



IHB File N° S3/4405

CIRCULAR LETTER 49/2014  
23 June 2014

**S-4 - CHART SPECIFICATIONS OF THE IHO**  
**Revised Specifications related to Section A-204**  
**International Chart Numbering**

Reference: IHO Publication S-4 Part A - *Regulations of the IHO for INT charts*, Edition 4.4.0

Dear Hydrographer,

1. The Chairman of the Baltic Sea International (INT) Charting Coordination Working Group (BSICCWG) and Coordinator of INT Chart Region E submitted a request to the Chairman of the Chart Standardization and Paper Chart Working Group (CSPCWG) for additional INT chart numbers for the Baltic Sea region. This was because the few remaining unused INT numbers in the region are very scattered and cannot be used in a logical manner. Also, there are insufficient remaining available groups of numbers in other regions in the series 1000-1999 to transfer to Region E. The Chairman of BSICCWG suggested the possibilities of using INT numbers with a prefix (for example INT E-1025) or with 5-digits (for example INT10251).

2. The CSPCWG considered these two options and unanimously supported the use of 5-digit numbers as the better choice, because:

- “E” is not a meaningful prefix for chart users or producers as regional identifiers are not well known outside the IHO community.
- Letter prefixes are already used in the numbering of certain paper charts to indicate the producer nation, for example AUS (= Australia), JP (=Japan) and NZ (=New Zealand). In the European context, E is often used for España / Spain and some users might consider E = Estonia within the Baltic Sea region. There is therefore considerable potential to confuse the user.
- A non-numeric value may cause problems with metadata stores.

3. The use of 5-digit INT numbers was also supported by the Baltic Sea Hydrographic Commission at its 19<sup>th</sup> meeting (10-12 June 2014).

4. Consequently, the CSPCWG proposes to add a new ‘Note 3’ at the foot of the table in Specification A-204.2:

3. In the event of 4 digits not providing sufficient INT numbers for a region, a 5<sup>th</sup> digit may be added at the unit end of the existing allocated 4 digit numbers. Alphabetical prefixes or suffixes should not be used.

5. As clarifications, CSPCWG will also take the opportunity to amend the table in A-204.2 and Specifications A.204-4 and A.204-5 as follows:

- Amend both lines ‘West side of North Atlantic’ and ‘East side of North Pacific’ to ‘Part of Region A’ and ‘Part of Region B’ and split the allocation of numbers between Regions A and B.

*Note: The Pacific portion of Region B was transferred from Region A around 2005/2006. As a result, the table in A-204.2, line ‘East side of North Pacific’, should have been amended accordingly, with appropriate allocation of INT numbers to a new ‘Part of Region B’.*

- Amend 'Region J' to 'Regions I & J' in the table.

*Note: Region I was formed out of Region J several years ago, but has never been listed in A-204.2. Unfortunately, it is not possible to separate the allocation of the numbers to the two regions, as most were already allocated before the separation of the Regions.*

- Amend A-204.4 to 'Chart numbers with 4 or 5 digits....'
- Amend the examples in A-204.5, noting that the Baltic Sea is no longer a good example, as numbers were previously transferred from Region D to Region E to fill gaps and consequently disrupting the regional allocation.

6. The proposed changes to Specifications A-204.2 to A-204.5 are shown at Annex A.

7. According to Specification B-160 of S-4, 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 these revised Specifications, or any other comments. Therefore, any comments from Member States should reach the IHB **no later than 23 September 2014**, 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 the next edition of S-4.

On behalf of the Directing Committee  
Yours sincerely,



Gilles BESSERO  
Director

Annex A: Proposed revised Specifications A-204.2-5

Annex B: Response Form

**S-4 - CHART SPECIFICATIONS OF THE IHO**  
**Proposed revised Specifications A-204.2 to A.204-5**

*Proposed changes are shown in red below.*

**A-204.2** The blocks of INT numbers allocated to major areas <sup>(+)</sup> are:

MAJOR AREAS	Allocation of INT Numbers to charts on scales shown (Note: OCEAN CHARTS (1:10M and smaller) are allocated numbers 10 to 99)		
	1:9 900 000 to 1:1 100 000	1:1 000 000 to 1:375 000 *	1:350 000 * and larger
East side of North Atlantic Region D	100 - 199	1000 – 1019, 1030 - 1079	1100 - 1169 1300 1305 - 1314 1400 - 1759
Region E		1020 - 1029	1119 - 1299 1301 - 1304 1315 - 1399 1760 - 1799
Part of Region G		1080 – 1099	1800 - 1999
Central and South Atlantic Region C1 Part of Region H Part of Region G	200 - 299	2000 - 2049 2050 - 2074 2075 – 2099	2100 - 2499 2500 - 2754 2755 - 2999
Mediterranean & Black Seas Region F	300 - 399	3000 – 3099	3100 - 3999
West side of North Atlantic Part of Region A Part of Region B	400 - 499	4030-4069, 4090-4099 4000-4029, 4070-4089	4300 - 4999 4100 - 4299
West side of North Pacific Region K	500 - 599	5000 – 5099	5100 - 5999
South Pacific Region C2 Part of Region L	600 - 699	6000 - 6029 6030 – 6099	6100 - 6299 6300 - 6999
Indian Ocean Regions I and J Part of Region H Part of Region L	700 - 799	7000 - 7049 7050 - 7074 7075 – 7099	7100 - 7499 7500 - 7749 7750 - 7999
East side of North Pacific Part of Region A Part of Region B	800 - 899	8000 - 8069 8070 – 8099	8100 - 8699 8700 - 8999
Polar Regions Region M (Antarctica) Region N (Arctic)	900 - 929 930 - 959	9000 - 9199 9200 - 9599	
Special Charts	960 - 999	9600 - 9999	
NOTES: 1. * The scale bands may be varied to suit regional needs. 2. The blocks of numbers listed above include numbers already in use. 3. In the event of 4 digits not providing sufficient INT numbers for a region, a 5 <sup>th</sup> digit may be added at the unit end of the existing allocated 4 digit numbers. Alphabetical prefixes or suffixes should not be used.			

~~OCEAN CHARTS (1:10M and smaller) are allocated numbers 10 to 99.~~

**A-204.3** Chart numbers with 2 or 3 digits may be allocated only after consultation with the CSPCWG Secretariat, to permit co-ordination between regions.

**A-204.4** Chart numbers with 4 or 5 digits may be allocated by the Regional Co-ordinators of INT chart schemes, in consultation with other members of their Regional Groups.

**A-204.5** Each block should be sub-divided on a regional basis, for example:

1100 - 1118 Iceland

~~1130 – 1299 Baltic.~~

1300 - 1399 Skagerrak, Kattegat and Baltic entrances

1700 - 1759 English Channel

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**Revised Specifications A-204.2 to A-204.5**  
**International Chart Numbering**

**Response Form**

*(Objections and/or comments to be returned to the IHB by 23 September 2014)*

*E-mail: [info@iho.int](mailto: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 proposed changes to Specifications A-204.2 to A.204.5?

If you answer 'No', please explain in the comment section below the table.

S-4 reference	Change	Yes	No
A-204.2 to A-204.5	See Annex A		

**Comments:**

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**Signature:**

**Date:**
