Software Assists Updates to Paper Charts

Global Navigation Software, USA, has added features to NavPak Professional Edition - NavPak Graphic NTM and NavPak Graphic Light List, making it easy to update paper charts. These functions will read and plot Notices to Mariners (NTMs, NMs and LNMs) and Light Lists (LLs), providing worldwide chart updates.

The LLs and NTMs have information that is not shown on the charts. For any given area, NTMs and LLs can be combined on the same NavPak Overlay.

The detailed symbols show what is in the NTM or LL at a glance. The symbols start with a structure which can be a buoy, pile, post, tower, platform, pyramid or building. Then a light, RADAR reflector, fog signal, Racon, radio beacon, AIS ATON, and top mark are added as applicable. For some features in the NTM, such as submarine pipes and cables, the control points are shown as coloured symbols. When a user clicks on a symbol, the attributes are shown in the Search Box in NavPak.

Focus on NTM

According to Global Navigation Software, regulatory agencies auditing chart carriage requirements seem to focus on Notice to Mariners chart updates and how they are being handled, rather than ECDIS vs ECS. The charts in ECDIS systems are supposed to have all the latest information, but the NTMs and LLs will probably be more recent than the chart. If an ATON is deployed on a navigational hazard, then it will probably show up on the NTM first, and may never be shown on the chart.

Some of the commercial contracts, such as towing, are requiring that vessel operators have updated paper charts, regardless of whether or not they have an ECDIS. In this respect, commercial contracts supersede government requirements. The Graphic NTM and LL features in NavPak have been developed to make it easier to update paper charts, and combining this information on a digital chart.

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