

OFFICE OF THE GEOGRAPHER AND GLOBAL ISSUES  
DEPARTMENT OF STATE

GUIDANCE BULLETIN

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**INTERNATIONAL DATELINE: UPDATED CARTOGRAPHIC DEPICTION**

*Note.* This guidance pertains to the depiction of the International Date Line around Samoa, Kiribati, and Tokelau.

*Background:* At midnight on December 29<sup>th</sup>, 2011 the Independent State of Samoa and the New Zealand territory of Tokelau moved from the eastern side of the International Date Line to the western side, thus losing December 30<sup>th</sup> and proceeding to December 31<sup>st</sup>. This change allowed for a closer harmonization of business hours with their trading partners in Asia and Oceania.

In 1995, Kiribati announced that its entire territory would now fall west of the International Date Line, even though the Phoenix and Line Island groups formerly lay east of the established Line (the latter by more than 1,300 nautical miles). However, U.S. Government maps continued to represent the International Date Line as before, but with notations to account for Kiribati's decision. In light of the recent decision by Samoa and Tokelau, the Office of the Geographer and Global Issues now believes it is appropriate to adjust the depiction of the International Date Line around Kiribati, Samoa, and Tokelau.

*Guidance:* The following guidance should be followed on any U.S. Government maps depicting the International Date Line.

Continue to depict the International Date Line as a solid line, distinct from the line symbology used for other boundaries, along its traditional alignment south until 2°30'34"S, 180°00'00"W. From that point depict it as a dashed line using straight line segments from the following set of coordinate turning points:

- |                           |                            |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| 1. 2°30'34"S 158°29'12"W  | 9. 5°50'32"S 156°04'50"W   |
| 2. 0°13'41"S 158°29'12"W  | 10. 5°50'32"S 169°23'46"W  |
| 3. 1°29'53"N 160°38'23"W  | 11. 9°25'42"S 170°59'34"W  |
| 4. 4°56'14"N 160°38'23"W  | 12. 11°03'26"S 171°17'38"W |
| 5. 4°56'14"N 155°31'43"W  | 13. 13°58'05"S 171°00'12"W |
| 6. 9°54'33"S 150°00'01"W  | 14. 14°25'52"S 171°14'12"W |
| 7. 11°38'43"S 150°00'01"W | 15. 15°00'00"S 172°30'00"W |
| 8. 11°38'43"S 154°33'58"W |                            |

The final point above joins the traditional alignment of the International Date Line, and south of this point the Line should be depicted again as a solid line. To clarify, there should not be a solid line between 2°30'34"S, 180°00'00"W and 15°00'00"S, 172°30'00"W.

The dashes indicate a notional depiction of a line drawn to contain those islands belonging to Kiribati, Samoa, and Tokelau that now fall west of the Date Line. A shapefile of the new International Date Line is available upon request to [crawfordia@state.gov](mailto:crawfordia@state.gov).

**ACTION:** Please disseminate this guidance to all personnel in your organization concerned with cartographic production.

Lee R. Schwartz

(signed)

The Geographer,  
U.S. Department of State



