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**CIRCULAR LETTER 62/2019
10 December 2019**

**PREPARATION FOR THE 7th SESSION OF
THE IMO SUB-COMMITTEE ON NAVIGATION, COMMUNICATIONS
AND SEARCH AND RESCUE (NCSR)**

15 to 24 January 2020, London, United Kingdom

References:

- A. IHO CL 14/2019 dated 4 March – *Report on the 6th Session of the IMO Sub Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR 6)*
- B. IHO CL 36/2019 dated 9 July – *Report on the 101th Session of the IMO Maritime Safety Committee (MCS 101)*
- C. IHO CL 54/2019 dated 14 November – *IHO Submission to IMO Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR 7)*

Dear Hydrographer,

1. As announced in Reference A, the 7th session of the Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR 7) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) will take place from 15 to 24 January 2020 at the IMO Headquarters in London, United Kingdom.

2. The provisional agenda for NCSR 7 (NCSR 7/1) includes a significant number of items of interest to IHO Member States, namely:

- 3 *Routeing measures and mandatory ship reporting systems;*
- 6 *Recognition of the Japanese regional navigation satellite system Quasi-Zenith Satellite System (QZSS) and development of performance standards for shipborne satellite navigation system receiver equipment;*
- 7 *Revision of the Guidelines for vessel traffic services (resolution A.857(20));*
- 8 *Consideration of descriptions of Maritime Services in the context of e-navigation*
- 9 *Updating of the GMDSS master plan and guidelines on Maritime Safety Information (MSI);*
- 10 *Safety measures for non-SOLAS ships operating in polar waters;*
- 11 *Revision of SOLAS chapters III and IV for Modernization of the 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;*
- 14 *Developments in GMDSS satellite services; and*
- 22 *Any other Business.*

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 7, 9 and 22. As it is represented in the related groups, the IHO has also contributed to the reports submitted under agenda items 8, 9, 11, 12, 14 and 22. 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 7 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 7, 8, 9, 11, 14 and 22.

5. IHO Member States intending to be represented at NCSR 7 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 7 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 7*

**List of NCSR 7 documents submitted or co-sponsored by the IHO
or including an IHO contribution**

Agenda Item 7 – Revision of the Guidelines for vessel traffic services (resolution A.857(20))

NCSR 7/7 - Draft Assembly resolution – Australia, Brazil, China, India, Norway, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Turkey, IHO, IALA, IMPA, IAPH, IAIN, IFSMA, IHMA and NI

Agenda Item 8 – Agenda item 8 – Consideration of descriptions of Maritime Services in the context of e-navigation

NCSR 7/8 - Report of an informal meeting of Member States and international organizations acting as domain coordinating bodies for the further development of descriptions of Maritime Services in the context of e-navigation – Secretariat

Agenda item 9 – Updating of the GMDSS master plan and guidelines on Maritime Safety Information (MSI)

NCSR 7/9 - Proposed amendments to the International SafetyNET Manual – Chairs WWNWS-SC and WWMIWS-C

NCSR 7/9/1 - Promulgation of Maritime Safety Information - NAVTEX Service Annual report IMO NAVTEX Coordinating Panel – Chair IMO NAVTEX Coordinating Panel

NCSR 7/9/2 - Outcome of the eleventh session of the IHO World-Wide Navigational Warning Service Sub-Committee (WWNWS-SC) – IHO

NCSR 7/9/4 - Promulgation of Maritime Safety Information - International SafetyNET Service Annual report International SafetyNET Coordinating Panel – Chair International SafetyNET Coordinating Panel

Agenda item 11 – Revision of SOLAS chapters III and IV for Modernization of the GMDSS, including related and consequential amendments to other existing instruments

NCSR 7/11 - Report of the Correspondence Group on the Modernization of the GMDSS – USA

NCSR 7/11/1 - Correspondence Group recommendations on related and consequential amendments to other existing instruments – USA

Agenda Item 12 - Response to matters related to the Radiocommunication ITU R Study Group and ITU World Radiocommunication Conference

NCSR 7/12 - Report of the fifteenth meeting of the Joint IMO/ITU Experts Group on Maritime radiocommunication matters – Secretariat

Agenda item 14 – Developments in GMDSS satellite services

NCSR 7-14 - Recognition of BeiDou Message Service System as a GMDSS Service provider – China

NCSR 7/14/2 - Analysis and assessment of the GMDSS performance of Inmarsat Global Limited – IMSO

NCSR 7/14/3 - The introduction of additional GMDSS mobile satellite service providers – Australia

Agenda item 22 – Any other business

NCSR 7/22/2 - Issues encountered with MSI portrayal guidance in SN.1/Circ.243/Rev.2 – Canada

NCSR 7/22/3 - Development of guidelines for the use of Electronic Nautical Publications (ENPs) – Republic of Korea

