



IHO File No. S3/8151/S-100

CIRCULAR LETTER 17/2026
27 March 2026

ADOPTION OF IHO PUBLICATIONS

S-4 EDITION 4.10.0 - REGULATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL (INT) CHARTS AND CHART SPECIFICATIONS OF THE IHO.

References:

- A. IHO Resolution 2/2007 - Procedures for making changes to IHO Technical Standards and Specifications.
- B. IHO CL 45/2025 dated 24 November 2025 – Call for the approval of S-4 Edition 4.10.0.

Dear Hydrographer,

1. In accordance with reference A, the adoption of Edition 4.10.0 of the S-4 Standards - endorsed by HSSC at its 17th meeting - were proposed through the Circular Letter in Reference B.
2. The IHO Secretariat thanks the thirty seven Member States who responded to Reference B: Algeria, Australia, Bangladesh, Belgium, Chile, Colombia, Cuba, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Fiji, Finland, France, Germany, Greece, India, Indonesia, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Malaysia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Nigeria, Peru, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, South Africa, Sri Lanka, Sweden, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America and Uruguay.
3. All thirty-seven Member States supported the adoption of the proposed Edition. Ten Member States submitted comments in addition to their vote. All comments received are provided in Annex A to this Circular Letter with responses from the NCWG Chair and IHO Secretariat.
4. When the Reference was issued, there were 103 Member States of the IHO with two States suspended. In accordance with the provisions of the Convention on the IHO as amended, the minimum number of affirmative votes required is 34. As a result, the abovementioned proposed Editions have been adopted and are now available (English versions only) on the IHO website > Publications > [Standards and Specifications](#).
5. The IHO Secretariat and the HSSC Chair would like to congratulate the NCWG Officer Bearers and Members for this new Edition of one of the most relevant IHO Standards.

On behalf of the Secretary-General

Yours sincerely,

John NYBERG
Director

Annex:

- A. Responses to Member States' comments to IHO CL 45/2025 from the NCWG Chair and IHO Secretariat (in English only).

**MEMBER STATES' RESPONSES TO IHO CL 45/2025 AND COMMENTS
FROM THE WORKING GROUP and PROJECT TEAM CHAIRS, IHO SECRETARIAT**

S-4, Ed. 4.10.0	REGULATIONS FOR INTERNATIONAL (INT) CHARTS AND CHART SPECIFICATIONS OF THE IHO.
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DENMARK (Vote for adoption = YES)

These comments are provided jointly by the DANISH GEODATA AGENCY and the FAROESE ENVIRONMENT AGENCY.

Clause No./ Subclause No./ Annex (e.g. 3.1)	Type of comment	Comment (justification for change)	Proposed change	HSSC Chair/IHO Secretariat Comments
B-100	Editorial	Accuracy of record of updates.	Correct Specification Number B-120 to B-122.1 Correct S-4 Edition Nr. to 4.10.0	Amended
B-300	Editorial	Accuracy of record of updates.	Correct Specification Number B-380.2 to B-320.3 B-320.3 Terminal and commercial ports: Instead of Fxx, insert INT1 reference 'F9'	Amended INT reference was agreed at NCWG9 and will be included in this version of S-4

B-400	Editorial	Accuracy of record of updates.	<p>Second column: Add Specification Number B-422.10 and B-445.1 and B-415.1 (The term 'High confidence depths has been revised in these specifications as well.)</p> <p>Record of updates: Add a column: Add specification 'B-480 and B-480.1' Remarks: 'Clarification to marine radiobeacon' (The specification has been revised, but not added as an update in the Record of updates)</p> <p>Also general in this section: Update format of Specification Numbers in the record of updates table to always start with "B-"(B and a hyphen)</p> <p>B-422.10: Add the following phrase after "..., where known, for example: 'ODAS', 'Diffuser': ' --> The legend 'Rig(Ru)' indicates submerged jackets of decommissioned platforms.'</p> <p>B-445.1: Rig(Ru)' and 'Obstn' should be written in san-serif italic font.</p> <p>B-445.10: Correct reference in the text. Instead of B-422.5 it should be B-422.3-5.</p>	<p>Amended</p> <p>Amended</p> <p>Amended</p> <p>Amended</p> <p>Amended</p> <p>B-422.5 is correct, as the main paragraph describing safe clearance.</p>
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Comments by the NCWG Chair and IHO Secretariat:

The NCWG Chair and IHO Secretariat thank Denmark for their comments. Please see the above Table for responses.

