478.4 through editing text is appreciated, though the complexity of the original text is unknown. However, as the footnote is unclear regarding the level of subsequent consultation with CSPCWG, clarification of the process followed is sought.

As a matter of appropriate process, there are concerns that changes made in isolation, without reference back to the relevant technical WG for impact assessment, carry a small risk of having unintended consequences.

Comment from IHB: The IHB sought the advice of the Chair of the CSPCWG on the proposed editing prior to issuing the Circular Letter. Although the Chair of the CSPCWG did not support the changes at this late stage of the process, it was considered that any potential unintended consequence would be easily detected by the members of the CSPCWG during the three-month consultation. No observation has been received on the edited text.

CROATIA

Croatia fully supports all proposals for the new and revised specifications of the IHO pub. S-4. We value the proposals very important and useful for the process of paper chart production and updating. Croatia also highly appreciates the work of the CSPC working group that resulting in those proposals.

Comment from Chairman CSPCWG: Thank you for these expressions of support. It is worth noting that, as explained in section B-100, much of the portrayal of features on charts specified in S-4 is relevant to both electronic and paper charts.

FRANCE

B-410a: The last sentence of B-410a should be as follows:

‘The final test of depth selection is that no source material should contain depths shallower than the mariner would expect by interpolating the depths on the chart (from charted soundings and depth contours).’

Comment from Chairman CSPCWG: Thank you for suggesting this clarification. To avoid the repetition ‘on the chart’ and ‘charted’, the text will be amended to ‘...by interpolating the depth in any position from the charted soundings and depth contours’.

SAUDI ARABIA

B-487.4: We prefer to have a symbol in INT1 to highlight the Navigational Lights to distinguish them from the other formats of lights. This can be done by enclosing the navigational light in a circle or a square box will be useful. With this we can avoid ‘see Note’ legend on the chart. However, we agree to add details in the List of Lights.

Comment from Chairman CSPCWG: CSPCWG considered that adding a circle (or even a square) would not intuitively imply ‘highlighting’ and would also add clutter to an already overloaded symbol (for example, potentially with flares, radio circles, colour sectors, floodlight, name, light description, fog signal and possibly other details) for a less important detail.

TUNISIA

The adoption of the revised specifications reinforces the safety of maritime navigation.

UK

UK would like to endorse these revisions of IHO Publication S-4 and to highlight the commitment and contribution made by CSPCWG members to the task

USA

B-470.2: [US] Coast Guard considers major lights to be those having a nominal range of 10 nautical miles or greater, regardless of purpose.

Comment from Chairman CSPCWG: Consultation confirmed that this simplistic view is not acceptable to IALA. The purpose and context of the light are the deciding factors.

B-475.7: There are many "patterns" for directional lights, ranging from a simple lantern with 3 sectors (RWG) to a PEL with 7 sectors each showing something different. See the attached handouts (Pilot I and Pilot 2) that were developed for Port Everglades (a 7 Sector PEL). "DirWRG" does not give mariners enough information about a 5 or 7 sector PEL.

Comment from Chairman CSPCWG: Most mariners are familiar with 'PEL' oscillating lights and will not be surprised to see the complex WRG sectors that result. If space allows, the specification explains how such sectors should be charted, although in practice the actual characteristics vary so much, depending on the angle the light is viewed from, that it is not practical to chart all the details (which can be given in Lists of Lights if required).

B-460.4b: There are no LANBYs in service in U.S. waters.

Comment from Chairman CSPCWG: Thank you for this confirmation.