

Lower Columbia Region Harbor Safety Committee
Harbor Safety Plan | Chapter 10

REQUIRED CHARTS AND PUBLICATIONS GUIDELINES

CHANGE LOG:

Changes Made	Sub-Committee	Date Approved
Updated logo. No content changes.	N/A	4/4/23
Updated Introduction, Chart Requirements, LMN. Removed Required Charts for Areas to Transited	N/A	5/15/25
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A. Introduction

These guidelines provide information on charts and publications required for commercial vessels operating in the Lower Columbia region.

No person may operate or cause the operation of a vessel unless the vessel has the required marine charts and publications of the area prior to entering U.S. waters or departing a U.S. port.

Commercial vessel requirements are contained in 33 CFR 164 and all vessels should have appropriate charts and publications for the areas they are operating in. The information for the charts and publications should be currently corrected (updated) for the areas to be transited.

The Required Charts and Publications list and guidelines:

- Were cooperatively drafted by regulators, pilots, and industry representatives and provide information unique to the river.
- Are to be used in accordance with all International, Federal, State and Local regulations, and the normal practices of good seamanship.

The use of electronic charts and some electronic publications is acceptable in lieu of paper publications and are seen as equivalent to chart and publication carriage and certain navigation functions required by titles 33 and 46 of the Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) as well as publication requirements in the International Convention for Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS) Chapter V, Regulation 27.

B. Chart Requirements

Marine charts of the areas to be transited must either include all available ENC or the area in all scales or be published by NOAA approved “print-on-demand” paper chart service.

C. Guidelines for Vessels Missing Charts

The vessel master must report directly or through their agent to the Captain of the Port (COTP) and pilots if the vessel is missing any of the required or current navigational charts. The master will be required to obtain the proper charts prior to entering U.S. waters. Note that some foreign flagged vessels may report they are missing U.S. charts; however, if they have the appropriate updated foreign charts for their transit those charts will be accepted (refer to Section G of the guidelines). Vessel masters or agents may contact the COTP to verify if the charts the vessel has on board are sufficient for their transit.

Required charts must be acquired before entering the Columbia River. The vessel’s agent or pilot can arrangement to have the appropriate charts delivered prior to entering the Columbia River. Faxed charts are not an acceptable alternative for missing charts.

In all cases, the vessel shall have the charts in sufficient time to support appropriate voyage planning. Vessel masters shall not rely on last minute chart deliveries and the services of the pilot to make their transit. The bridge team shall remain fully engaged in voyage planning and execution of the voyage plan along with the services of the pilot, whose input, based on local knowledge, may require the voyage plan formulated by the vessels bridge team to be adjusted during various stages of the transit while in pilotage waters.

D. Local Notice to Mariners (LNM)

The Coast Guard Northwest District publishes a weekly LNM. The LNM covers aids to navigation, marine construction, military operations, bridge repair/construction, significant marine events and other information of interest to mariners.

The information from the Local Notice to Mariners (LNM) and the yearly Special Local Notice to Mariners (SLNM) can be found at:

<https://www.navcen.uscg.gov/local-notices-to-mariners?district=13+0&subdistrict=n>

E. Required Publications

Commercial vessels must have corrected versions of the following publications available for the area to be transited:

- U.S. Coast Pilot.
- Coast Guard Light List.
- Tide tables using data provided by the National Ocean Service.
- Tidal current tables using data provided by the National Ocean Service.
- U.S. Coast Guard International – Inland Navigation Rules.

F. Alternative Charts and Publications

If a ship uses foreign charts and publications such as Canadian or British Admiralty (BA), then these need to meet 33 CFR 164.33(b) requirements. This states that alternative charts or publications may be substituted for a U.S. chart or publication if:

- The chart is of large enough scale and has enough detail to make safe navigation of the area possible, and must be currently corrected.
- The publication, or applicable extract, must singly or in combination contain similar information to the U.S. Government publication to make safe navigation of the area possible.
- The publication or applicable extract must be currently corrected, with the exceptions of tide and tidal current tables, which must be the current editions.

G. Electronic Chart Display and Information System (ECDIS)

The United States Navigation Safety Regulations in 33 CFR Part 164 require that vessels have on board corrected marine charts of the areas to be transited. These charts must be of a large enough scale and have enough detail to make safe navigation in the area possible. Similarly, International regulations for the carriage of charts and publications are outlined in regulation V/19 of the 1974 International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS).

An alternative to the carriage of paper navigation charts is an Electronic Chart Display and Information System (ECDIS). ECDIS is a navigation information system which, with adequate back-up arrangements, can be accepted as complying with the chart carriage requirements in regulation V/19 of the 1974 SOLAS Convention, by displaying selected information from a system electronic navigational chart (SENC) with positional information from navigation sensors to assist the mariner in route planning and route monitoring, and by displaying additional navigation-related information.

“If a ship has an approved ECDIS installed according to chapter V, the ECDIS will be considered by the Coast Guard as meeting its nautical chart regulation in 33 CFR 164.33(a)(1), because the ECDIS meets the same navigational safety concerns as do paper nautical charts.”