

NCWG DETAILED PROCEDURES

Updated [20172024](#), following [NCWG3-NCWG10](#) meeting

1. Correspondence

- 1.1. The working **language** of the Working Group (WG) is English.
- 1.2. Correspondence (including formal NCWG letters) will be by email. Respondents are encouraged to use the 'Reply to all' option for responses, to ensure the full Working Group membership (including IHO Secretariat, industry representatives and expert contributors) is aware of developing discussions.
- 1.3. It is necessary to ensure that personal address lists are updated when updated membership and contact lists are issued from time to time. These are dated and posted on the NCWG section of the IHO website.
- 1.4. Significant correspondence will be supplied to other HSSC WG Chairs and/or Secretaries as appropriate, for their WGs' information and seeking their input.

2. Timescales

- 2.1. Except where there is good reason for shortening the timescales, **8 weeks** will normally be allowed for responding to the first correspondence on a new subject. Thereafter, **4 weeks** will be allowed for responding to further correspondence on the same subject. The ~~Chairman~~ may extend the times allowed for complex issues at his discretion. The Secretary will ensure that the response date (if any) is clearly shown on all correspondence.

3. Meetings

- 3.1. The NCWG should meet about once a year. A meeting should last approximately three days.
- 3.2. It is important to have issues which would benefit from a face-to-face discussion on the agenda, which may not be known until near the meeting time. However, the venue and date of the next meeting shall be considered at the previous meeting; ~~in order to~~ facilitate participants' travel arrangements.
- 3.3. Meetings will be hosted either by invitation of a WG member, or at the IHO Secretariat in Monaco. If more than one invitation is available, the venue will be agreed by vote at the earliest opportunity.
- 3.4. NCWG Meetings will not be held in the 9-week period before an HSSC meeting.
- 3.5. The Secretary will issue an invitation to the next NCWG meeting about 6 months in advance of the agreed date, to allow time for representatives to bid for the necessary budget approval, obtain visas and make travel arrangements. The letter will also request representatives to suggest topics for the agenda.

4. Publications

- 4.1. NCWG is responsible for maintaining IHO publications S-4 (The International Chart Regulations and Specifications) with its supplementary documents, INT1, INT2 and INT3; and S-11 Part A. The principles and procedures for making changes to IHO technical standards and specifications are set out in IHO Resolution 2/2007 as amended (Res.2/2007) and apply to S-4 and S-11 Part A.
- 4.2. One of the principal tasks of NCWG is to maintain S-4 to reflect the developing requirements of nautical charting, including changing navigational procedures and developments in cartographic techniques (S-4 B-160). These may be New Editions, Revisions or Clarifications, as defined by Res.2/2007:5.
- 4.3. Any new work items that require significant resources and time (such as the addition of a new section to S-4 or a change of style, resulting in a **New Edition**) will require approval from HSSC before work is commenced (in accordance with Res.2/2007:3.2).

