

DRAFT ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION A. ...(26)

IMO/IHO World-Wide Navigational Warning Service

THE ASSEMBLY,

RECALLING Article 15(j) of the Convention on the International Maritime Organization concerning the functions of the Assembly in relation to regulations and guidelines concerning maritime safety,

BEARING IN MIND the decisions of the XIth International Hydrographic Conference,

NOTING that the world-wide navigational warning service, previously adopted by resolution A. 706(17), as amended has successfully been in existence since 1979,

NOTING FURTHER the provisions made for the promulgation of maritime safety information by the 1988 amendments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, concerning radio-communications for the global maritime distress and safety system,

HAVING CONSIDERED the recommendations made by the Maritime Safety Committee at its [eighty-fourth] session,

1. ADOPTS the [revised/amended] IMO/IHO World-Wide Navigational Warning Service Guidance Document, as set out in annex 1 to the present resolution;
2. RECOMMENDS Governments to continue to implement the world-wide navigational warning service;
3. AUTHORIZES the Maritime Safety Committee to amend the world-wide navigational warning service, as may be necessary, in accordance with the procedure set out in annex 2 to the present resolution;
4. REVOKES resolution **A706(17)**, as amended.

ANNEX 1

**IMO/IHO WORLD-WIDE NAVIGATIONAL WARNING SERVICE GUIDANCE
DOCUMENT****1 INTRODUCTION**

1.1 The purpose of this document is to provide specific guidance for the promulgation of internationally co-ordinated NAVAREA and coastal warnings. Its guidance does not apply to purely national warning services which supplement these internationally co-ordinated services.

1.2 The original resolution of the tenth International Hydrographic Conference in 1972 recommended the formation of an *ad hoc* joint IMO/IHO Commission to study the "establishment of a co-ordinated, efficient global radio navigational warning service". Subsequently, this became a purely IHO Commission known as the Commission on Promulgation of Radio Navigational Warnings, which nevertheless consulted continuously with IMO. In its report to the eleventh International Hydrographic Conference in 1977, the Commission submitted a Draft Plan for the Establishment of a World-Wide Navigational Warning System, also referred to as Plan for the Establishment of a co-ordinated Radio Navigational Warning Service. The title *World-Wide Navigational Warning Service* or *WWNWS* used for this revised edition of the document reflects the evolution of the system from a proposed action to an effective and fully operational co-ordinated service. This revised edition reflects the evolution of the *WWNWS* since the advent of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS), as adopted by the Conference of Contracting Governments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, on the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System in November 1988, effective on 1 February 1992.

1.3 Future amendments to this guidance document will be considered formally and approved by both IHO and IMO in accordance with the procedures set out in Annex 2. Proposed amendments shall be evaluated by the IHO [*Commission on Promulgation of Radio Navigational Warnings*], which includes an *ex-officio* representative of the IMO Secretariat, prior to any extensive IHO or IMO consideration.

2 DEFINITIONS

2.1 For the purposes of the *WWNWS*, the following definitions apply:

.1 *Coastal warning* means a navigational warning promulgated as part of a numbered series by a National co-ordinator. Broadcast shall be made by the International NAVTEX service to defined NAVTEX service areas and/or by the International SafetyNET service to coastal warning areas. (In addition, Administrations may issue coastal warnings by other means).

.2 *Coastal warning area* means a unique and precisely defined sea area within a NAVAREA or Sub-Area established by a coastal state for the purpose of co-ordinating the broadcast of coastal maritime safety information through the SafetyNET system.

.3 *In-force bulletin* means a list of serial numbers of those NAVAREA, Sub-Area or coastal warnings in force issued and broadcast by the NAVAREA co-ordinator, Sub-Area co-ordinator or National co-ordinator during at least the previous six weeks.

