

INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC  
ORGANIZATION



ORGANISATION HYDROGRAPHIQUE  
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## CHART STANDARDIZATION & PAPER CHART WORKING GROUP (CSPCWG)

[A Working Group of the Committee on Hydrographic Requirements for Information Systems – CHRIS]

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### CSPCWG Circular Letter: 08/2005

UKHO ref: HA317/010/031-03 & HA317/004/013-03

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To CSPCWG Members

Date 27 June 2005

Dear Colleagues,

**Subject: Potential to develop M-4 as ISO Standard for Paper Nautical Charts (further to CL 05/2005)**

We received 15 responses to CL 05/2005 and we are grateful to all the respondents for their helpful comments and advice. A summary of the responses is attached at Annex A. However, the various associated comments have not been repeated as these have already been made available through the 'reply to all' email system and many of their contents were lengthy.

12 responses were NOT in favour of adding this issue to the work plan. Of the 3 in favour of adding it to the plan, all considered the priority should be LOW. Additionally, there were no stronger arguments in favour of developing M-4 into an ISO Standard than the arguments against.

In accordance with this clear view on the proposal, expressed by our members, I will not be putting it forward to CHRIS 17 for approval as a CSPCWG Work Item. I will instead refer to this consultation exercise in my report to CHRIS 17 (September 2005).

Yours sincerely,

Peter G.B. Jones,  
Chairman

Annex A: Summary of Responses to CL 05/2005

**CL 05/2005 SUMMARY OF RESPONSES**

**Potential to develop M-4 as ISO Standard for Paper Nautical Charts**

15 responses received: AU, BR, CA, DE, DK, ES, FI, FR, GR, IT, JP, NL, UK, US(NOAA), ZA

No.	Advantages	Agree	Disagree
1	M-4 is already compiled and is likely to require very little effort over and above normal maintenance to render it suitable as a standard (but note Disadvantage 4 below)	2	13
2	Standards for International Charts would have international maritime acceptance and would encourage new member states of the IHO to bring their charting in line. However, I am not aware that any marine bodies question the authority of official paper charts anyway	13	2
3	In recent years, with the continuing discussion of performance standards for digital chart products, some have begun to question whether there should be a performance standard for paper charts. At first sight, the approval of M-4 as a standard might be thought to solve this problem. However, M4 is a construction standard for International Charts not a performance standard and so would have no real bearing on this debate	3	12
	<b>Disadvantages</b>		
1	M-4, as mentioned above, is not a standard for all navigational charts. It is a construction standard for International Charts. <i>[but see CSC Secretary's manuscript note – 'this is not the case - M-4 provides specifications for national and international charts -see B-102']</i>	3  (Second sentence  5)	7  (First sentence  5)
2	a. IHO member states who do not produce national charts in conformance with M-4 may feel that they are being pushed into doing so as a result of the wider circulation of M-4. b. Furthermore, charts produced by member states which do not conform to a greater or lesser extent might be deemed as not being charts for legal purposes	12 <hr/> 10	3 <hr/> 5
3	There is an implication in the 'Fast Track Procedures' that the IHO might lose control of the updating of M-4 if it became an ISO standard since all amendments would have to be reviewed by the ISO technical committee. This would be unlikely to be acceptable to member states of the IHO and would be very cumbersome to operate	13	2
4	It is possible that the level of latitude to use alternative solutions inherent in M-4 may not be deemed acceptable for an ISO standard	13	2

Do you wish CSPCWG to add this issue to its Work Plan?

YES: 3 NO: 12

If so, with what priority?

Marked N/A  
or not marked: 10 LOW: 5