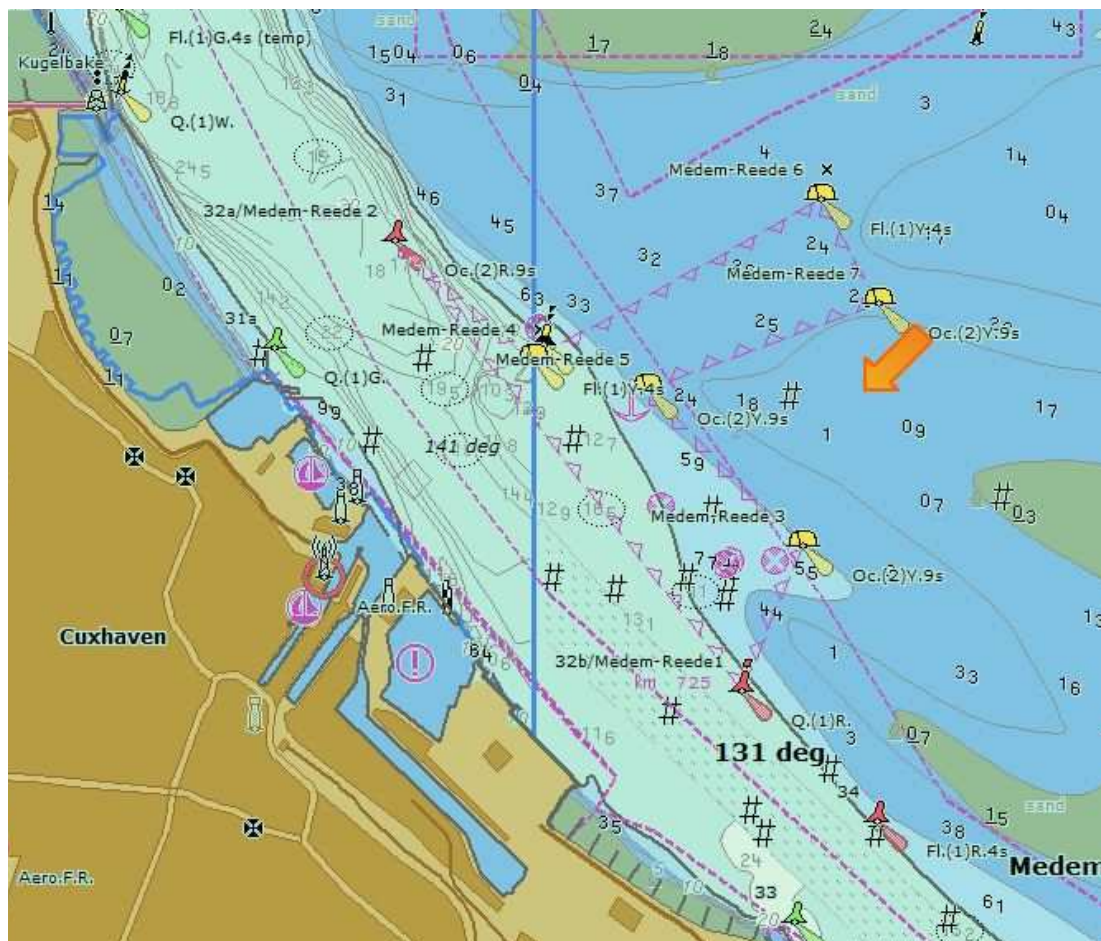


Customized ENC service for pilots and VTS applications – bathymetric ENC

Bathymetric charts are designed to present the topography of the sea bottom most accurately by dense contour lines. A nautical chart presents a much more generalised topography of the seabed to aid mariners in avoiding underwater hazards and incorporates landmarks, any type of aids to navigation and other information to assist ship's handling.

The new customized ENC service combines the advantages of both charts. Areas where the official ENC used to present 0, 5 and 10 meter contours only, are supplemented with dense contour lines of 1 meter up to 20 centimetre steps (shown in the left side of the picture below). With regard to the data format, bathymetric ENCs are based on a proprietary commercial extension of S-57.



During the last years several commercial data providers started to produce bathymetric ENC of the bigger estuaries and the Kiel Canal for German pilots. All German pilots are equipped with Portable Pilot Units (PPU) and use them by means of their customized bathymetric ENCs for their pilotage. This practice however, leads to operational inconsistencies between the pilots and the onboard staff who make their decisions on the basis of official ENCs loaded in their respective onboard ECDIS device.

The federal government of Germany in collaboration with the German Federal Chamber of Pilots has taken initiative to maintain official bENC of the subject areas. Under the auspices of the BSH a scenario for a customized official bENC data service for pilots and VTS applications was developed. The concept specifies regionally diverging requirements for bENC and defines users groups who get access to this data. The update frequency depends from the local circumstances, the frequency and the resolution of the available re-survey. It ranges from weeks in the Elbe estuaries to years for Baltic Sea harbours. The target date to cover all piloted areas with a regular bENC provision in the desired frequency is 2018.

The Commission is invited to take note.