

NAVTEX Panel Report

Submitted by Chair, IMO International NAVTEX Co-ordinating Panel

SUMMARY

Executive Summary: This report provides a summary of the current issues being addressed by the IMO International NAVTEX Co-ordinating Panel and its actions and activities since WWNWS Meeting 2.

Action to be taken: Paragraphs 4 & 7

Related documents: None

INTRODUCTION

1. This report covers the period since WWNWS 2 and outlines:
 - .1 changes to the NAVTEX infrastructure during the period, and notification of planned changes;
 - .2 current operational issues associated with the NAVTEX service world-wide; and
 - .3 other wider issues associated with the promulgation of Maritime Safety Information (MSI) with which members of the Panel are involved.

NAVTEX INFRASTRUCTURE

2. Activities and developments during the period since the last report to WWNWS-SC are detailed below in respect to specific NAVAREAs (there has been no activity to report for NAVAREAs VI, VII, X, XII, XIII, XIV, XVII and XVIII):

.1 NAVAREA I.

- .1.1 Further to the request by **Norway** reported to WWNWS2 concerning the establishment of a new NAVTEX station at Jeloya, the Panel has received agreement from the **Russian Federation** to the reallocation of B₁ transmitter identification characters of Murmansk from [C] to [K] and of Arkangel'sk from [F] to [L]. A final date for this changeover has yet to be confirmed. As soon as this has been accomplished, the Panel will begin the next stage of co-ordination, including reallocating a number of transmitter identification characters within NAVAREA I and establishing agreement over the limits of the new NAVTEX service area for the Jeloya station in consultation with **Norway** and **Sweden**.

.2 NAVAREA II.

- .2.1 Further to the plans of **Ivory Coast** to install a new NAVTEX station at Abidjan reported to WWNWS2, the NAVAREA II Co-ordinator has continued to coordinate the developments in this area, and has obtained agreement between **Ivory Coast** and

Ghana to establish a common station to improve NAVTEX coverage along the North coast of the Gulf of Guinea.

- .2.2 Discussions to establish formal agreements on NAVTEX service areas between **France, Portugal** and **Spain** in NAVAREA II have continued throughout the year.

.3 NAVAREA III.

- .3.1 In July 2010, **Italy** announced trials of their planned new stations at La Maddalena, Sellia Marina and Mondolfo. The Panel welcomed this news and also allocated new B1 transmitter identification characters for use on 490 kHz from these stations. Full Operational Capacity was planned for 2011 and although the change over to the new stations is ready, **Italy** and **France** are currently engaged in discussions about the volume and content of messages, along with the methods to be used to exchange MSI for promulgation within their newly proposed service areas.

- .3.2 In March 2011, **Tunisia** informed the Panel and **Italy**, that they were unable to begin NAVTEX transmissions from Kelibia. It was agreed that Italy will continue to cover the Tunisian service area utilizing [T] for the foreseeable future, even when the rest of their new stations become fully commissioned.

- .3.3 The current situation in **Libya** makes it impossible to predict when their new NAVTEX station (which has yet to be installed) will become operational. Until such time, the Maltese administration has been encouraged to promulgate MSI via NAVTEX coastal warnings for this area, along with the provision of NAVAREA III Messages via SafetyNET.

- .3.4 Following COMSAR 15, **Azerbaijan** submitted a request to the Panel for a B₁ transmitter identification character for a new station on Jiloy Island in the Caspian Sea. Whilst it is clear that a new station at this location will fill a strategic gap in the current NAVTEX coverage of the Caspian Sea, the co-ordination required for a station as part of the International NAVTEX Service on 518 kHz in this area presents two unique problems already known to the WWNWS Sub-committee:

- The Caspian Sea is currently not assigned to a NAVAREA within the World-Wide Navigational Warning Service.
- The full requirements of the 1974 SOLAS Convention, as amended, do not apply to vessels sailing in the Caspian Sea. (Ref CPRNW10/3/4/4 dated 21 August 2008).

- .3.5 Notwithstanding these obstacles, the Panel has recommended that Azerbaijan first agree the limits NAVTEX service areas between the **Russian Federation, Iran** and themselves, ahead of a suitable transmitter identification character which fits in with the overall co-ordination in the Mediterranean Sea being allocated.

.4 NAVAREA IV

- .4.1 Two new NAVTEX stations have been established in **Greenland**, one on the West Coast at Upernavik (Disko Island) [I] and the other on the South Coast at Simiutaq (Cape Farewell area) [M]. Full agreement on new service areas for these stations was quickly and effectively completed between **Denmark/Greenland** and **Canada**, allowing trial status to be declared for both transmitters by the end of August 2011. A consequential minor change to the existing service area of **Iceland** affecting the

South Eastern tip of **Greenland**, is currently being co-ordinated by NAVAREA I Co-ordinator.