EGYPT (Vote for adoption = YES)

Clause No./ Subclause No./ Annex (e.g. 3.1)	Type of comment	Comment (justification for change)	Proposed change	HSSC Chair/IHO Secretariat Comments
B-300	Editorial	Under section 300-Topography (record of updates) table regarding Port symbol current reference B 380.2 symbol for terminal and container port.	Replace Specification number from B 380.2 to B 320.3 and Remarks from symbol for terminal and container port to symbol for terminal and commercial port.	Amended

Comments by the NCWG Chair and IHO Secretariat:

The NCWG Chair and IHO Secretariat thank Egypt for their comments. Please see the above Table for responses.

INDIA (Vote for adoption = YES)

Clause No./ Subclause No./ Annex (e.g. 3.1)	Type of comment	Comment (justification for change)	Proposed change	HSSC Chair/IHO Secretariat Comments
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B-400	Editorial	Refer to list of Decisions and Actions taken during the 11th Meeting of NCWG held from 04-07 Nov 2025, the following are recommended for inclusion into the S4 Edn. 4.10.0: Agenda Item 6.6: Sub surface sea cliff at B411.7.	Use of Gender Inclusive language at B440 International Boundaries and National Limits.	This has not yet been presented to HSSC.
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Comments by the NCWG Chair and IHO Secretariat:

The NCWG Chair and IHO Secretariat thank India for their comments. Please see the above Table for feedback.

INDONESIA (Vote for adoption = YES)

General comment:

1. Adopt and comply with the IHO S-4 Standard as the authoritative framework to develop the content, structure, and portrayal of nautical chart specifications.
2. Integrate updates to technical features and incorporate newly defined attributes into the technical specifications for nautical chart production in accordance with IHO S-4 Standard.
3. Ensure that all revisions to nautical chart production specifications are implemented and maintained consistently, in order to guarantee standardization, accuracy, and international interoperability as prescribed by the IHO S-4 Standard?

Comments by the NCWG Chair and IHO Secretariat:

The NCWG Chair and IHO Secretariat thank Indonesia for their comments and take note of their remark.

JAPAN (Vote for adoption = YES)

Clause No./ Subclause No./ Annex (e.g. 3.1)	Type of comment	Comment (justification for change)	Proposed change	HSSC Chair/IHO Secretariat Comments
B-400	Editorial	It seems that the following revisions have not been incorporated into the draft of S-4 ed.4.10.0. Could you review and confirm?	B-445.1 Wells, Wellheads, Templates, Manifolds and Jackets. Item b, 3rd paragraph, 3rd line: It should be read "See B-422.10, but it still shows "B-422.9".	Amended
B-400	Editorial	It seems that the following revisions have not been incorporated into the draft of S-4 ed.4.10.0. Could you review and confirm?	B-445.10 Underwater turbines 2nd paragraph, 3rd line: It should include B-422.3-5, but it remains as B-422.3.	B-422.5 is correct, as the main paragraph describing safe clearance.
B-400	Editorial	It seems that the following revisions have not been incorporated into the draft of S-4 ed.4.10.0. Could you review and confirm?	B-422.10 Submerged obstructions 5th line: The text "Rig(Ru) indicates submerged jackets of decommissioned platforms." is missing.	Amended

Comments by the NCWG Chair and IHO Secretariat:

The NCWG Chair and IHO Secretariat thank Japan for their comments. Please see the above Table for feedback.

MALAYSIA (Vote for adoption = YES)

Malaysia acknowledges that the enhancements introduced in S-4 Edition 4.10.0 represent a significant and timely advancement to the IHO Chart Specifications, delivering substantial benefits in terms of clarity, internal consistency and technical modernisation of chart content.

The refined editorial language, together with the adoption of more precise, inclusive and unambiguous terminology, markedly strengthens the overall coherence of S-4, ensuring closer alignment between traditional paper chart specifications and the evolving framework of digital charting standards, while steadfastly preserving the fundamental safety-of-navigation principles that underpin S-4.

In view of the clear technical merits, the limited implementation burden for Hydrographic Offices, and the positive contribution to long-term standard harmonisation, Malaysia fully supports the adoption and operational use of S-4 Edition 4.10.0 by Member States and endorses its approval at the forthcoming HSSC meeting.

