5th CSPCWG MEETING
Sydney, 18-21 November 2008

Paper for Consideration by CSPCWG

Symbol Library

Submitted by:	Chairman
Executive Summary:	At the 4th CSPCWG meeting in November 2007, Action 17 charged the Secretary to draft WG letter asking for views on a way forward on proposal for a symbol library. The subsequent correspondence is covered in the related documents.
Related Documents:	CSPCWG4-10.1A (original paper by AU); CSPCWG Letters 09/2008 and 13/2008.
Related Projects:	None

Introduction / Background

At the 4th CSPCWG meeting in November 2007, Action 17 charged the Secretary to draft WG letter asking for views on a way forward on proposal for a symbol library. The subsequent correspondence is covered in the related documents.

Analysis / Discussion

Four possible options were suggested in CSPCWG Letter 09/2008. These options, with a summary of responses and comments, are as follows:

Option	Proposal	YES				NO
		1	2	3	4	
1	to adopt M-4 as 'the international symbol library' (which is effectively the UK symbol library)	DK, JP, IN, IT, NZ, PK,	AU, CA, NL, SE, US, ZA	FI, NO		DE, ES, FR
2	add an annex to M-4 which would serve as a symbol library and collection of INT1 terms and descriptions in English, French and Spanish	DE, FI	IN, IT, NO, PK	CA	AU	DK, ES, FR, JP, NL, NZ, SE, US, ZA
3	engage a contractor to produce a symbol library separate from M-4			AU		CA, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, IN, IT, JP, NL, NO, NZ, PK, SE, US, ZA
4	maintain status quo, ie no formal symbol library; all HOs free to prepare their own, or adopt those they prefer from other HOs, or use whatever is available from software companies. It was noted, for example, that CARIS has its own symbol library, and also those of France, UK and others, are available	AU, CA, ES, FR, NL, NO, SE, US, ZA	DK, FI, JP, NZ			DE, IN, IT, PK

Members were asked to indicate their preference in the columns above, and add any comments below. They were asked to indicate in the 'YES' columns their order of preference (1,2…), and in the 'NO' column tick (√) any option they consider should not be pursued.

<u>Comments by responding WG members</u>

AU: Given that most Hydrographic Offices have invested considerable time, effort and money into developing and maintaining their own symbol libraries based on what is depicted in M-4 and the official IHO INT1's (with some minor variations in some cases) for their production systems, AU cannot see any immediate benefit to the IHO or HOs in undertaking the huge task of developing a generic international symbol library at this time. While it would be desirable to move forward with options 2 or 3 above, this would probably be difficult to implement on completion as it would be required for HOs and/or software manufacturers to implement the symbols into their production systems (if they have the functionality and capability). HOs would also be hesitant in implementing such a change where it will cause inconsistency in portrayal in their paper chart/RNC portfolio, and as such would probably retain their national INT1 as their symbol library – can the IHB force HOs to cancel their national INT1's in favour of an international symbol library?

There is work being done by groups such as the Defence Geospatial Information Working Group (DGIWG) in establishing international portrayal registers within their registry, and CSMWG is doing similar work in relation to S-100 for ECDIS symbols. AU recommends that CSPCWG monitor the work being done by these groups for possible future development of a paper chart portrayal register within S-100 at a later date.

CA: Canada prefers to maintain the status quo as we see little immediate benefit to users by adopting a slightly different symbol library considering the large amount of work it would take to update our chart inventory.

DE: M-4 serves as the lead document for cartographers to produce charts. Adding an annex containing "the international symbol library" is therefore supported in principle. The INT1 editions of DE, ES and FR are considered model representations for other HOs to produce their national specifications of symbols, abbreviations and terms for chart users, and are available as repromat files. The differences between the four symbologies are not really important for the chart user, there is mainly consistence in the terms and descriptions (see CSPCWG Letter 10/2008). The vector graphics for the symbols as contained in the current M4 edition differ in some parts from the original M-4 symbols specified by CSC and should be updated to an agreed set of international symbols. An annex to M-4 providing the international symbology should primarily facilitate to HOs adopting this symbology. But then one can dispense with terms and descriptions in the annex (they could be taken from the INT1 editions), one needs only the INT1 reference number and symbol. DE favours a unique table to achieve with the best digitized symbols, which could be some days of work for the INT1 SubWG. The advantage is that new or amended symbols could be developed together and easily and rapidly included in this table, much earlier than in the next INT 1 editions of DE, ES and FR. The proposed DE solution would be equivalent to option 3, but as part (annex to) of M-4, and without contractor which is not seen necessary. We should discuss the topic further at CSPCWG5.

ES: We support comments by France.

FI: We agree with DE comments on option 2.

FR: An offer of paper charts production systems already exists for HOs. Also, there is no such a need to help manufacturers with a strict standardization of symbols.

The added value for end users is low and the cost for CSPCWG (lot of work with other priorities), HOs and manufacturers (to be in accordance with a strict standard) is heavy.

NZ: Whilst New Zealand uses the symbol library in M4, we would also be happy with option 4, maintain status quo.

PK: Int charts, for their nature, are a documents that are compile in the same way and have a standard representation, this for safety and for simplify the use of the chart to the mariner, particularly near the coast or approaching harbour. We have the same system with the ENC where the chart symbols are standard.

US: Many nations already have devoted considerable resources to developing symbol libraries and are unlikely to abandon them. Options number 2 and 3 would slow the progress of the working group.

ZA: South Africa supports the comments made by Australia (AU) under CSPCWG4-10.1A (Annex A).

Conclusions

(As in CSPCWG Letter 13/2008). It will be readily seen that option 3 can be dismissed; there is clearly no desire to engage an external contractor. Options 1 and 4 are finely balanced: 14 accept option 1 and 13 accept option 4. Of those which accept these options, more make option 4 their first or second choice. Although Option 2 gets less support than options 1 and 4, Germany has made a proposal based on option 2 (but not quite the same) which came fairly late among the responses and has therefore not been fully considered by everyone (although Finland has indicated support for Germany's suggestion).

Recommendations

The Chairman, as also representative of UK, has deliberately abstained from the votes above.

Justification and Impacts

Adopting Options 1 or 4 would have little impact in terms of work to be done. Option 2 would produce significant work, especially for the members of the INT1 subWG, but also for the WG members as a whole, as it is unlikely that the subWG members will find it easy to decide which is the 'best digitized' version of a particular symbol.

Action required of CSPCWG

The CSPCWG is invited to discuss Germany's suggestion and then decide on whether to accept options 1, 2 or 4.