

**4th CSPCWG MEETING
Monaco, 13-15 November 2007**

Paper for Consideration by CSPCWG

Convention for the use of capital or lower-case letters

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| Submitted by: | Secretary |
| Executive Summary: | There is no known existing convention for when legends are in all capital letters, or use a mix of capitals and lower case letters |
| Related Documents: | M4, INT1 |
| Related Projects: | None |

Introduction / Background

During the INT1 subWG review of INT1, it was noticed that there are currently inconsistencies in the use of capitals (upper case) and lower case letters in M4, eg Area to be Avoided – caps in M4 text (B435.7e), lower case in M4/INT 1 graphic. Consequently, CSPCWG Letter 06/07 posed the question, ‘Should a convention be developed (for M4 and/or charts)?’ to which the consensus answer was ‘Yes’. In the letter, a typical convention was outlined, but contributions to a future convention were not invited.

Analysis / Discussion

There may be two issues to address:

1. Where a legend is inserted on a chart in upper/lower case, should only the first word have an initial capital; or should all nouns have capitals; or some other convention?
2. Are there legends which should always be shown entirely in capital letters; should capitals be used when the legend is larger than a certain point size; or is it a matter for the judgement of the cartographer, depending on the degree of prominence required?

It is assumed that whatever conventions are decided for charts, and therefore included in INT1, would be reflected in the text of M-4.

Issue 1: Upper and lower case legends

In the FR-produced INT 1, chart legends generally have just the first letter of the first word capitalized, eg:

Déclinaison magnétique (FR) – but Magnetic Variation (DE), Declinación Magnética (ES draft)

Anomalie magnétique locale (FR) – but Local Magnetic Anomaly (DE), Local Magnetic anomaly (ES draft)

Pont tournant (FR) – but Swing Bridge (DE), Puente giratorio (ES draft)

This difference generally continues throughout the publications. The French INT1 is consistent in using an initial capital only for the first word, except: Zone de Navigation Côtière (Inshore Traffic Zone), Vigie Pilotes and national symbol Pa where capitals are used throughout the legend ‘PHARE DU...’

The DE INT 1 is less consistent. Generally, nouns have initial capital letters, other words lower case initial letters, but there are several exceptions: Local Magnetic Anomaly, Salt pans, Overhead pipe, Training wall, Fish traps, Tunny nets, Entry Prohibited, Explosives Dumping Ground, Pilot lookout, Tide gauge.

The draft ES INT1 sometimes follows the FR and sometimes the DE practice.

In Section T, the first letter of the word in parenthesis is capitalized in DE and ES (draft), but not in FR, eg:

SS(Traffic) (DE), SS(Tráfico) (ES draft) but SS(traffic) (FR).

The general difference between the French, Spanish and English text may well be attributable to different capitalization rules in French, Spanish and English grammar. In English, the rules for capitalization are very complex and to some extent flexible (ie individual preference). For most of the examples above, the use of capitals (eg for legends describing the purpose of an area) is a version of what is known as 'Title Case' (where principal words in titles of books, plays, etc have an initial capital letter). So, for example, the 'title' of a defined charted area may be given as Explosive Dumping Ground, but a general description of an undefined area would not have capital initial letters, eg Sand dunes, not Sand Dunes (agrees with INT1).

The simplest expedient is to maintain the status quo – do nothing - and accept the current inconsistencies in practice and in INT1. This is probably what will happen anyway as far as charts are concerned, and will have little impact on the mariner. Alternatively, we could attempt to provide a convention.

Working this up into a convention (for English only) which largely follows current practice is very difficult. The following are examples of possible rules:

- i. All words which are part of proper names should have initial capitals, eg Brighton Pier.
- ii. All principal words describing a charted feature which has known formal meaning with associated attributes such as regulations (eg within a recognized international convention) should have initial capital letters, eg Inshore Traffic Zone, Area to be Avoided.
- iii. Legends which are merely descriptive of a charted feature should only have the first letter of the first word capitalized, eg Pontoon bridge, Magnetic anomaly, Small craft moorings, Radar tr. (If accepted, this will have considerable consequence to INT1).
- iv. Legends which are frequently abbreviated should have the same capitalization as the abbreviation – if adopted this rule would change Area To Be Avoided, Radar Tr.

Issue 2: Fully capitalized legends

Apart from conspicuous objects, the only fully capitalized legends in INT1 are:
SEE NOTE/VOIR NOTA at M5.2 (but this has already been noted for removal)
Names of countries at international boundaries (eg N40, 41)
FR Pa national symbol 'PHARE DU.....'

In M4 text, the following are fully capitalized, and usually appear this way on charts, even though at present they are not shown in INT1:

CURRENT (B408.3)

FAIRWAY (B434.5)

ROUTE T (B435.4)

AREA TO BE AVOIDED (B435.7)

SUBMARINE EXERCISE AREA (B441.5)

GENERAL DIRECTION OF BUOYAGE ON THIS CHART (B461.4)

Abbreviations which are initial letters of any word are generally capitalized, eg ATBA, DGPS but where other letters from the word are included they are not usually capitalized, eg BnTr, Obstn. Exceptionally, where the abbreviation forms an acronym, sometimes the whole resultant word is capitalized, eg LANBY, LASH.

The use of capitals for most legends (other than conspicuous objects) appears at present to be the choice of the cartographer and relates to the prominence required, or the geographical extent of the feature. It is probably best left that way, although some good cartographic practices could be suggested as a convention, eg:

- i. Where geographic extent requires a legend to in a larger point size than [say 12?], the cartographer may use all capital letters.
- ii. Where the legend is spread across a wide area, capital letters should be used and spacing should be such that gaps between words should not be greater than 3 times the space between the letters.
- iii. The following legends should always be capitalized, regardless of lettering size:
 - Conspicuous features
 - Fairway
 - General direction of buoyage on this chart

Conclusions

The issue of capitalizing initial letters of legends may be an English language only issue. There is no definitive language convention, and at present no consistent cartographic convention. This is unlikely to have any significant impact on the chart user and no effort should be expected from hydrographic offices to amend charts to conform with any convention CSPCWG suggest.

Recommendations

Agree some guidance for M4, and make future editions of INT1 conform. Once approved. examples in M4 can be changed by editorial amendments at a future edition.

Justification and Impacts

It is useful to have a convention. However, because inconsistent practice is already well established for most English legends, there should not be a high expectation that established hydrographic offices will now change their practice to conform. A convention may, however, be helpful to emergent hydrographic offices.

Action required of CSPCWG

The CSPCWG is invited to consider the recommendations above and decide whether there is any value in having a convention, and if so, deciding what the convention should be.