



REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

Marine Notice

**BUREAU OF
MARITIME AFFAIRS**

**NAV-001
Rev. 6/01**

TO: ALL SHIPOWNERS, OPERATORS, MASTERS AND OFFICERS OF MERCHANT SHIPS, AND AUTHORIZED CLASSIFICATION SOCIETIES

SUBJECT: Safety of Navigation - Nautical Charts, Publications and Notices to Mariners.

**References: (a) Maritime Law 10.296(5)
(b) Revised SOLAS 74 as amended, Chapter V, Regulations 19 and 27**

Supersedes: Marine Notice NAV-001 dated 1/00

PURPOSE:

This Notice provides advice and guidance to mariners on the importance of maintaining a regular and efficient system of charts and publications, corrections, and use of electronic updating services.

APPLICABILITY:

This Notice applies to all ships. Revised SOLAS Chapter V, Regulation 19, (effective date July 2002) requires that each ship shall carry “. . . paper nautical charts, or an Electronic Chart Display and Information System (ECDIS) and publications to plan and display the ships route for the intended voyage and to plot and monitor positions throughout the voyage.”

Revised SOLAS Chapter V, Regulation 27 further requires “Nautical charts and publications, such as sailing directions, lists of lights, notice to mariners, tide tables and all other nautical publications necessary for the intended voyage shall be adequate and up to date.”

REQUIREMENTS:

- 1.0** It is essential that any nautical publication which is liable to be affected by changes in navigational or hydrographic conditions be corrected and updated by every available means, primarily through Radio Navigational Warnings, e.g., NAVTEX, Safety NET and Notices to Mariners. **The regular use of an electronic digitized notice to mariners chart correction service is authorized provided it meets the applicable requirements of Revised SOLAS Chapter V, Regulations 19 and 27.** If an Electronic Chart Display and Information System (ECDIS) is used, back up paper charts must be available. Failure to follow this basic procedure can place the master, his vessel, and owners in an untenable legal position in the event of an accident, Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) or Routing System Contravention.

1 of 2

Inquiries concerning the subject of this Notice should be directed to the Office of the Deputy Commissioner, Republic of Liberia, the Liberian International Ship & Corporate Registry, LLC, 8619 Westwood Center Dr., Suite 300, Vienna, VA 22182, USA

RLM-01, 1/00

- 2.0** Uncorrected charts and publications have proven to be a source of problems with port State control inspections. While it is appreciated that many vessels may be engaged in worldwide trading calling at ports in countries where Notices to Mariners and other publications may not be available, it is possible to order well in advance the current editions of sailing directions, tide and current tables, charts and chart corrections for delivery to the ship on a regular basis, [or subscribe to a digitized notice to mariners chart correction service](#).
- 3.0** A concise guide to the proper correction of charts has been published by the UK Admiralty Charts and Publications. Designed to be easy to use, the guide provides a range of examples of chart correcting techniques for the use of shipboard navigators. The publication, which is available from Admiralty Charts Agents (as Catalogue No. NP294) provides guidance on SOLAS best practice, which of course will be a basis for ISM Code auditing.
- 4.0** Liberian Nautical Inspectors have been instructed to pay particular attention to the carriage on board of charts and nautical publications appropriate to the service in which the ship is engaged. In the event that a Nautical Inspector determines the charts/publications are inadequate, or that an efficient correction procedure does not exist, the ship may be prevented from proceeding to sea on its intended voyage until action is taken to correct the situation.
- 5.0** Masters and Officers should be aware of the danger of navigating without adequate under keel clearance. The practice of navigating through waters barely adequate in depth with a finely assessed under keel clearance based upon predicted tidal heights is not recommended, as the actual tidal rises may be appreciably lower than predicted. Wind conditions which may cause negative tidal surges should always be considered. Charted depths or soundings may not be current or may be based on surveys taken many years in the past.
- 6.0** Even charts based on recent surveys may not show all seabed obstructions or the shallowest depths. Hydrographic surveys have inherent technical limitations, due partly in some offshore areas to difficulties in accurately calculating tidal ranges. Furthermore, in some cases the depth of the seabed is constantly changing. Nautical charts should, therefore, not be absolutely relied upon in their representation of depth, and when tidal predictions are applied to the chart as if they were actual tide levels, the uncertainties are thereby compounded.
- 7.0** In areas such as estuaries and approaches to ports, where optimum under keel clearance cannot be obtained, Masters should carefully consider what is an appropriate speed having regard to the 'squat' characteristics of their particular ship. Masters are cautioned against being influenced by any interests outside the ship, commercial or otherwise, to proceed at a speed inconsistent with safe navigation.