



Navigation: MCA Policy on charging for Navigation Warnings

Notice to all users of the Navigation Warning services

This MIN expires 01 May 2014

Summary

This MIN lays out the MCA's policy on charging for Navigation Warnings, which is that all users, academies, charities, researchers and commercial organisations pay for the navigation warnings that their activities generate.

In addition it provides a list of subjects that would be considered suitable for broadcasting as a navigation warning and notes the recent price increase for the NAVTEX broadcasting service.

1. Navigation Warnings Policy

1.1 It is the MCA's policy that all users, academies, charities, researchers and commercial organisations pay for the navigation warnings that their activities generate.

1.2 This policy considers the following elements:

- The general principle that the "risk imposer pays" is widely adopted across Government.
- The charges for most warnings are modest compared with the maritime risks they mitigate.
- The organisation undertaking the activity which gives rise to the navigation warning has much to gain by issuing the warning, including protection of its own equipment, facilities and sometimes personnel and vessels.
- Alternatives such as Local Notices to Mariners are sometimes available (see later).
- Expert advice is available from the Radio Navigation Warnings officers at the UKHO.

1.3 The fees charged for each transmission of a warning have been set at 30p plus VAT per word for Radio Telephony (RT) voice broadcasts by HM Coastguard Radio, and 8p plus VAT per word for NAVTEX broadcasts since MCA took responsibility for this service in 1999.



- 1.4 The aim of this charge is to help the MCA cover the costs of broadcasting the necessary warnings, but as broadcasting costs have increased over the years it has become apparent that the fees do not cover the MCA costs.
- 1.5 Following a consultation exercise with key stakeholders, the decision was made to increase the fee for NAVTEX broadcasts by applying the Retail Price Index (RPI) to each year since 1999. This equates to a current fee of 12p per word.
- 1.6 This increase in fees will be applied in a two stage process. From 01/06/13 the fee for NAVTEX broadcasts will rise to 10p per word. From 01/04/14 the fee will rise again to 12p per word. The fees for RT voice broadcasts will remain unchanged.
- 1.7 Any subsequent changes to the broadcast fees will be in line with rises in the RPI and will be notified via similar means.
- 1.8 Please note that when requesting a navigational warning, the UKHO should be provided with sufficient contact details and (whenever possible) a purchase order number. This will assist both the MCA with issuing an invoice and the recipient of the invoice to identify the originator of the message.
- 1.9 The UKHO follows joint International Maritime Organization (IMO) and International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) guidance in both the selection of information to be issued as warnings and in formatting the warning messages. Subjects in the following list, which is not exhaustive, are considered suitable for broadcast as a UK Coastal or NAVAREA warning:
- casualties to lights, fog signals, buoys and other aids to navigation affecting main shipping lanes
 - the presence of dangerous wrecks in or near main shipping lanes
 - establishment of major new aids to navigation or significant changes to existing ones when such establishment or change, might be misleading to shipping
 - the presence of large unwieldy tows in congested waters
 - drifting hazards (including derelict ships, ice, mines, containers, other large items, etc)
 - areas where search and rescue (SAR) and anti pollution operations are being carried out (for avoidance of such areas)
 - the presence of newly discovered rocks, shoals, reefs and wrecks likely to constitute a danger to shipping
 - unexpected alteration or suspension of established routes
 - underwater operations constituting potential dangers in or near shipping lanes
 - the establishment of research or scientific instruments in or near shipping lanes
 - the establishment of offshore structures in or near shipping lanes
 - significant malfunctioning of radio-navigation services and shore-based maritime safety information radio or satellite services
 - information concerning special operations which might affect the safety of shipping, sometimes over wide areas, e.g. naval exercises, missile firings, space missions, nuclear tests, ordnance dumping zones etc.
 - acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships
 - tsunamis and other natural phenomena, such as abnormal changes to sea level
 - World Health Organization (WHO) health advisory information
 - security related requirements

For those activities not considered by the UKHO as suitable for a national navigational warning it may be appropriate for the Harbour Authority to issue a local Notice to Mariners.



1.10 In any event all applicants should be mindful of the possible liability issues of the consequences of failing to adequately warn mariners of their activities through the navigational warning arrangements.

2. Further Information

2.1 More information can be found on the MCA's website at:

http://www.dft.gov.uk/mca/mcga07-home/shipsandcargoes/mcga-shipsregsandguidance/navigation/navigational_warnings.htm

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