NCSR 7/22/5 - Report on monitoring of ECDIS issues by the IHO – IHO

**Comments to be considered by IHO Member States when briefing
their national delegation at NCSR 7**

Agenda Item 7 – Revision of the Guidelines for vessel traffic services (resolution A.857(20))

Resolution A.857(20) describes the principles and general provisions for the operation of a VTS and participating ships, the roles and responsibilities of Contracting Governments, competent authorities and VTS authorities, and qualifications and training of VTS Operators. Since the adoption of the resolution more than 20 years ago, various organizational, operational and technological developments have taken place globally in a rapidly changing maritime domain. This has rendered important parts of the resolution open to differing interpretation, resulting in debate amongst stakeholders and a reduced ability to implement the Guidelines for Vessel Traffic Services in a consistent and harmonized manner.

Agenda Item 8 – Consideration of descriptions of Maritime Services in the context of e-navigation

Report of an informal meeting of Member States and international organizations acting as domain coordinating bodies for the further development of descriptions of Maritime Services in the context of e-navigation

An informal meeting of IMO Member States and international organizations acting as domain coordinating bodies for the further development of descriptions of Maritime Services in the context of e-navigation, was held at IALA Headquarters, on 9 October 2019. The objectives of the meeting were to:

- .1 share information about current and future developments related to the descriptions of Maritime Services in the context of e-navigation (MSC.1/Circ.1610);
- .2 explore opportunities for better collaboration amongst domain coordinating bodies, in particular, in connection to future work on harmonization.

The IHO Secretariat participated in relation to MS 5 (Maritime safety information (MSI) service), MS 11 (Nautical chart service), MS 12 (Nautical publications service) and MS 15 (Real-time hydrographic and environmental information services); the maintenance of which has been allocated to various IHO subordinate bodies. It was noted that the description of MS 5 would be further elaborated by WMO and IHO to address new GMDSS recognized mobile satellite service providers for possible submission to NCSR 8.

***Agenda Item 9 –
Updating of the GMDSS master plan and guidelines on Maritime
Safety Information (MSI)***

Outcome of the eleventh session of the IHO World-Wide Navigational Warning Service Sub-Committee (WWNWS-SC)

As discussed at the 11th 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 "type approved" mobile transceiver is available, the WWNWS-SC has been invited, at the DRWG18 meeting after NCSR 7, to review the current draft version of the Iridium SafetyCast manual with a view for its approval by NCSR 8. The WWNWS-SC again has raised concerns over the processes for the operational implementation of the Iridium SafetyCast service, in particular the cost issues of operating in a multi-provider environment and asked the Sub-Committee to consider what methodology could be developed to share the funding burden across the wider IMO community. In addition the WWNWS-SC has asked the NCSR to consider what actions are necessary to facilitate broadcast monitoring in a multi-provider environment and how the development of multiple system capable terminals can be progressed. 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 –

Revision of SOLAS chapters III and IV for Modernization of the GMDSS, including related and consequential amendments to other existing instruments

Report of the Correspondence Group on the Modernization of the GMDSS

The IHO Secretariat 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 GMDSS satellite services

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

The WWNWS-SC has raised concerns over the addition of a third mobile satellite service provider, particularly when a number of significant issues have yet to be resolved on the operational implementation of the Iridium SafetyCast system. IHO Member States, particularly those acting as NAVAREA Coordinators, are invited to liaise with their national maritime administrations to consider the impact on the service providers and to consider supporting the position of the WWNWS-SC.

Agenda item 22 – Any other business

Issues encountered with MSI portrayal guidance in SN.1/Circ.243/Rev.2 by Canada

Challenges have been encountered with the portrayal of Maritime safety information (MSI) because of guidance provided in SN.1/Circ.243/Rev.2. Clarification from the Sub-Committee is requested on the degree of flexibility that can be exercised by the International Hydrographic Organization's S-124 Correspondence Group when developing portrayal for MSI.

Canada is of the opinion that SN.1/Circ.243/Rev.2 is a guideline with an inherent flexibility, which would allow deviation during the product specification development. Clarification on this point is needed to ensure the product specification development does not have to redo its portrayal development at a later date. Moreover, such clarification will give all stakeholders clarity into what role SN.1/Circ.243/Rev.2 will have on portrayal in the future.

Report on monitoring of ECDIS issues by the IHO

The IHO Secretariat has made a submission which reported on the status of IHO's ECDIS-related standards, presented a roadmap for the introduction of the next generation of S-101 Electronic Navigational Charts (ENC) and explained the resulting implications for existing

and new ECDIS installations. Member States are invited to engage with their respective national delegations and to brief them on the contents of the IHO document. In particular Hydrographic Offices are urged to obtain the support of their Maritime Administrations for the actions requested of the Sub-Committee, most notably action 23.3 and 23.4, which are necessary to meet the proposed 2024 operational availability date for substantial S-101 ENC coverage.