

**8th CSPCWG Meeting
Turku, Finland, 29 November – 2 December 2011**

Paper for Consideration by CSPCWG

Sound signals: aid to navigation or hazard warning?

Submitted by:	UK Chairman
Executive Summary:	Is the purpose of sound signals changing? To share information in order to inform whether a review of our specifications may be required.
Related Documents:	S-4 B-451, S-12
Related Projects:	Views of General Lighthouse Authorities (GLA); IALA

Introduction / Background.

Trinity House, as the General Lighthouse Authority (GLA) for England and Wales (in UK), is currently undertaking a consultation exercise regarding the continued requirement for a fog signal at a specific location. A fog (sound) signal is currently sounded in conditions of reduced visibility. It is being proposed that this signal is discontinued. As part of the consultation, the views of those who navigate in the area are being asked for their views on the navigation requirement for this fog signal.

In further explanation, Trinity House make the statement:

'It should be borne in mind that fog signals are no longer considered to be an aid to navigation (provided so that mariners can identify their position by the characteristic sound), but as a means of warning of a particular hazard.'

The implication may be that sound signals are of value only to warn of 'standing into danger'. The inshore fishing and leisure communities may be best served by these signals but perhaps the value of including them in charts could be reconsidered?

Analysis / Discussion.

What may be the significance of these statements and change of definition?

Is this view shared by other national GLA?

Is this view shared by IALA?

In terms of existing standards:

- **S-4 B451: Audible (Sound) Fog Signals** The term 'fog signal' refers to the sound emitted, not the apparatus. Fog signals are short range aids to navigation, principally used as hazard warnings. For various reasons they are unreliable as indicators of position. Their importance relative to other aids to navigation has declined but they are still considered useful for the safe navigation of vessels with very limited (or non-functioning) electronic equipment. Brief details of the type and characteristics of fog signals may be

shown on charts on which vessels may navigate within range of the fog signals. The type of fog signal should be indicated by a legend (see B-452), at least on buoys (see B-454).

- **S-4 B-620: Selection Criteria for Promulgating Information via the Notice to Mariners (NM) System** Sound / fog signals are not included within the items at B-620.3: Information considered to be navigationally significant.
- **S-12 Standardization of List of Lights and Fog Signals** describes (at 3.2) in its *General Terms*:
 - Sound Signal – sound transmitted to convey information.
 - Fog Signal – sound signal to warn or guide ships in conditions of poor visibility.

NB: S-12 is relatively old and does not have a current responsible WG owner.

Conclusions - none

Recommendations - none

Justification and Impacts:

- Further investigation may be necessary to seek views from other agencies both nationally and from IALA.
- There may be the potential to remove unnecessary detail from charts.
- A review of the guidance in S-4.

Action required of CSPCWG.

CSPCWG is invited to note this paper and advise on any future action, if appropriate.