- .4** *International NAVTEX service* means the co-ordinated broadcast and automatic reception on 518 kHz of maritime safety information by means of narrow-band direct-printing telegraphy using the English language¹
- .5** *International SafetyNET service* means the co-ordinated broadcasting and automated reception of maritime safety information via the Inmarsat EGC system, using the English language, in accordance with the provisions of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, as amended
- .6** *Local warning* means a navigational warning, broadcast by means other than NAVTEX or SafetyNET, which covers inshore waters, often within the limits of jurisdiction of a harbour or port authority.
- .7** *Maritime safety information (MSI)*² means navigational and meteorological warnings, meteorological forecasts and other urgent safety-related messages broadcast to ships.
- .8** *METAREA* means a geographical sea area³ established for the purpose of co-ordinating the broadcast of marine meteorological information. The term METAREA followed by a roman numeral may be used to identify a particular sea area. The delimitation of such areas is not related to and should not prejudice the delimitation of any boundaries between States.
- .9** *National co-ordinator* means the national authority charged with collating and issuing coastal warnings within a national area of responsibility.
- .10** *National NAVTEX service* means the broadcast and automatic reception of maritime safety information by means of narrow-band direct-printing telegraphy using frequencies other than 518 kHz and languages as decided by the Administration concerned.
- .11** *National SafetyNET service* means the broadcasting and automated reception of maritime safety information via the Inmarsat EGC system, using languages as decided by the Administration concerned.
- .12** *NAVAREA* means a geographical sea area **Error! Bookmark not defined.** established for the purpose of co-ordinating the broadcast of navigational warnings. The term NAVAREA followed by a roman numeral may be used to identify a particular sea area. The delimitation of such areas is not related to and should not prejudice the delimitation of any boundaries between States.
- .13** *NAVAREA co-ordinator* means the authority charged with co-ordinating, collating and issuing NAVAREA warnings for a designated NAVAREA.
- .14** *NAVAREA warning* means a navigational warning or in-force bulletin promulgated as part of a numbered series by a NAVAREA co-ordinator.
- .15** *Navigational warning* means a message containing urgent information relevant to safe navigation broadcast to ships in accordance with the provisions of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, as amended.
- .16** *NAVTEX co-ordinator* means the authority charged with operating and managing one or more NAVTEX stations broadcasting maritime safety information as

¹ as set out in the IMO NAVTEX Manual.

² as defined in regulation IV/2 of the 1974 SOLAS Convention, as amended.

³ which may include inland seas, lakes and waterways navigable by sea-going vessels.

part of the International NAVTEX service.

.17 *Sub-Area* means a sub-division of a NAVAREA in which a number of countries have established a co-ordinated system for the promulgation of navigational warnings. The delimitation of such areas is not related to and shall not prejudice the delimitation of any boundaries between States.

.18 *Sub-Area co-ordinator* means the authority charged with co-ordinating, collating and issuing Sub-Area warnings for a designated Sub-Area.

.19 *Sub-Area warning* means a navigational warning promulgated as part of a numbered series by a Sub-Area co-ordinator. Broadcast shall be made by the International NAVTEX service to defined NAVTEX service areas or by the International SafetyNET service (through the appropriate NAVAREA co-ordinator.)

3 NAVIGATIONAL BROADCASTS

3.1 Services

3.1.1 Two systems are used for broadcasting navigational warnings as part of MSI in accordance with the provisions of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, as amended, in the areas covered by these systems, as follows:

- .1** NAVTEX: broadcasts to coastal waters; and
- .2** SafetyNET: broadcasts which cover all the waters of the globe except for polar regions.

3.1.2 Information shall be provided for unique and precisely defined sea areas, each being served only by the most appropriate of the above systems. Although there will be some duplication to allow a vessel to change from one system to another, the majority of messages will only be broadcast on one system.

3.1.3 NAVTEX broadcasts shall be made in accordance with the standards and procedures set out in the NAVTEX Manual published by IMO.

3.1.4 SafetyNET broadcasts shall be made in accordance with the standards and procedures set out in the International SafetyNET Manual published by IMO.

