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CIRCULAR LETTER 03/2019
10 January 2019

**PREPARATION FOR THE 6th SESSION OF
THE IMO SUB-COMMITTEE ON NAVIGATION, COMMUNICATIONS
AND SEARCH AND RESCUE (NCSR)**

16 to 25 January 2019, London, United Kingdom

References:

- A. IHO CL 25/2018 dated 12 March - *Report on the 5th Session of the IMO Sub Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR 5)*
- B. IHO CL 34/2018 dated 11 June – *Report on the 99th Session of the IMO Maritime Safety Committee (MCS 99)*

Dear Hydrographer,

1. As announced in Reference A, the 6th session of the Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR 6) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) will take place from 16 to 25 January 2019 at the IMO Headquarters in London, United Kingdom.
2. The provisional agenda for NCSR 6 (NCSR 6/1) includes a significant number of items of interest to IHO Member States, namely:
 - 3 *Routeing measures and mandatory ship reporting systems;*
 - 6 *Revised General requirements for shipborne radio equipment forming part of the GMDSS and for electronic navigational aids (resolution A.694(17)) relating to Built-In Integrity testing (BIIT) for navigation equipment;*
 - 7 *Guidelines on standardized modes of operation, S-mode;*
 - 8 *Develop guidance on definition and harmonization of the format and structure of Maritime Service Portfolios (MSPs)*
 - 9 *Updating of the GMDSS master plan and guidelines on MSI (maritime safety information) provisions;*
 - 10 *Consequential work related to the new Polar Code;*
 - 11 *Revision of SOLAS chapters III and IV for Modernization of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS), including related and consequential amendments to other existing instruments;*
 - 12 *Response to matters related to the Radiocommunication ITU-R Study Group and ITU World Radiocommunication Conference; and*

14 Developments in GMDSS satellite services.

3. On behalf of the IHO, and in accordance with the arrangements agreed with the relevant IHO Committees, Sub-Committees and Working Groups, the Secretariat has submitted or co-sponsored papers related to items 6 and 9. As it is represented in the related groups, the IHO has also contributed to the report submitted under agenda items 6, 7, 8, 9, and 11. The list of the relevant documents is provided at Annex A.
4. Member States are encouraged to liaise with and brief their national delegations at NCSR 6 on the issues of relevance to the IHO. They are invited, in particular, to take into consideration the comments summarized in Annex B, related to the documents submitted under agenda items 8, 9, 11 and 14.
5. IHO Member States intending to be represented at NCSR 6 are invited to indicate to the Secretariat at cl-lc@iho.int (copy to adso@iho.int) the name and e-mail of their representative(s) to facilitate coordination at the meeting, if and as appropriate.

On behalf of the Secretary-General

Yours sincerely,



Abri KAMPFER

Director

Annexes:

Annex A: *List of NCSR 6 documents submitted or co-sponsored by the IHO or including an IHO contribution.*

Annex B: *Comments to be considered by IHO Member States when briefing their national delegation at NCSR 6*

**List of NCSR 6 documents submitted or co-sponsored by the IHO
or including an IHO contribution**

Agenda Item 6 - Revised General requirements for shipborne radio equipment forming part of the GMDSS and for electronic navigational aids (resolution A.694(17)) relating to Built-In Integrity testing (BIIT) for navigation equipment

MSC 95/19/14 - Comments on implementing e-navigation to enhance the safety of navigation and protection of the marine environment – IHO

Agenda Item 7 - Guidelines on standardized modes of operation, S-mode

NCSR 6/7 - Report of the Correspondence Group - Australia

Agenda Item 8 - Develop guidance on definition and harmonization of the format and structure of Maritime Service Portfolios (MSPs)

NCSR 6/8 - Report of the second meeting of the IMO/IHO Harmonization Group on Data Modelling (HGDM) - Secretariat

Agenda Item 9 - Updating of the GMDSS master plan and guidelines on MSI (maritime safety information) provisions