- 4.4. Suggestions for updates (**Revisions and Clarifications** as defined in Res.2/2007: 5.1) to the specifications or proposals for new symbols may be received from IHO Member States (MS) or WG members at any time. Preliminary discussions about such suggestions will be held during NCWG meetings (or by correspondence if the matter is urgent) when a decision will be taken on whether a suggestion merits further work. An accumulation of such changes will eventually be included in a 'Revised Edition' of S-4.
- 4.5. **Revisions and Clarifications** of the relevant clauses will be drafted by ~~the~~ Chairman and Editor in 'MS Word' format, changes to existing specifications shown as 'track changes', and circulated to all WG members by NCWG Letter. Where specific guidance is required, WG members may be asked to vote on their preference in an Annex to the Letter.
- 4.6. Feedback from WG members within the timescales above is considered by the Chairman and Editor and incorporated into a revised draft as appropriate. Further drafts are ~~circulated~~circulated, if necessary, until no further or minimal amendments are suggested.
- 4.7. In accordance with Res.2/2007: 3.2.4, relevant stakeholders should be invited to comment and participate as appropriate. IHO MS are the most significant stakeholders for revisions to S-4, and in particular any possible impact of proposed changes to S-4 on ENC encoding and ECDIS performance must be considered. Therefore, any proposed changes classified by the WG as revisions or extensions are additionally to be forwarded to the Chair and Secretary of the ENCWG to elicit comment and feedback from that WG.
- 4.8. Once approved by NCWG, the changes will be included as 'Bulletins' on a **Nautical Cartography Bulletins** page (accessible from the NCWG section of the IHO website), so that interested Member States can implement them immediately.
- 4.9. **Clarifications** will be included in the next draft Revised Edition by the Editor, without further consultation. Where a new version of S-4 incorporating only clarifications is considered necessary (n.n.n), the NCWG has the authority to publish the new version without seeking HSSC's endorsement and MS approval (Res.2/2007: 5.1 and 5.2).
- 4.10. When a proposed change is considered to be **navigationally significant and urgent**, as determined by the NCWG Chair, an abbreviated consultation period within the NCWG, as considered appropriate, is initiated. On approval of such changes by the WG, the change is posted immediately on the Nautical Cartography Bulletins page, and notification promulgated by IHO Circular Letter (CL).
- 4.11. When a significant change has been introduced, and/or sufficient Revisions to S-4 have accumulated, the NCWG Chair will propose to HSSC that a **New or Revised Edition of S-4** should be published. As NCWG members and MS (through access to changes from the Nautical Cartography Bulletins page) have already had the opportunity to comment on the proposed changes, the New or Revised Edition can be prepared as soon as HSSC endorsement is obtained.
- 4.12. The Secretary supplies to IHO Secretariat, by email, a **pdf file of the complete S-4**, which is given a New Edition (n.0.0) or Revision number (n.n.0), as appropriate (Res.2/2007: 5.1 and 5.2).
- 4.13. IHO Secretariat issues a CL to propose the New or Revised Edition for adoption and explain the changes (by an explanatory note (EN) together with a PDF of the draft revised S-4 in the 'Draft Publications Awaiting Approval by Member States' part of the IHO website). (This is in accordance with Res.2/2007: 3.2.8.) The EN will also draw attention to any significant Clarifications which the WG has decided to incorporate.
- 4.14. IHO Secretariat makes and retains a CD of each finalized New or Revised Edition of S-4, as an international archive of the development of S-4.
- 4.15. The Editor will supply a list of all changes, including minor editorials, to ~~France, IHO Secretariat and Spain~~ to assist with translation work. The list will also be supplied to Republic of Korea to assist in updating the Digital Reference Tool for Cartographers and to other HOs that maintain local translations of S-4, on request (currently Germany). ~~In order to~~To avoid any confusion on the date of availability and effective publication of S-4 French and Spanish versions, the

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IHO Secretariat indicates on the IHO website and cover pages of S-4 (all versions), the Edition date and Publication date (month, year) in force.

- 4.16. NCWG is also responsible for maintaining **S-11 Part A**. Any changes will be progressed in a similar way to the above. Any major revision may be facilitated by the establishment of a subWG.
- 4.17. **Official INT1** revisions are undertaken by France, ~~Germany-UK~~ and Spain. They consult within the INT1 subWG, with the aim of achieving consistency (e.g. in English terms and descriptions). New editions are announced by IHO CL and in the 'IHO News' panel on the IHO website home page. PDF files are provided to IHO Secretariat for display on the IHO website (in a password protected section if required by the producer*). Notice to Mariners updates to INT1 are posted on the IHO website, with links from the Publications download list.
- 4.18. **INT2 and INT3** are published by Netherlands and UK respectively, on behalf of IHO. PDF files are provided to IHO Secretariat for display on the IHO website (in a password protected section if required by the producer*).
- 4.19. Revisions of INT1, INT2 and INT3 are not subject to HSSC approval. NCWG is the authority for all terms and descriptions used in official S-4 supplementary publications. The NCWG should formally approve new editions of INT2 and INT3 (by correspondence), as it does for INT1 via its INT1 sub-WG. Terms and descriptions in S-4's supplementary publications must be strictly in accordance with the specifications agreed by IHO Member States for incorporation into S-4. In INT1 however, they may be abridged to provide only the information essential to the chart user.
- 4.20. WG members are encouraged to advise the Secretary at any time of errors or omissions noticed in publications or information messages for which NCWG is responsible.

* when the IHO Secretariat receives requests from non-IHO Member States for these publications, they are directed to the producer for subsequent possible actions.