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**CIRCULAR LETTER 56/2017**  
**02 November 2017**

**OUTCOME OF THE NINTH MEETING OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE ON  
THE WORLD -WIDE NAVIGATIONAL WARNINGS SERVICE (WWNWS-SC)**

Reference: *WWNWS-SC Letter No. 01/2017 dated 22 March 2017.*

Dear Hydrographer,

1. The ninth meeting of the WWNWS Sub-Committee (WWNWS9) was hosted by the South African Navy Hydrographic Office and held in Cape Town, South Africa, from 28 August to 1 September 2017 under the chairmanship of Mr Peter Doherty of the United States of America (USA). Commander Christoff Theunissen, acting Hydrographer of South Africa, welcomed the meeting which was attended by 51 delegates from 21 IHO Member States, the Secretariat of the World Meteorological Organization (WMO), the Secretariat of the International Mobile Satellite Organization (IMSO), the Chairs of IMO NAVTEX and International SafetyNET Coordinating Panels, Inmarsat, Iridium, South African Maritime Safety Agency (Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre) (SAMSA (MRSCC)), Security of Navigation, Stabilisation, Advice and Training (inc AWNIS) (SONSAT), Telkom Maritime Radio and the IHO Secretariat. The delegates included representatives of 19 NAVAREA Coordinators, one Sub-Area Coordinator and five National Coordinators.

**Summary of Discussions at WWNWS9**

2. All meeting documents and the meeting report for WWNWS9 are available from the WWNWS section of the IHO web site ([www.iho.int](http://www.iho.int) > Committees & WG > IRCC > WWNWS > WWNWS9). The following is a brief summary of the major issues considered at the meeting.

WWNWS Documentation

3. The work of the 15<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Document Review Working Group (DRWG) was reviewed. In particular, the proposed future editorial amendment cycle to the Maritime Safety Information (MSI) documentation was highlighted and endorsed by the Sub-Committee; this will also take into account the proposed amendments to the SOLAS Convention, the outcomes of the Modernization of the GMDSS and the expected recognition of Iridium as a mobile satellite service provider in the GMDSS. It was also agreed to include the MSI Capacity Building (CB) course training material in the review cycle to ensure it reflected the amendments to the Joint IMO/IHO/WMO Manual on MSI and the revisions to the SafetyNET and NAVTEX Manuals.

4. It was agreed that the 16<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Document Review WG (DRWG16) will continue the review of the IMO resolutions A705(17), as amended, - *Promulgation of Maritime Safety Information – A706(17)*, as amended, - *World-Wide Navigational Warning Service* - and prepare proposed amendments for consideration at WWNWS10 in 2018 and subsequent submission to IMO Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR) - 6 in 2019.

5. It was agreed that the proposed amendments to IMO resolution A.1051(27) (*IMO/WMO Worldwide Met-Ocean Information and Warning Service – Guidance Document*) be submitted to NCSR6 in 2019 to align with the WWNWS related resolutions. At the same time the Joint IMO/IHO/WMO Manual on MSI would be reviewed in coordination with the International SafetyNET Manual and the IMO NAVTEX Manual.

6. It was agreed that Inmarsat would provide proposed amendments to the Inmarsat SafetyNET Users' Handbook for consideration at DRWG16. Iridium agreed to continue to develop its documentation to support its proposed GMDSS service; this follows the format of the International SafetyNET Manual but remains a separate document until the system had been recognised by the IMO and a mature operational state had been achieved, after which consideration for a single generic manual for the two systems would be contemplated.

7. All draft documents under development by the Sub-Committee are available via the WWNWS page of the IHO web site. Member States are encouraged to review the documents and submit comments to the Chair (Mr Peter Doherty, e-mail: Peter.M.Doherty@nga.mil) and the IHO Secretariat (Assistant Director David Wyatt, e-mail: adso@iho.int). Any proposed changes or amendments and further work will be undertaken at the DRWG16, which will be held the week after the fifth session of the NCSR at IMO Headquarters in London in mid-February 2018. The drafting work will be finalised at WWNWS10, then submitted to the IMO for approval.

#### Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) / MSI Briefing

8. The Sub-Committee received MSI self-assessment reports from all 21 NAVAREAs. A number of issues were highlighted, which will require further investigation and input from the Chair of the WWNWS-SC, as well as the Chairs of the IMO SafetyNET and NAVTEX Coordinating Panels. The Chair agreed to assist NAVAREA Coordinators, through the IHO Secretariat, to gain the support of National Coordinators in ensuring that all SOLAS MSI responsibilities were being met.

9. The contents of the relevant Annexes of the GMDSS Master Plan were reviewed. The IHO Secretariat highlighted a number of differences between the information contained in the Annexes of the GMDSS Master Plan and that contained in IHO Publication C-55 – *Status of Hydrographic Surveying and Nautical Charting Worldwide*. NAVAREA Coordinators were requested to highlight to National Coordinators the conflicting information in the two documents and to request that they investigate to ensure consistency for their national entries.

