



Navigation: Safety of Navigation - Counterfeit Nautical Charts and Publications

Notice to all shipowners, large yacht owners, fishing vessel owners, fleet managers, safety managers, training managers, masters, yacht masters, skippers, nautical training colleges and training organisations.

This Marine Information Note expires on 31 December 2015

Summary

This Marine Information Note advises industry on:

- proliferation of counterfeit nautical charts and publications; and
- United Kingdom Hydrographic Office (UKHO) and International Maritime Organization (IMO) guides to distinguish above from genuine products.

1. Introduction/ Background

- 1.1 The Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) has become aware of an increase in the number of counterfeit nautical charts and publications that are being produced and sold around the world. This is not just limited to UKHO products, but also includes forgeries of publications of other authorities, such as the IMO.
- 1.2 Counterfeit documents do not satisfy the carriage requirements stipulated by International Convention on the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), as they have not been issued by a government authorised body. Their use also fails to satisfy UK flag and Port State Control requirements. The use of counterfeit charts and publications may introduce serious risks to safety of navigation. Furthermore, carriage of counterfeit documents is against the law in all countries that have signed the Berne Convention on protection of intellectual property copyright, which includes a vast majority of maritime administrations.

2. Recommendation and Actions

- 2.1 The MCA urges all purchasers, users, Port State Control inspectors and Flag State surveyors, as well as recognised organizations to be vigilant towards counterfeit nautical charts and publications. Because counterfeit versions have not been through the same rigorous checking procedures as official charts and publications, they cannot be trusted for

voyage planning or navigational purposes or as a trustworthy source of guidance on regulatory requirements.

2.2 The official UKHO charts bear the Admiralty "Flying A" watermark within the paper and will carry a "thumb label" strip on the reverse with the Admiralty logo, chart number, geographical area, barcode and date. Suspect charts and publications can also be identified by comparing them against official versions, where variations may be spotted in the look, feel and weight of the product, the colour tone and strength of the ink, the folds on charts and the height and binding quality of publications.

2.3 A simple guide to help distinguish the official UKHO nautical charts and publications from possible counterfeit versions can be downloaded from:- <http://bit.ly/admiralty-genuine>. Likewise, information from the IMO regarding counterfeit copies of publications is available below which include pictures and physical details which may be used to identify some of the publications:

<http://www.imo.org/Publications/Documents/Attachments/Dear%20customer.pdf>

More Information

Navigation Safety Branch
Maritime and Coastguard Agency
Bay 2/04
Spring Place
105 Commercial Road
Southampton
SO15 1EG

Tel : +44 (0) 23 8032 9316
Fax : +44 (0) 23 8032 9204
e-mail: navigationsafety@mcga.gov.uk

General Inquiries: infoline@mcga.gov.uk

MCA Website Address: www.dft.gov.uk/mca

File Ref: MNA 134/003/006/part 6

Published: June 2014
Please note that all addresses and telephone numbers are correct at time of publishing

© Crown Copyright 2014

Safer Lives, Safer Ships, Cleaner Seas

Printed on material containing minimum 75% post-consumer waste paper

