



Fact Sheet: Paper Nautical Charts

Guide to updating Paper Nautical Charts

This Guide provides a simple step by step process to using the Australian Hydrographic Office (AHO) website (www.hydro.gov.au) for a mariner to:

- check whether they have the correct edition of a Paper Nautical Chart, and
- determine the updates that might need to be applied to keep it up to date.

Please note, while the examples used in this guide may appear dated, the process remains valid. Notices to Mariners are issued by the AHO each fortnight. The content of Paper Nautical Charts, including Notices to Mariners, are derived from Electronic Navigation Charts produced and updated by the AHO.

Why do charts need to be updated?

Charts are 'living' documents. Information affecting the safety of navigation for mariners is constantly being received. Sometimes it is in the form of an individual report of a newly discovered danger, or a buoy or beacon has been moved or removed, while other times the change can be as large as an entire new survey. In all cases, the AHO has an obligation to publish details of new and altered information affecting the potential safety of mariners. Equally, many mariners have a legal obligation to apply these updates to their charts – and there are several tales of woe to show why having an up to date chart is a good idea for all vessels, ranging from large cargo ships to racing yachts.

Are my charts up to date for Notices to Mariners when I purchase them?

If you have purchased your chart from an authorised AHO 'Correcting Agent', your charts should be up-to-date for Notices to Mariners (NtM) at the time you purchased them. However you will need to update them yourself from this point forward until a new edition is released.

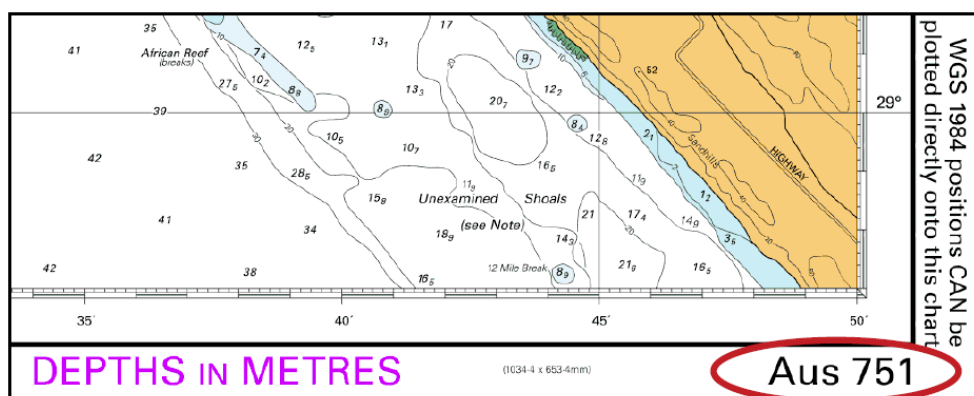
If you have purchased your charts from another source such as an AHO authorised 'Non Correcting Agent', it is possible that NtM affecting that chart have been issued since it was printed. You should therefore update them yourself before you use them and then keep them up-to-date until a new edition is released.

Authorised agents are listed as 'Correcting Agent' or 'Non-correcting Agent' on the 'Distribution Agents' listing on the AHO website.

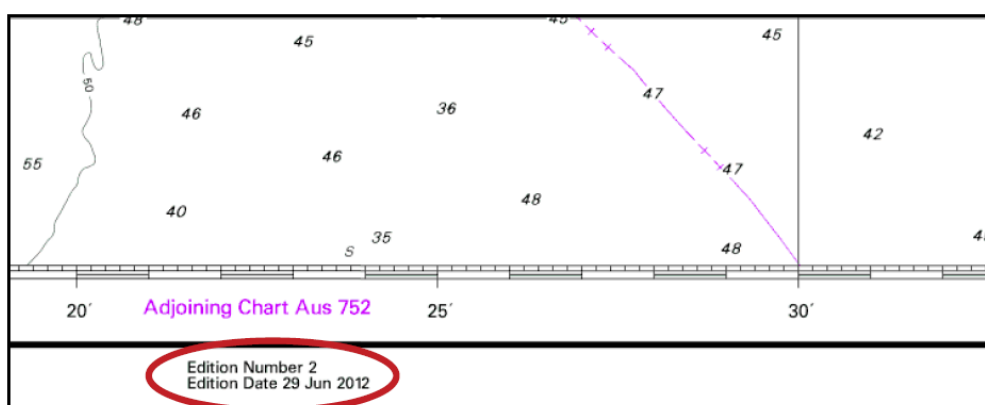
How do I determine if I have the current edition?

