

## FAQ's

**1. Can ECDIS replace the paper chart on board small craft?**

In principle, the answer is „Yes,„. Small-craft shipping is subject to the same rules as commercial shipping. Issue 01/2003 of the Notices to Mariners contains information about the use of ECDIS systems on board seagoing vessels, which applies analogously to small craft.

**2. What is the usual procedure currently for updating ENC datasets (Inmarsat, radio, GSM)?**

Generally, the data are delivered on CD-ROM. The possibility of the update transfer by satellite communication is already offered by some private companies.

**3. How can S-57 data be visualised?**

The S-57 data can be visualised on normal PCs, but this requires special visualisation software. Some software producers offer free visualisation software. Information about that you will find on the website of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) <http://www.iho.shom.fr/> (first click "ENC", then "Open ECDIS Forum"). ECDIS equipment (used mainly on board commercial vessels) includes a special software complying with the international standard S-52, which allows visualisation of the S-57 data..

**4. With which systems S-57 data can be processed?** The Hydrographic Offices are using special software for the production and updating of ENCs. But in the meantime the users of different GIS-Products can also import and process S-57 data (.000 files) for GIS applications:

The Version 3.2 of ARCVIEW GIS and later versions include an S-57 data converter. With this sample extension, S-57 can be converted to a set of ESRI shape files that can be visualised and processed in the ArcView environment.

NOAA (National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration) has developed the mentioned „S-57 Data Converter Sample Extension“ from ESRI further to the „Chart Data Handler for ArcView“.

With ARC/INFO S-57 data also can be imported and processed.

From version 8.3, ArcGIS will be capable of directly importing/exporting S-57 ENC cells.

**5. Where do I get S-57 test data?**

IHO makes available S-57 test data free of charge on its website (<http://www.iho.shom.fr/>) under „Publications – Download List – Test Data Set for ECDIS,„. In this download list, under „Special Publications,„, you can also obtain information on, e.g., objects and attributes of the S-57 data.

**6. What is the global availability of ENC data presently?**

A survey of global ENC coverage is given on the IHO website (<http://www.iho.shom.fr/>).

**7. What does have to be taken into account at the use of raster data?**

Raster data are digital reproductions of the paper charts. Because of their pixel structure they are only capable of providing surface information and there is no direct object reference. Alphanumerical data for the individual objects thus is missing completely. Raster charts (RNC - Raster Nautical Chart) are georeferenced. For each point in the chart the geographic position is given. RNCs are produced according to the IHO-Standard S-61.

They have the same functionality like paper charts. Furthermore, RNCs allow vessels to determine their position and perform route planning. However, it is not possible for a raster system (RCDS -Raster Chart Display System) to identify danger situations. The official raster data approved for ECDIS, the so-called ARCS-data (Admiralty Raster Chart System) are produced by United Kingdom Hydrographic Office (UKHO). They are available worldwide. Thus RNCs complete the official vector data base for ECDIS. RNCs are updated on a weekly basis according to the Notices to Mariners (NtM) like ENC.