

**AERONAUTICAL CHARTING MEETING**  
**Charting Group**  
**Meeting 22-02 – October 25 - 27, 2022**

**RECOMMENDATION DOCUMENT**

**FAA Control #22-02-376**

**Subject:** Distinction to be made for permanently unlit towers on VFR Sectional Charts to enhance pilot awareness.

**Background/Discussion:**

The NAS currently has numerous obstacles above 200 FT AGL that had previous lighting plans that are now abandoned and are no longer lit for conspicuity AGL. A frequent reason for an obstacle to be unlit is simply that it is abandoned due to decommissioning and the proponent no longer ensures the obstacle remains lit.

Currently in the Chart Users Guide, a VFR sectional chart annotates obstacles above 200 FT AGL, but does not indicate if these obstacles are lit or unlit unless equipped with a high intensity strobe lighting system.

FAA Chart Users' Guide - VFR Terms and Symbols

*Obstacles less than 1000' AGL.* ▲ Sectional Charts, Terminal Area (TACs) and Caribbean Charts (CACs) typically show man-made obstacles extending more than 200' Above Ground Level (AGL), or more than 200' AGL in yellow city tint. Features considered to be hazardous obstacles to low-level flight are; smokestacks, tanks, factories, lookout towers, and antennas, etc.

*Obstacle 1000' AGL or greater.* ▲ Man-made features used by FAA Air Traffic Control as checkpoints use a graphic symbol shown in black with the required elevation data in blue. The elevation of the top of the obstacle above Mean Sea Level (MSL) and the height of the structure (AGL) is also indicated (when known or can be reliably determined by a Specialist). The AGL height is in parentheses below the MSL elevation. In extremely congested areas, the FAA typically omits the AGL values to avoid confusion.

*Group Obstacle Symbol* ▲ 4877 (1452) Whenever possible, the FAA depicts specific obstacles on charts. However, in high-density areas like city complexes, only the highest obstacle is represented on the chart using the group obstacle symbol to maximize legibility.

Obstacles under construction are indicated by placing the letters UC adjacent to the obstacle type.

*Obstacles with high-intensity strobe lighting systems may operate part-time or by proximity activation and are shown as follows:*

*Gay wires may extend outward from obstacles.*

*If space is available, the AGL height of the obstruction is shown*

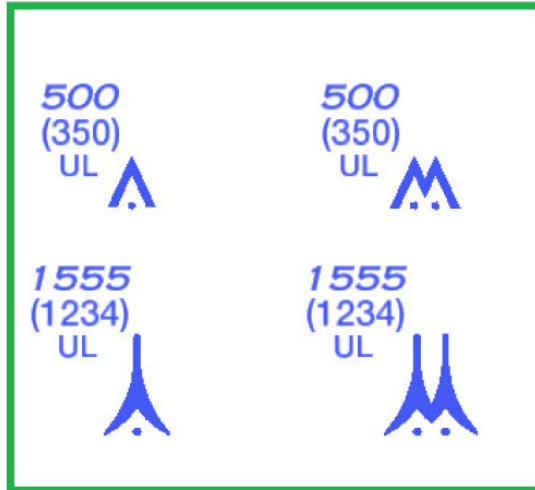
Pilots, particularly flying under VFR, are expecting to see obstacles, which are lit on sectional charts. An unlit obstruction greater than 200 FT AGL in the NAS may be a potential Hazard to VFR Navigation if pilots are not made properly aware.

In addition, there are a number of NOTAMS in the FAA system of permanently unlit obstacles. A distinct annotation of an unlit obstacle on a sectional chart would reduce the number of NOTAMS required to be maintained for these obstacles.

**Recommendations:**

This submission is to propose a distinction be made on VFR sectional charts to annotate which obstacles are permanently unlit.

We recommend the following distinction made in the charting annotation to denote which towers are permanently unlit by adding a “UL” symbology next to/below the MSL and AGL height to indicate permanently unlit.



UL Symbol using  
original size of .06

**Comments:**

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**Date:**

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