The first phase of the process is to check whether the chart is the latest edition, as changes between one edition and the next are typically substantial. The AHO only produces new editions *because* there are changes too large or significant to update by other means.

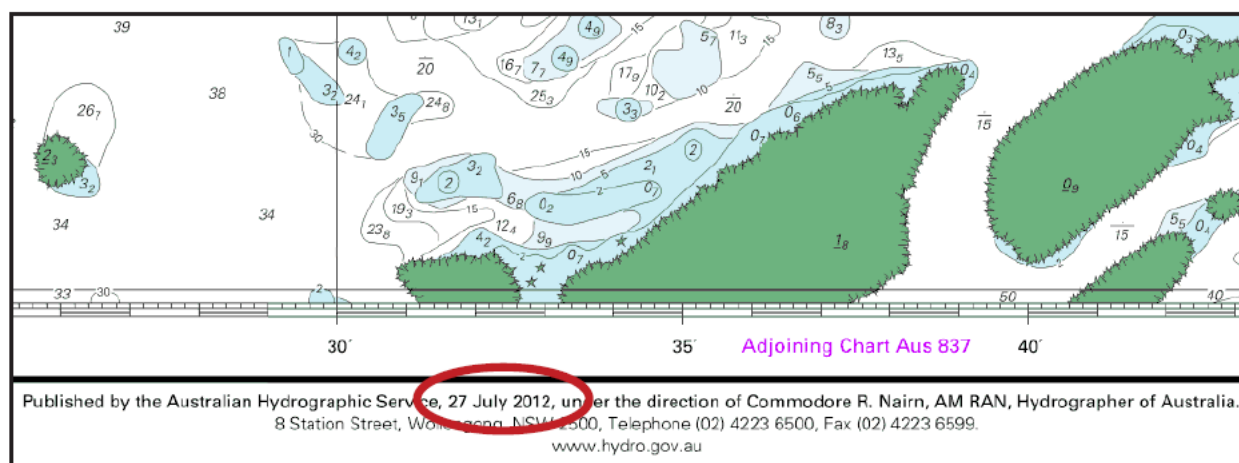
Step 1: Identify the chart number. The chart number can be found at the corners of your chart. In the example below the chart number is 'AUS 751'.



Step 2: Identify the edition of your chart. The edition date is located in the lower margin of a chart, towards the right side. As most charts are published as new editions, if the edition number is not 'Number 1', the edition date will be stated directly under the edition number. In this example the edition date for Aus 751 is '29 Jun 2012'.



However, if the edition number stated on the chart is 'Number 1' the edition date will be mentioned in the 'Published by' information in the centre of the lower margin. In this different example the edition date is '27 July 2012'.



Step 3: Check that your copy is the latest edition. There may be very significant differences in information between one edition of a chart and the next. Therefore you should compare the edition date of your copy of the chart from Step 2 with the edition date listed on the AHS website. This can be accessed by selecting 'Australian Chart Index (ACI)' then 'Standard ACI' and 'Paper Chart List'. By scrolling down to the correct chart number you can then view all the necessary information, such as in the following example:

Aus749	Australia West Coast - Western Australia - Shark Bay (South Western Sheet)	1:150000	1993-05-21	404/2011	view
Aus751	Australia West Coast - Western Australia - Houtman Abrolhos and Geelvink Channel	1:150000	2012-06-29	158/2014	view
Aus752	Australia West Coast - Western Australia - Pelsaert Island to Beagle Islands	1:150000	2009-08-14	858/2011	view

The dates on your chart and on the website should be the same. In our example, AUS 751, we have a match – 29 Jun 2012 – so our copy is the latest edition of the chart. Further information, including a thumbnail image of the chart, can be accessed by selecting 'View'. This will be used in Step 4.

Progress check.

If you have followed these three initial steps, you should now know whether you have the current edition of the chart. You can progress to the next steps.

If the edition date on your chart is earlier than the edition date listed on the website, then your copy is an old edition and should not be used - you should contact your distributor for a replacement. There is no point progressing to the next step until you have the correct edition.

How do I determine how up-to-date my chart should be, and actually is?