3.1.5 In addition, Administrations may also provide navigational warnings by other means.

3.2 Scheduling

3.2.1 Automated systems (NAVTEX /SafetyNET)

3.2.1.1 Navigational warnings should be broadcast as soon as possible or as dictated by the nature and timing of the event. Normally, the initial broadcast should be made as follows:

- .1** for NAVTEX, at the next scheduled broadcast, unless circumstances indicate the use of procedures for VITAL or IMPORTANT warnings; and
- .2** for SafetyNET, within 30 min of receipt of original information.

3.2.1.2 Navigational warnings shall be repeated in scheduled broadcasts in accordance with the guidelines promulgated in the NAVTEX Manual and International SafetyNET Manual as appropriate.

3.2.1.3 At least two scheduled daily broadcast times are necessary to provide adequate promulgation of NAVAREA warnings. When NAVAREAs extend across more than six time zones, more than two broadcasts should be considered to ensure that warnings can be received. When using SafetyNET in lieu of NAVTEX for coastal warnings, Administrations

may need to consider an increase in the number of scheduled daily broadcasts compared with the requirement for NAVAREA warnings.

3.2.2 *Schedule changes*

3.2.2.1 Broadcast times for NAVTEX are defined by the B1 character of the station, allocated by the co-ordinating Panel on NAVTEX Services of the Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications and Search and Rescue.

3.2.2.2 Times of scheduled broadcasts under the international SafetyNET service should be co-ordinated through the International SafetyNET co-ordinating Panel.

4 **NAVIGATIONAL WARNINGS**

4.1 **General**

4.1.1 There are four types of navigational warnings: NAVAREA warnings, Sub-Area warnings, coastal warnings and local warnings. The WWNWS guidance and co-ordination are involved with only three of them:

- .1** NAVAREA warnings,
- .2** Sub-Area warnings, and
- .3** Coastal warnings.

4.1.2 Navigational warnings shall remain in force until cancelled by the originating co-ordinator. Navigational warnings should be broadcast for as long as the information is valid; however, if they are readily available to mariners by other official means, for example in Notices to Mariners, then after a period of six weeks they may no longer be broadcast.

4.1.3 The minimum information in a navigational warning which a mariner requires is “hazard” and “position”. It is usual, however, to include sufficient extra detail to allow some freedom of action in the vicinity of the hazard. This means that the message should give enough extra data for the mariner to be able to recognize the hazard and assess its effect upon his navigation.

4.1.4 If known, the duration of the event causing a navigational warning should be given in the text.

4.1.5 Some of the subjects for navigational warnings listed below (e.g. drifting ice, tsunami warnings, negative tidal surges) may also be suitable for promulgation as METAREA forecasts or warnings. In this event, appropriate co-ordination between the relevant NAVAREA co-ordinator and METAREA issuing Service must occur.

4.2 **The four types of navigational warnings are:**

4.2.1 *NAVAREA warnings*

4.2.1.1 NAVAREA warnings are concerned with the information detailed below which ocean-going mariners require for their safe navigation. This includes, in particular, new navigational hazards and failures of important aids to navigation as well as information which may require changes to planned navigational routes.

4.2.1.2 Coastal warnings are broadcast by the International NAVTEX service, or by the International SafetyNET service when implemented in lieu of NAVTEX. They are not normally rebroadcast as NAVAREA warnings unless deemed of such significance that the mariner should be aware of them before entering a NAVTEX service area. The National co-ordinator will evaluate the significance of the information for consideration as a NAVAREA warning while the NAVAREA co-ordinator will make the final determination.

