

MARINE INFORMATION

UNITED STATES COAST GUARD NAVIGATION INFORMATION SERVICE

The United States Coast Guard Navigation Information Service (NIS), operated by the USCG Navigation Center, provides information for all radionavigation systems. The NIS is staffed 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, providing information on the current operational status, effective policies, and general information for GPS, DGPS, and LORAN-C. The NIS also disseminates Safety Broadcasts (BNM), Local Notice to Mariners (LNM) and the latest Notice Advisory to Navstar Users (NANU). NANU notices can also be obtained via e-mail subscription through the USCG Navigation Center website (<http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/gps/nanu.htm>). In addition, the NIS investigates all reports of degraded or loss of GPS, DGPS or LORAN-C service. Mariners are encouraged to report all degradation of radionavigation services to the NIS via any of the following: Phone: 703-313-5900, Email: webmaster@navcen.uscg.mil, or on the World Wide Web at <http://www.navcen.uscg.gov>.

DISCONTINUANCE OF 121.5 AND 243 MHZ FOR SATELLITE DISTRESS ALERTS

The Cospas-Sarsat Program has announced plans to terminate satellite processing of distress signals from 121.5 and 243 MHz emergency beacons on February 1, 2009. Users of the system will have to switch to emergency beacons operating at 406 MHz, which are more reliable and provide search and rescue agencies complete information that they need to do their job, in order to be detected by satellites.

Reasons for the Cospas-Sarsat program to discontinue use is driven by guidance from the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). These two agencies are responsible for regulating the safety of ships and aircraft on international transits and handle international standards for maritime and aeronautical search and rescue missions. In addition, 121.5 MHz false alerts inundate search and rescue resources which impact the effectiveness of lifesaving services.

Individuals who plan on buying a new distress beacon may wish to take the Cospas-Sarsat decision into account.

NOAA CHART NEW EDITIONS AND THEIR AVAILABILITY

NOAA recognizes two paper nautical chart products:

- the Charts-on-Demand chart distributed by OceanGrafix (www.OceanGrafix.com), and
- the traditional NOAA/NOS paper chart distributed by the Federal Aviation Administration and the National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA).

The Charts-on-Demand chart is available the day after NOAA clears a New Edition for release. The traditional chart is available two to eight weeks later. Each is official, should be put into service immediately, and meets Federal chart carriage requirements immediately upon its release. For questions, contact NOAA at help@nauticalcharts.gov or call 301-713-1773 x105. Dates of Latest Edition for both charts are listed at <http://nauticalcharts.noaa.gov>.

This week's new edition released by NOAA is listed below:

14774	17 th Ed. Jul 2004 NEW EDITION NY-ONT-ST LAWRENCE SEAWAY-ST LAWRENCE RIVER-ROUND ISLAND NY TO GANANOQUE ONT (New edition due to change in format.)	NAD 83	(NOS Silver Spring, MD) 1:15,000
25655	12 th Ed. Jul 2004 NEW EDITION WEST INDIES-ENSENADA HONDA TO CANAL DE LUIS PENA-ISLA DE CULEBRA (New edition due to change in format.)	NAD 83	(NOS Silver Spring, MD) 1:10,000
25661	12 th Ed. Jul 2004 NEW EDITION WEST INDIES-PUERTO RICO-PUERTO YABUCOA (New edition due to change in format.)	NAD 83	(NOS Silver Spring, MD) 1:15,000