



Liaison note to HSSC-4 of the International Hydrographic Organization From the Chairman of IEC TC 80

IEC 61174, ECDIS

The IEC was originally going to issue an amendment to IEC 61174 Ed 3 in 2012 emphasising that the latest version of IHO S-64 must be used in all associated testing. Although already explicit in the existing standard it was thought worthwhile to emphasise this when S-64 was about to be amended to include the tests for previously found ECDIS anomalies.

During 2012 it became clear that amendments to IEC standards defined in the European Marine Equipment Directive were now being treated in the same manner as new editions of standards, causing issues in the continuity of type approval of previously approved equipment. Normally manufacturers have several years notice to plan the complex transition to a new edition of an IEC standard but this amendment would have proceeded with minimal notice. Since the amendment would have caused no practical differences to the requirements, the burden was considered to be unacceptable.

An alternative route has been looked at, which is using an IEC Publicly Available Standard. With no apparent disruption to European Standards, the route appears to be open to produce a PAS that emphasises the need to use the latest version of S-64, and could perhaps be published shortly before the actual publication of the next edition of S-64, which IEC TC80 now understands to be late 2013.

More importantly, it is now clear when IEC is likely to achieve publication of the 4th Edition of IEC 61174. An experienced maintenance team leader with good ECDIS knowledge has agreed to head the task and the drafting work is expected to be completed by March 2014. The initial list of issues that will be tackled include additional information about testing for IHO requirements, revision of alarm handling in line with Bridge Alert Management, addition of interfacing requirements for connection to the Voyage Data Recorder and new requirements for a waypoint database.

Through its national bodies, the IEC will shortly be asking for the nomination of experts to form the maintenance team. It is hoped that key experts from the IHO will be wanting to join the team. IEC 61174 Ed.4 is expected to be published in early 2015, in line with the expectations of the 2011 IEC TC80 Plenary Meeting.

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