4.2.1.3 The following subjects are considered suitable for broadcast as NAVAREA warnings. This list is not exhaustive and should be regarded only as a guideline. Furthermore, it presupposes that sufficiently precise information about the item has not previously been disseminated in a Notice to Mariners:

- .1 casualties to lights, fog signals and buoys affecting main shipping lanes;
- .2 the presence of dangerous wrecks in or near main shipping lanes and, if relevant, their marking;
- .3 establishment of major new aids to navigation or significant changes to existing ones when such establishment or change, might be misleading to shipping;
- .4 the presence of large unwieldy tows in congested waters;
- .5 drifting hazards (including derelict vessels, ice, mines, containers, other large items, etc.);
- .6 areas where search and rescue (SAR) and anti-pollution operations are being carried out (for avoidance of such areas);
- .7 the presence of newly discovered rocks, shoals, reefs and wrecks likely to constitute a danger to shipping, and, if relevant, their marking;
- .8 unexpected alteration or suspension of established routes;
- .9 cable- or pipe-laying activities, the towing of large submerged objects for research or exploration purposes, the employment of manned or unmanned submersibles, or other underwater operations constituting potential dangers in or near shipping lanes;
- .10 the establishment of research or scientific instruments in or near shipping lanes;
- .11 the establishment of offshore structures in or near shipping lanes;
- .12 significant malfunctioning of radio-navigation services and shore-based maritime safety information radio or satellite services;
- .13 information concerning special operations which might affect the safety of shipping, sometimes over wide areas, e.g. naval exercises, missile firings, space missions, nuclear tests, ordnance dumping zones, etc. It is important that where the degree of hazard is known, this information is included in the relevant warning. Whenever possible such warnings should be originated not less than five days in advance of the scheduled event;
- .14 acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships;
- .15 tsunamis and other natural phenomena;
- .16 World Health Organization (WHO) health advisory information; and
- .17 security related information ⁴.

4.2.2 *Sub-Area warnings*

4.2.2.1 Sub-Area warnings broadcast information which is necessary for safe navigation within a Sub-Area. They will normally include all subjects listed in 4.2.1.3 above, but will

⁴ in accordance with the ISPS code

usually affect only the Sub-Area.

4.2.3 Coastal warnings

4.2.3.1 Coastal warnings broadcast information which is necessary for safe navigation within areas seaward of the fairway buoy or pilot station, and should not be restricted to main shipping lanes. Where the area is served by NAVTEX, it should provide navigational warnings for the entire NAVTEX service area. Where the area is not served by NAVTEX, it is necessary to include all warnings relevant to the coastal waters up to 250 miles from the coast in the International SafetyNET service broadcast.

4.2.3.2 Coastal warnings should include the subjects in 4.2.1.3, and may additionally cover:

- .1 Negative tidal surges
- .2 [Other TBD]

4.2.4 Local warnings

4.2.4.1 Local warnings broadcast information which cover inshore waters, often within the limits of jurisdiction of a harbour or port authority. They are broadcast by means other than NAVTEX or SafetyNET, and supplement coastal warnings by giving detailed information within inshore waters on aspects which the ocean-going ship normally does not require.

5 MESSAGE REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Guidance

5.1.1 Operational guidance for handling and formatting navigational warnings is given in the Joint IMO/IHO/WMO Manual on Maritime Safety Information, the NAVTEX Manual and the International SafetyNET Manual.

5.2 Numbering

5.2.1 Navigational warnings in each series shall be consecutively numbered throughout the calendar year, commencing with 0001 at 0000 UTC on 01 January.

5.2.2 Navigational warnings should, as a general rule, be transmitted in reverse numerical order on scheduled broadcasts.

5.3 Language

5.3.1 All NAVAREA, Sub-Area and coastal warnings shall be broadcast only in English in the International NAVTEX and SafetyNET services.

5.3.2 In addition to the required broadcasts in English, NAVAREA, Sub-Area and coastal warnings may be broadcast in a national language using national NAVTEX and SafetyNET services and/or other means.

5.3.3 Local warnings may be issued in the national language and/or in English.

5.4 “No warnings” message

5.4.1 When there are no navigational warnings to be disseminated at a scheduled broadcast time, a brief message shall be transmitted to identify the broadcast and advise the mariner that there is no navigational warning message traffic on hand.