The next phase of the process is to check whether there are any more NtM updates yet to be applied to bring it up to date, if it isn't already, and whether those individual NtM have already been applied.

Step 4: Identify the latest NtM issued for your chart. The simplest way is to keep using the AHO website as you did in Step 3 - select the 'Standard ACI' then 'Paper Chart List' and scroll down to find the chart that matches your chart number - in our example AUS 751. Once found click 'View'. A similar page to the one below will appear.

Australian Government
Department of Defence

Minister | Navy | Army | Air Force | Department

AUSTRALIAN
HYDROGRAPHIC
SERVICE

[Home](#) | [ABOUT US](#) | [PRODUCTS & SERVICES](#) | [FACT SHEETS](#) | [CONTACT US](#)

CHART DETAILS FOR AUS751

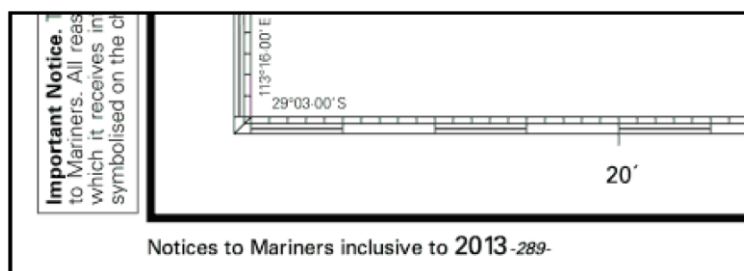
Chart Number	Aus751
Title	Australia West Coast - Western Australia - Houtman Abrolhos and Geelvink Channel
Geog Location	Australia
North Lat	28 10.60 S
South Lat	29 03.00 S
East Long	114 50.00 E
West Long	113 16.00 E
Scale	1:150000
Projection	mercator
Pub Date	24-Nov-1986
Edition Date	29-Jun-2012

CHART IMAGE

NOTICES TO MARINERS

2014	158
2013	1085 289
2012	943 790 727

Step 5: Identify the last NtM to be applied to your chart. The NtM that have been applied to your copy of the chart are listed on the chart's lower left corner. NtM are numbered from '1' onwards each calendar year and are unique to a particular piece of safety critical information, so will be listed in increasing numerical order, but are likely to be non-consecutive (the other NtM will have been applicable to other charts). The numbers written in the larger text represent the calendar year, followed by the individual NtM within that year in smaller text. In the example below, the latest NtM applied to this copy AUS 751 is NtM '289' of the year '2013'.



Step 6: Check that your copy is up to date to the latest NtM. Compare the latest NtM listed on your copy of the chart (from Step 5), with the largest number listed against the latest calendar year from the AHO website (from Step 4). If your chart is fully up-to-date, these NtM numbers will be the same. In our example we have two missing; '2014: 158' and '2013: 1085' – so our copy requires two NtM updates.

[ABOUT US](#)
[PRODUCTS & SERVICES](#)
[FACT SHEETS](#)
[CONTACT US](#)

CHART DETAILS FOR AUS751

Chart Number	Aus751
Title	Australia West Coast - Western Australia - Houtman Abrolhos and Geelvink Channel
Geog Location	Australia
North Lat	28 10.60 S
South Lat	29 03.00 S
East Long	114 50.00 E
West Long	113 16.00 E
Scale	1:150000
Projection	mercator
Pub Date	24-Nov-1986
Edition Date	29-Jun-2012

CHART IMAGE

NOTICES TO MARINERS

2014	158
2013	1085 289
2012	943 790 727

Step 7: Apply any outstanding NtMs. Most mariners apply 'missing' NtM updates to their copies of charts by hand. It is important to apply NtM in increasing numerical order as a later NtM can occasionally modify the subject of an earlier one. In our example, the earlier NtM 1085/2013 therefore needs to be applied before 158/2014.

Information contained within each NtM can be viewed by selecting the NtM number from the Chart Details page. For example by clicking on '1085' as above, a page similar to the one below would be displayed.

Australian Government
Department of Defence

Minister | Navy | Army | Air Force | Department |

AUSTRALIAN HYDROGRAPHIC SERVICE

ABOUT US | PRODUCTS & SERVICES | FACT SHEETS | CONTACT US

Search...