10. The Secretariat of the WMO provided a brief on the activities of the Organization over the past year, this included details of the work programmes of the six regional associations and working groups and their activities, the need for increased cooperation between NAVAREA and METAREA Coordinators and the continuous emergency response capability was highlighted, as well as the activities of the regional training and global training centres. Preparations for the 5<sup>th</sup> meeting of Joint Commission on Oceanography and Marine Meteorology (JCOMM-5) were highlighted and the intention to complete the review of IMO resolution 1051(27) ready for final harmonization at the DRWG16 meeting.

11. The Secretariat of IMSO provided a presentation on the activities of IMSO and an update on the technical assessments of the Iridium system and the Inmarsat Fleet Broadband system as they seek recognition as new GMDSS mobile satellite service providers.

12. The Sub-Committee also received several other briefings. Inmarsat reported on progress on the Inmarsat-C EGC SafetyNET system developments, including the new SafetyNET II system. The Chair of the S-124 Correspondence Group updated the Sub-Committee on the progress in the development of the S-124 Navigational Warnings S-100 based Product Specification. The Chair of the Correspondence Group noted his desire to stand down from his position as soon as a replacement could be identified, although he indicated he would remain engaged with the development of S-124. Iridium provided an update on developments of the Iridium Satellite system, as the process towards approval recognition as a mobile satellite GMDSS service provider progresses.

13. NAVAREA XIV highlighted that the transfer of responsibility for MSI from Land Information New Zealand (LINZ) to Rescue Coordination Centre New Zealand (RCCNZ) had been completed. NAVAREA XIV also provided a live demonstration of the systems in use for assessing and processing information by operations room personnel to help decision making and the issuing of warnings.

#### MSI Capacity Building Training Course

14. The meeting received updated information on the delivery of MSI training courses and the need for the NAVAREA Coordinators to work closely with the Regional CB Coordinators to help developing nations to reach the Phase 1 level (collection and circulation of nautical information, necessary to maintain existing charts and publications up to date) of the IHO CB Strategy. The meeting was informed that MSI courses had been conducted in 2017 in Barbados for members of the Meso-American and Caribbean Hydrographic Commission (MACHC) and in Fish Hoek, South Africa, for members of the North Indian Ocean Hydrographic Commission and the Southern African and Islands Hydrographic Commission. Additionally, it was noted that a further three courses were planned in 2018 for the South West Atlantic Hydrographic Commission, South West Pacific Hydrographic Commission and the Mediterranean and Black Seas Hydrographic Commission. The e-learning guided sessions for the East Atlantic Hydrographic Commission were highlighted and it was agreed that these could not replace the MSI training course, but were considered to be an ideal pre-course preparation, particularly for coastal states with no established MSI organization.

15. A critical issue for the continued success of the MSI course was the availability of qualified trainers; the Chair noted the only French instructor qualified and available to deliver the MSI course was due to retire at the end of October 2017 and this will restricted the opportunities for delivering courses in French. The lack of Spanish speaking instructors means that the course can only be delivered in English at present. It was suggested that a course could be developed to train new trainers, who had a suitable background and the necessary operational experience. It was recognised this would need to be funded and fitted into the IHO CB strategy plan and it was recommended that this issue be raised to the next CBSC meeting.

#### **Election of Chair and Vice-Chair**

16. Mr Peter Doherty, USA, was re-elected as Chair for the period 2017 to 2020 and Mr Trond Ski, Norway, was elected as vice-Chair. Two long serving members, Mr Alain Rouault (France), 7 years, and Mr Svante Håkansson (Sweden), 20 years, informed the meeting that they would be standing down from their positions as NAVAREA II and Sub-Area Ib respectively and retiring at the end of the year.

#### **WWNWS9 report to IMO NCSR5**

17. The IHO Secretariat and the Chair of the WWNWS-SC will prepare a brief report on the outcome of WWNWS9, based on this Circular Letter, for submission to IMO NCSR5, which will be held in February 2018.

#### **Next Meeting**

18. The tenth meeting of the WWNWS-SC (WWNWS10) will be held in Monaco, from 27 to 31 August 2018 and it was proposed there could be joint sessions with the Worldwide Met-Ocean Information and Warnings Service (WWMIWS) Committee of JCOMM and METAREA Coordinators. All NAVAREA Coordinators and National MSI Coordinators are encouraged to attend the meetings of the WWNWS-SC to broaden their experience and interact with each other.

19. The IHO Secretariat takes this opportunity to remind Member States with responsibilities for the NAVAREA system that they should:

- Encourage regular attendance at WWNWS-SC meetings;
- Seek or maintain close engagement with National MSI Coordinators within their NAVAREA;

- In cooperation with their respective Regional Capacity Building Coordinator, seek to identify coastal States within their NAVAREA in need of support and MSI training;
- Encourage engagement with the GMDSS Modernization CG and, through national delegations to the IMO, raise awareness of progress and impact of e-navigation on the provision of MSI; and
- Monitor progress of the establishment of contingency plans with adjacent NAVAREAs and encourage regular exercising of plans already established.

On behalf of the Secretary-General

Yours sincerely,



Mustafa IPTES  
Director