6 CO-ORDINATOR RESOURCES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 NAVAREA co-ordinator resources

6.1.1 The NAVAREA co-ordinator must have:

- .1 the expertise and information sources of a well established national

hydrographic service;

- .2 effective communications, e.g. telephone, e-mail, facsimile, internet, telex, etc., with Sub-Area and National co-ordinators in the NAVAREA, with other NAVAREA co-ordinators, and with other data providers; and
- .3 access to broadcast systems for transmission to the entire NAVAREA. As a minimum, this shall include those described in paragraph 3.1.1. Reception should normally be possible at least 700 miles beyond the limit of the NAVAREA (24 hours' sailing by a fast ship).

6.2 NAVAREA co-ordinator responsibilities

6.2.1 The NAVAREA co-ordinator must:

- .1 endeavour to be informed of all events that could significantly affect the safety of navigation within the NAVAREA;
- .2 assess all information immediately upon receipt in the light of expert knowledge for relevance to navigation in the NAVAREA;
- .3 select information for broadcast in accordance with the guidance given in paragraph 4.2.1 above;
- .4 draft NAVAREA warning messages in accordance with the Joint IMO/IHO/WMO Manual on Maritime Safety Information;
- .5 direct and control the broadcast of NAVAREA warning messages, in accordance with the provisions of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, as amended;
- .6 forward NAVAREA warnings and relevant associated information which may require wider promulgation directly to adjacent NAVAREA co-ordinators and/or others as appropriate, using the quickest possible means;
- .7 ensure that NAVAREA warnings which remain in force for more than six weeks are made available immediately to NAVAREA co-ordinators, other authorities and mariners in general, as appropriate.
- .8 ensure that information concerning all navigational warning subject areas listed in paragraph 4.2.1.3 that may not require a NAVAREA warning within their own NAVAREA is forwarded immediately to the appropriate National and NAVAREA co-ordinators affected by the event.
- .9 broadcast in-force bulletins not less than once per week at a regularly scheduled time.
- .10 promulgate the cancellation of NAVAREA warnings which are no longer valid;
- .11 act as the central point of contact on matters relating to navigational warnings within the NAVAREA;
- .12 promote and oversee the use of established international standards and practices in the promulgation of navigational warnings throughout the NAVAREA;
- .13 when notified by the authority designated to act on reports of piracy and armed robbery against ships, arrange for the broadcast of a suitable NAVAREA warning. Additionally, keep the national or regional piracy control centre

informed of long-term broadcast action(s);

- .14 when notified by the appropriate authorities, arrange for the broadcast of suitable NAVAREA warnings to promulgate World Health Organization (WHO) health advisory information; tsunami; and security related information.
- .15 monitor the broadcasts which they originate to ensure that the messages have been correctly broadcast;
- .16 co-ordinate preliminary discussions between Member States seeking to establish NAVTEX services and neighbouring Administrations, prior to formal application; and
- .17 contribute to the development of international standards and practices through attendance and participation in relevant IMO, IHO and WMO fora, e.g. COMSAR, CPRNW, ETMSS, appropriate regional conferences etc.

6.3 Sub-Area co-ordinator resources

6.3.1 The Sub-Area co-ordinator must have, or have access to:

- .1 the expertise and information sources of a well established national hydrographic service;
- .2 effective communications, e.g. telephone, e-mail, facsimile, internet, telex, etc., with National co-ordinators in the Sub-Area, with the NAVAREA co-ordinator, and with other data providers; and
- .3 access to broadcast systems for transmission to the entire Sub-Area

