

MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE
90th session
Agenda item 25

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WORK PROGRAMME

Clarification to SOLAS regulation V/27

Submitted by Australia, the United Kingdom,
the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) and the Nautical Institute (NI)

SUMMARY

Executive summary: This document contains a proposal for a new unplanned output that offers clarifications to the regulatory requirements for nautical charts and nautical publications that relate to Electronic Chart Display and Information System (ECDIS) contained in SOLAS regulation V/27

Strategic direction: 5.2

High-level action: 5.2.4

Planned output: No related provisions

Action to be taken: Paragraph 15

Related documents: Regulations A.817(19); MSC.86(70); MSC.232(82); MSC.282(86); MSC.302(87) and MSC 90/10/1

1 This proposal for an unplanned output is submitted in accordance with paragraphs 4.7 to 4.9 of MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.4 (Guidelines on the organization and method of work of the Maritime Safety Committee and the Marine Environment Protection Committee and their subsidiary bodies).

Background

2 At the eighty-sixth session of the Maritime Safety Committee, amendments were adopted to the 1974 SOLAS Convention through resolution MSC.282(86). These amendments included changes to chapter V, regulation 19 – *Carriage requirements for shipborne navigational systems and equipment*. Paragraph 2.1.4 of regulation V/19 now states that "*an electronic chart display and information system (ECDIS) is also accepted as meeting the chart carriage requirements of this subparagraph*". Regulation V/19, paragraphs 2.10 and 2.11 provide for the carriage of ECDIS on various ship types, with implementation commencing on 1 July 2012 and progressing through to 1 July 2018.

3 At the eighty-ninth session of the Maritime Safety Committee, the IHO reported on some operating anomalies identified within ECDIS (MSC 89/24/2 refers). At the same session, other Member States also commented on this issue (MSC 89/24/3 refers) and proposed measures that ought to be taken. In document MSC 90/10/1, IHO has reported on actions

taken to help address the operating anomalies identified within ECDIS. The sponsors of this document believe that in order to complete actions needed to address the operating anomalies within ECDIS, a clarification needs to be provided in SOLAS regulation V/27 on what constitutes adequate and up-to-date nautical charts and nautical publications.

Scope of the proposal

4 Footnotes should be added to SOLAS regulation V/27 – *Nautical charts and nautical publications*, to provide guidance on electronic nautical publications and clarify the term "adequate and up to date" in relation to nautical charts and ECDIS. The proposed wording of the footnotes to SOLAS regulation V/27 is provided below:

Regulation 27

Nautical charts and nautical publications

*Nautical charts and nautical publications*¹, such as sailing directions, lists of lights, notices to mariners, tide tables and all other nautical publications necessary for the intended voyage, shall be adequate and up to date^{2, 3}.

¹ Where electronic nautical publications are carried, they shall be readily accessible at all times by the use of a computer on the bridge dedicated to navigational tasks. Adequate back-up arrangements shall be provided in the event the primary electronic means becomes unavailable.

² Where ECDIS is used to meet the chart carriage requirement, adequate implies that all necessary electronic nautical charts (of appropriate scale) for the intended voyage are available on board. Up-to-date charts are electronic nautical charts of the latest available edition as corrected by official updates and conform to [IMO implemented] IHO standards.

³ ECDIS hardware, software and the electronic nautical charts must comply with applicable and relevant standards as promulgated by IMO from time to time.

Compelling need

5 Mariners and all others with an involvement in ECDIS need to be aware that if ECDIS is used to fulfil the chart carriage requirement, it will need to be maintained to the latest international standards as promulgated by IMO. Although guidance exists in SN.1/Circ.266/Rev.1 on the importance of maintaining ECDIS software, IHO has identified (MSC 90/10/1) that there is currently no regulatory requirement for ship operators to update ECDIS systems already in use at sea.

Implications to the maritime industry

6 The proposal does not incur any additional cost or administrative burden to the maritime industry as it is intended to offer clarifying information on SOLAS regulation V/27.

Benefits which would accrue from the proposal

7 The proposal will help to clarify the carriage requirements for electronic charts and publications, prevent misinterpretation of the regulations pertaining to ECDIS and assist administrations with the implementation of SOLAS regulations V/19 and V/27. Additionally, the proposal makes it clear that those responsible for ECDIS hardware and software have a role to play in ensuring their ECDIS equipment meets the latest requirements as promulgated by IMO.

Priority and target completion date

8 This proposal requires the addition of simple explanatory footnotes to SOLAS regulation V/27 and should need to be addressed by only one Sub-Committee. As such, it is expected that one session of the Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation will be able to complete the work. With the implementation dates of SOLAS regulation V/19 beginning from 1 July 2012, this work should be given high priority (as indicated in MSC 89/25, paragraph 24.8) and completed in 2012.

Is the subject of the proposal within the scope of IMO's objectives?

9 The proposal is within the scope of the IMO's objectives as it aims to enhance maritime safety.

How is the proposed item related to the scope of the Strategic Plan for the Organization and fits into the High-level Action Plan?

10 Since the proposal is directly related to the enhancement of technical, operational and safety management standards, the proposal is within the scope of strategic direction 5.2 of the Strategic Plan for the Organization 2012-2017 and that of High-level Action 5.2.4 of the current High-level Action Plan 2012-2013.

Do industry standards exist?

11 In addition to the IMO instruments on ECDIS, the IHO and IEC sets standards on data and equipment testing respectively. The proposed footnotes to SOLAS regulation V/27 will complement changes being made to IHO standards.

Do the benefits justify the proposed action?

12 The current situation is undesirable and should be addressed promptly in the interests of enhancing safety of navigation. Hence, the sponsors consider that the benefits described in paragraph 7 justify the proposed action.

Output

13 The output of the proposed work is the addition of footnotes to SOLAS regulation V/27. The output is realistic and achievable in the proposed time frame.

14 It is estimated that the Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation will need one session to complete the work.

Action requested of the Committee

15 The Committee is invited to consider the proposal and decide, as appropriate.
