

Design Group Archive

Copyright

Russian Mapping of the UK



Statement to the British Cartographic Society

Ordnance Survey is aware that small-scale mapping of Great Britain, produced by the Russian Military and Geodetic and Cartographic Committee at scales of 1:25 000, 1:50 000 and 1:100 000, has been and may still be being imported into the United Kingdom.

We have been asked by a number of people whether this mapping is based on Ordnance Survey in-copyright mapping and if so what are the implications regarding its reproduction by others. Technical examinations of examples of this mapping leave us in no doubt that it substantially reproduces Ordnance Survey 1:25 000, 1:50 000 and 1:63 360 scale maps and has been revised up until recent times, again reproducing in-copyright Ordnance Survey material. The Russian mapping does contain small amounts of additional material but is almost entirely an adaptation of Ordnance Survey Crown copyright material. It was produced without the permission of Ordnance Survey and thus it infringes Ordnance Survey's Crown copyright.

We believe use of this mapping by third parties would seriously undermine Ordnance Survey's legitimate rights and unfairly distort the market for all UK map-makers, be they Ordnance Survey licensed or producers of wholly original mapping in their own right. Accordingly as the original copyright owner, Ordnance Survey is not prepared to sanction its use commercially and is anxious to see it removed from the marketplace. Under the Copyright, Designs and Patents Act 1988 it is unlawful to import, trade in and use infringing material and we reserve the right to take legal action against any parties importing or offering this mapping for sale or reproducing material from it.

Ordnance Survey has no desire whatsoever to cause unnecessary difficulties for anyone currently holding published examples of this Russian mapping or copies taken from it. However as we cannot legitimise trading in it or copying from it, we would ask people holding such material to get in touch with Carl Calvert, Ordnance Survey (phone 023 8079 2360) as soon as possible, so that appropriate arrangements can be made, by agreement with us, for the removal of such stocks from the market.

We are very grateful for the assistance we have already received in this matter from others in the map-publishing community and hope that this statement will clarify the situation. If you have any queries relating to the identification of individual map titles etc., we will do everything we can to assist. Any such questions should again be addressed to Carl Calvert, IP Technical Consultant.

Finally, we would like to stress that Ordnance Survey very much encourages the licenced use of its mapping by other publishers and value added resellers. Further information on these licensing arrangements can be obtained from Santiago Jagot, Publishing Licensing Officer (023 8079 2028).

Robin Knights

Intellectual Property Manger

Ordnance Survey

Romsey Road,

SOUTHAMPTON, SO16 4GU, 10 September 1997

The British Cartographic Society

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The previous circular entitled "Russian military mapping of the UK", has excited some interest, not least on LIS-Maps in relation both to its content and to the tone of its expression. At the recent Council Meeting it was agreed that a dual approach was necessary. Firstly, the Vice-President would write to OS Copyright Branch with the points already raised by members. Secondly the 'Copyright Working Group' - the President, Past President and Vice-President will meet with other interested parties to explore the factual and legal elements of the circular and possible courses of action.

We apologise if this sounds rather long-winded but hope members will feel assured that Council is most concerned about this issue and that we are trying to address it without attracting considerable legal costs; this will take time!