6.4 Sub-Area co-ordinator responsibilities

6.4.1 The Sub-Area co-ordinator must:

- .1 endeavour to be informed of all events that could significantly affect the safety of navigation within the Sub-Area;
- .2 assess all information immediately upon receipt in the light of expert knowledge for relevance to navigation in the Sub-Area;
- .3 select information for broadcast in accordance with the guidance given in paragraph 4.2.1 above;
- .4 draft Sub-Area warning messages in accordance with the Joint IMO/IHO/WMO Manual on Maritime Safety Information;
- .5 direct and control the broadcast of Sub-Area warning messages, in accordance with the provisions of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, as amended;
- .6 forward Sub-Area warnings and relevant associated information which may require wider promulgation directly to their own NAVAREA co-ordinator using the quickest possible means;
- .7 broadcast in-force bulletins not less than once per week at a regularly scheduled time.
- .8 promulgate the cancellation of Sub-Area warnings which are no longer valid;
- .9 act as the central point of contact on matters relating to navigational warnings within the Sub-Area;
- .10 promote the use of established international standards and practices in the

promulgation of navigational warnings within the Sub-Area

- .11** monitor the broadcasts which they originate to ensure that the messages have been correctly broadcast; and
- .12** contribute to the development of international standards and practices through attendance and participation in relevant IMO, IHO and WMO fora, e.g. COMSAR, CPRNW, ETMSS, appropriate regional conferences etc.

6.5 National co-ordinator resources

6.5.1 The national co-ordinator must have:

- .1** established sources of information relevant to the safety of navigation within national waters;
- .2** effective communications, e.g. telephone, e-mail, facsimile, internet, telex, etc., with the NAVAREA/Sub-Area co-ordinator and adjacent National co-ordinators; and
- .3** access to broadcast systems for transmission to their area of national responsibility.

6.6 National co-ordinator responsibilities

6.6.1 The national co-ordinator must:

- .1** endeavour to be informed of all events that could significantly affect the safety of navigation within their area of national responsibility.
- .2** assess all information immediately upon receipt in the light of expert knowledge for relevance to navigation in their area of national responsibility;
- .3** select information for broadcast in accordance with the guidance given in paragraph 4.2.1 above;
- .4** draft coastal warning messages in accordance with the Joint IMO/IHO/WMO Manual on Maritime Safety Information;
- .5** direct and control the broadcast of coastal warning messages, in accordance with the provisions of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, as amended;
- .6** forward coastal warning messages and relevant associated information which may require wider promulgation directly to their NAVAREA co-ordinator and/or adjacent National co-ordinators as appropriate, using the quickest possible means;
- .7** broadcast in-force bulletins not less than once per week at a regularly scheduled time.
- .8** promulgate the cancellation of coastal warnings which are no longer valid;
- .9** act as the central point of contact on matters relating to navigational warnings within their area of national responsibility;
- .10** promote the use of established international standards and practices in the promulgation of navigational warnings within their area of national responsibility; and
- .11** monitor the broadcasts which they originate to ensure that the messages have been correctly broadcast.

ANNEX 2

***IMO PROCEDURE FOR AMENDING THE WORLD-WIDE NAVIGATIONAL
WARNING SERVICE***

- 1** Proposed amendments to the world-wide navigational warning service should be submitted to the Maritime Safety Committee for evaluation.
- 2** Amendments to the service should normally come into force at intervals of approximately two years or at such longer periods as determined by the Maritime Safety Committee at the time of adoption. Amendments adopted by the Maritime Safety Committee will be notified to all concerned, will provide at least 12 months notification and will come into force on 1 January of the following year.
- 3** The agreement of the International Hydrographic Organization and the active participation of other bodies should be sought according to the nature of the proposed amendments.
- 4** When the proposals for amendment have been examined in substance, the Maritime Safety Committee will entrust the Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications and Search and Rescue with the ensuing editorial tasks.
- 5** The NAVAREA schedule of broadcast times and frequencies, not being an integral part of the service and being subject to frequent changes, will not be subject to the amendment procedures.

Appendix

Insert diagram

Geographical areas for co-ordinating and promulgating NAVAREA warnings