Notices to Mariners for Aus751, Year 2013

1085* WESTERN AUSTRALIA - African Reef - Historic wreck.
Australian Hydrographic Service (AA698524) ()

Aus751 [289/2013]
Insert magenta legend, Historic Wk (see Note) 28° 58.100 S 114° 36.500 E

In our example, you would apply this NtM to the chart first and then go back to the Chart Details page, select and open NtM 158/2014 and apply this next.

Australian Government
Department of Defence

Minister | Navy | Army | Air Force | Department |

AUSTRALIAN HYDROGRAPHIC SERVICE

ABOUT US | PRODUCTS & SERVICES | FACT SHEETS | CONTACT US

Search...

Notices to Mariners for Aus751, Year 2014

158* WESTERN AUSTRALIA - Geraldton - Buoys.
Geraldton Port Authority (AA248871, AA466789, AA468123, AA716924, AA716925, AA) ()

Aus751 [1085/2013]
Amend light beacon to F.Iso.WRG.3s 5M 28° 44.800 S 114° 36.500 E
Amend legend to Dir 127°9' 28° 42.000 S 114° 33.600 E

How do I apply NtM to my chart?

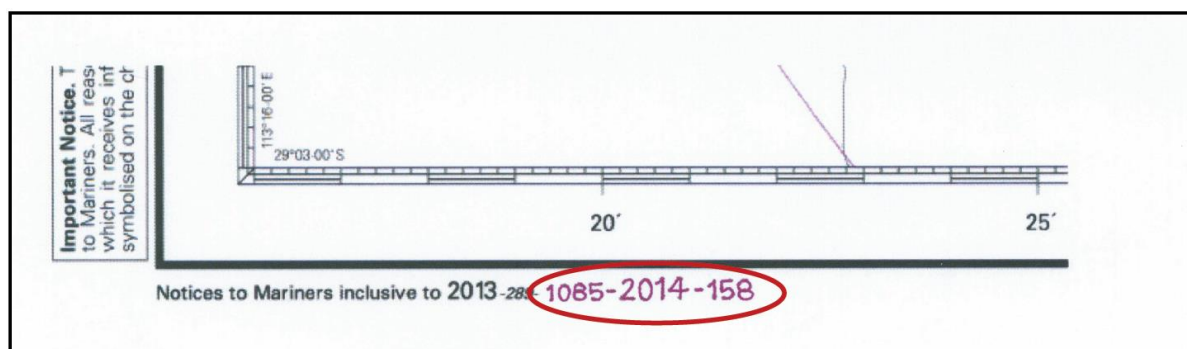
Step 8: Apply the update to the face of the chart. Corrections should be applied by hand in the position quoted in the Notice, or by downloading the relevant NtM Tracing (which shows both the correction plus sufficient existing detail to place the Tracing in the correct position). Larger and more complex corrections are issued as a 'Block Correction', to be printed, cut out and pasted over the affected area of the chart.

Guidance on symbology, and on ensuring that your Block Correction prints out at the correct size to fit the chart, can be found in 'AHP24 Chart and Publication Maintenance Handbook' which is available as a free download from the AHO website:

www.hydro.gov.au/prodserv/publications/ahp24.htm

Step 9: Record the NtM number on the chart. After actually applying the update to the face of the chart, the number of the individual Notice should then be recorded as the next number in the “Notices to Mariners inclusive to” list at the lower left corner of the chart.

If the year has changed since the last NtM was applied then you will need to record the year ahead of the correction number as well. In our example below, we have annotated the year ‘2014’ ahead of the individual correction number ‘158’ for that year. This is because NtM numbers restart from ‘1’ each calendar year. So if you don’t record the year (if the year is different to the last NtM listed) confusion may reign when you next update your chart and the same number apparently reappears.



Recording and providing evidence of the update status of charts being used for navigation is a requirement for all SOLAS vessels, most other commercial vessels, and even some offshore racing yachts.

Progress check.

Done. Repeat the process for other paper charts in your portfolio.

If this appears a lengthy process, consider shifting your navigation practices to use of Electronic Navigation Charts via the AusENC service, or other services distributing ENC produced by the AHO. Unlike paper charts, where a paper chart user must apply the typically 1100-1500 NtM issued by the AHO annually, the AHO applies them to ENC for you – all you need to do is download the latest cumulative ENC Update file, then load that single file into your navigation system each week, along with ENC Permits supplied by the AHO as part of your subscription to enable use of all New editions of ENC within your portfolio.