NCSR 6/9/1 - Outcome of the tenth session of the IHO World-Wide Navigational Warning Service Sub-Committee (WWNWS-SC) - IHO

NCSR 6/9/2 - Review of International SafetyNET Coordinating Panel terms of reference and authorization and certification process - Chair, International SafetyNET Coordinating Panel, WMO and IHO

NCSR 6/9/3 - Revision of Promulgation of maritime safety information (resolution A.705(17), as amended) - Chairs WWNWS-SC and WWMIWS-C

NCSR 6/9/4 - Revision of IMO/IHO World-Wide Navigational Warning Service guidance document (resolution A.706(17), as amended) - Chair WWNWS-SC

NCSR 6/9/5 - Revision of IMO/WMO Worldwide Met-Ocean Information and Warning Service guidance document (resolution A.1051(27)) - WMO

NCSR 6/9/7 - Promulgation of Maritime Safety Information - NAVTEX Service Annual report IMO NAVTEX Coordinating Panel - Chairman IMO NAVTEX Coordinating Panel

Agenda Item 11 - Revision of SOLAS chapters III and IV for Modernization of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS), including related and consequential amendments to other existing instruments

NCSR 6/11 - Report of the Correspondence Group on the Modernization of the GMDSS - USA

**Comments to be considered by IHO Member States when briefing
their national delegation at NCSR 6**

Agenda Item 8 - Develop guidance on definition and harmonization of the format and structure of Maritime Service Portfolios (MSPs)

Report of the second meeting of the IMO/IHO Harmonization Group on Data Modelling (HGDM)

In accordance with the outcome of the 99th session of the MSC (see Reference B), the Secretariat participated in second meeting of the IMO/IHO Harmonization Group on Data Modelling (HGDM). IHO Member States are invited to liaise with their national maritime administrations to consider supporting the requested actions of the Sub-Committee.

Agenda Item 9 - Updating of the GMDSS master plan and guidelines on MSI (maritime safety information) provisions

As discussed at the 10th meeting of the World-Wide Navigational Warning Service Sub-Committee (WWNWS-SC), the recognition of additional mobile satellite service providers in the GMDSS will create significant work for the WWNWS-SC and its Document Review Working Group (DRWG). Members of the WWNWS-SC participated in the technical assessment of the Iridium mobile satellite system conducted by IMSO; despite the positive recommendations from IMSO, a number of concerns have been identified by the WWNWS-SC. Despite there being no a "type approved" mobile transceiver is available, the WWNWS-SC has been invited, at the DRWG17 meeting after NCSR 6, to review the current draft version of the Iridium satellite system manual with a view for its approval by MSC 101 as an interim draft manual to allow the operational testing phase to be undertaken and assessed by IMSO. The WWNWS-SC does not support the comments submitted by IMSO in NCSR 6/9/10 and IHO Member States, particularly those acting as NAVAREA Coordinators, are invited to liaise with their national maritime administrations to consider supporting the position of the WWNWS-SC and to participate actively in the meetings of the DRWG.

Agenda Item 11 - Modernization Plan of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS)

The IHO contributed to the Correspondence Group (CG) on the draft SOLAS amendments. IHO Member States, particularly those acting as NAVAREA Coordinators, are invited to liaise with their national maritime administrations to consider supporting the comments.

Agenda Item 14 – Developments in Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) satellite services

Considerations on monitoring MSI broadcasts over satellite systems and Interoperability issues between recognized mobile satellite systems in the GMDSS

IMSO have submitted two documents for consideration by the Sub-Committee. The WWNWS-SC has concerns on the proposals, particularly as they imply an expansion of the remit of IMSO into broadcast monitoring for which it has no experience or expertise. Added to which, there is a clearly laid out monitoring procedure for NAVAREA and METAREA Coordinators to follow. The WWNWS-SC is also concerned that these proposals could create a conflict of interest for IMSO if it was monitoring the broadcasts as well as undertaking service provider compliance with the terms of the Public Service Agreement (PSA).