Comments by the NCWG Chair and IHO Secretariat:

The NCWG Chair and IHO Secretariat thank Malaysia for their comments.

NEW ZEALAND (Vote for adoption = YES)

General comment:

“The ECDIS Presentation Library has been updated and effectively promulgated to all ECDIS users, such that now, in the case of overlapping ENC’s, one of the ENC’s will be selected for display. This successfully mitigates the previous potential impact of display issues such as repeated content etc. The safety problem that the two ENC’s might show different navigational content (and which one is "right"?) remains, and it is noted that there is no defined decision criteria regarding which of the two ENC’s will be chosen for display by the ECDIS algorithm.

It is acknowledged that this approach effectively mitigates the earlier display issues, such as duplicated content. However, it may also result in users being unaware of overlapping cells and therefore lacking the ability to select which product they wish to use.

New Zealand notes that the proposed S-4 version includes changes that will improve Paper Chart automation which is very much aligned to our S-100 implementation Maritime Digital Transformation programme.”

Comments by the NCWG Chair and IHO Secretariat:

The NCWG Chair and IHO Secretariat thank New Zealand for their comments and take note of their remark.

REPUBLIC OF KOREA (Vote for adoption = YES)

General comment: “Oman thanks the IHO and the HSSC for their contribution to the development of S-100 documents and new editions of IHO Standards.”

Clause No./ Subclause No./ Annex (e.g. 3.1)	Type of comment	Comment (justification for change)	Proposed change	HSSC Chair/IHO Secretariat Comments
A-102.2	Editorial	The new draft version of SOLAS Chapter V, to be considered by the IMO Assembly, contains an explicit reference to this obligation.	updated required.	This should be proposed as a review/update to the next NCWG
B-300	Editorial	Accuracy of record of updates.	B-380.2 Symbol for Terminal and Container ports → B320.3 Symbol for Terminal and Commercial ports B-320.3 → symbol number needs to be assigned.	Amended INT reference was agreed at NCWG9 and will be included in this version of S-4

B-400	Editorial	Editorial corrections	B-431.5 A visitors mooring height about 3mm → height about 3mm	Amended
B-500	Editorial	Editorial corrections	B-551.1 website address update required B-563, B-563.3 univesely available → universally available	Website address updated to https://iho.int/en/iho-publications Amended

Comments by the NCWG Chair and IHO Secretariat:

The NCWG Chair and IHO Secretariat thank the Republic of Korea for their comments. Please see the above Table for feedback.

SOUTH AFRICA (Vote for adoption = YES)

Clause No./ Subclause No./ Annex (e.g. 3.1)	Type of comment	Comment (justification for change)	Proposed change	HSSC Chair/IHO Secretariat Comments
B-422.10	Editorial	<p>The following has been noted when comparing the submitted version (CL45/2025) and the version endorsed by HSSC (HSSC17 Decisions):</p> <p>HSSC17 submitted version includes the following in section B-422:</p> <p><i>The legend 'Rig(Ru)' indicates submerged jackets of decommissioned platforms.</i></p> <p>This does not appear in the proposed S-4 Ed 4.10.0 for approval.</p>	Align both documents versions.	amended
B-480	Editorial	Heading for section B-480 should be bold font.	Apply bold font type to Heading.	amended

B-439.4	Editorial	<p>The following has been noted when comparing the submitted version (CL45/2025) and the version endorsed by HSSC (HSSC17 Decisions):</p> <p>HSSC17 submitted version includes Symbol variant for B (<i>Fishing by Trawling or dredging</i>) and C (<i>Sea Bed Activity</i>) that are not included under section B-439.4 of the proposed S-4 Ed 4.10.0 for approval.</p>	Align both documents versions.	amended
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Comments by the NCWG Chair and IHO Secretariat:

The NCWG Chair and IHO Secretariat thank South Africa for their comments. Please see the above Table for feedback.

UNITED KINGDOM (Vote for adoption = YES)

The UK would like to congratulate the NCWG on the preparation of this edition of S-4 and notes the various improvements that will improve the consistency and usability of Nautical Charts.

Comments by the NCWG Chair and IHO Secretariat:

The NCWG Chair and IHO Secretariat thank United Kingdom for their comments.