

Iridium Implementation Update

Submitted by Iridium

SUMMARY

Executive Summary: This document informs the Sub-Committee of progress made by Iridium in implementing GMDSS services.

Action to be taken: The Sub-Committee is invited to note the information.

Related documents: None.

1 This document informs the Sub-Committee of progress made by Iridium in implementing GMDSS services. The Sub-Committee is invited to note the information, which is provided as an Information paper in place of the presentation to the Sub-Committee which Iridium would have made, if the Sub-Committee had been meeting under normal circumstances. This information was correct at the time this document was submitted.

Authorization and Certification of Registered Information Providers

2 All current NAVAREAs and METAREAs have been authorized and certified for access to Iridium SafetyCast, in accordance with the procedures of the International EGC Coordinating Panel.

Agreements with Registered Information Providers

3 Service agreements have been concluded between Iridium and 23 registered information providers. Particular national procedures have to be followed and these differ from provider to provider, and so more agreements will follow in due course.

Training

4 Iridium has provided training on use of the Iridium SafetyCast service to 27 registered information providers. Some providers have requested additional training so further training is planned. Iridium will provide this training to the remaining registered information providers as and when they are ready for it. Iridium is also providing training to its own customer service support staff.

Testing

5 Some registered information providers are now routinely copying their information to Iridium SafetyCast. In addition, Iridium Service Partners (the commercial partners who sell Iridium equipment to ships) have provided prototype terminals to some of their customers. There is a global test fleet of between 15 and 20 vessels participating, enabling testing in

most NAVAREAs/METAREAs. Participation is voluntary and the vessels are aware that they are participating in a test. The equipment is also clearly marked as being for testing purposes only. Iridium also maintains a number of terminals for monitoring transmissions, including in areas where there are no vessels participating in this “alpha” testing.

6 During the alpha testing period, registered information providers have been using email and the graphical user interface to submit their messages for transmission. This testing has shown that those paths are mature and stable. Development of the file-transfer method has been slower than planned, in part due to the COVID-19 pandemic, but this method will be part of the second and final stage of testing, and will enable more registered information providers to participate.

Beta-Testing and Initial Operating Capability

7 By the time of WVNWS 12, we will have commenced a second and final testing programme, “beta” testing, which is a larger and more mature form of testing. This is intended to demonstrate the maturity and stability of system development, after feedback from early participation by registered information providers. It also marks stabilisation of the development of the ship earth stations based upon experience gained through deployment in the test fleet.

8 During the beta test period, Iridium will send system test messages to terminals which are operating in areas where one or both registered information providers are not yet routinely copying information to the Iridium SafetyCast system. These will be dummy messages, and the risk of causing confusion is nil.

9 By combining the current test fleet and remote terminals it is possible to monitor test transmissions in all NAVAREAs/METAREAs. This will enable registered information providers to announce their initial operating capability, and begin their progress towards full operating capability.

Iridium SafetyCast Manual

10 The Interim Draft Iridium SafetyCast Manual was reviewed by the Document Review Working Group (DRWG 18). The recommendations of that meeting have been acted upon in the revised draft presented for consideration during WVNWS 12. We expect that the revised draft will be submitted to the IMO for consideration at NCSR 8, and will be published as the first edition following MSC 103, in mid-2021.

Interoperability (EGC API Correspondence Group)

11 Iridium is an active participant in the EGC API Correspondence Group.