.5 **NAVAREA V.**

- .5.1 As announced at WNWNS2, Brazil is actively considering the possibility of establishing an international NAVTEX service which could increase the efficiency of promulgating maritime safety information for Coastal Warnings in the approaches to their major ports, in addition to their current SafetyNET Coastal Warnings.

.6 **NAVAREA VIII**

- .6.1 **India** has announced plans to completely overhaul their international NAVTEX service and establish a comprehensive new shore-based infrastructure of seven NAVTEX transmitters consisting of three stations on the West Coast of India, three on the East Coast of India and one in the Andaman and Nicobar Islands.
- .6.2 **Sri Lanka** is also considering the establishment of a new NAVTEX station on the South East of the island which would considerably improve the availability of MSI for vessels passing the Southern tip of Sri Lanka on route to the Far East and Australasia.
- .6.3 The Panel has produced and distributed a draft proposal for possible NAVTEX service areas for the planned stations for India and Sri Lanka to consider.

.7 **NAVAREA IX**

- .7.1 The NAVTEX Stations in **Saudi Arabia** at Jeddah and Dammam have remained non-operational throughout the year. At the request of the IMO NAVTEX Co-ordinating Panel, the Chairman of International SafetyNET Panel suggested a contingency plan for any important maritime safety information to be forwarded by Saudi Arabia to the NAVAREA IX Co-ordinator. This data will then be promulgated via EGC SafetyNET broadcasts until the situation with the Saudi Arabian NAVTEX Stations is resolved. Saudi Arabia welcomed this initiative and agreed to implement the necessary procedures for this to happen.

.8 **NAVAREA XI**

- .8.1 In October 2010, the Panel allocated additional B₁ transmitter identification characters for use on 490 kHz and 4209.5 kHz by **Vietnam** to assist them in expanding their National NAVTEX services in their local language.

.9 **NAVAREA XV**

- .9.1 The topic of national language broadcasts on 518 kHz by **Chile** continues to be under discussion with the Panel.

.10 **NAVAREA XVI**

- .10.1 **Peru** reported in October 2010 that all three of their NAVTEX stations were fully operational again.

.11 NAVAREA XIX

- .11.1 **Norway** informed the Panel of amendments to their original plans to use NAVTEX frequency 4209.5 kHz in NAVAREA XIX. MSI will now be promulgated via HF NBDP frequency 8416.5 kHz.

.12 NAVAREAs XX and XXI

- .12.1 The **Russian Federation** has responded positively to the Panel's suggestions for a sequence of B₁ transmitter identification characters for the existing NAVTEX stations at Murmansk, Arkangel'sk and Tiksi, as well as the six other planned stations along the Northern Sea Route.

CURRENT OPERATIONAL ISSUES

Revision of the NAVTEX Manual

3. The IHO World-Wide Navigational Warning Service Sub-Committee completed the revision of the NAVTEX Manual, which was agreed by MSC 89 and published as MSC.1/Circ.1403. The Committee decided that the revised text of the NAVTEX Manual will come into force on 1 January 2013.

Misalignment of NAVTEX starting times with B₁ transmitter identification codes

4. A study of all the operational transmission times for NAVTEX broadcasts contained in the IMO GMDSS Master Plan has identified a number of discrepancies between the transmission times of actual broadcasts, with those specifically laid-out in the NAVTEX Manual for each B₁ transmitter identification character (A-X). In order for the Panel to effectively co-ordinate the international NAVTEX service, it is important that all administrations ensure that their NAVTEX transmission times conform with Figure 3 – Scheme for allocation of transmission schedules by the Organisation, in the 2005 Edition of the NAVTEX Manual (Table 2 – NAVTEX Transmission start times, in the draft revision of the 2011 Edition of the NAVTEX Manual). The Panel has therefore requested adherence by administrations to the appropriate transmission times in accordance to the NAVTEX Manual over the next year, and will report on the progress of this initiative to COMSAR 16.

The **Russian Federation** has already announced that their station at Novorossiysk has changed its time slots to conform to the matrix in the NAVTEX Manual for [A], instead of the times for [S], which it had originally been using. This is seen as a very positive beginning for the initiative and the Panel is hopeful for a similar proactive approach to what has been highlighted here. To this end, the Panel would like to specifically call upon the offices of each NAVAREA Co-ordinator to encourage the respective administrations in their NAVAREAs to make the necessary changes of their own accord and inform the Panel as soon as possible.

WIDER ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROMULGATION OF MARITIME SAFETY INFORMATION

5. The NAVTEX Panel continues to be active in a number of areas associated with improving standards and developing MSI services, including:
- i) Contributing to the work of the joint IMO/IHO/WMO CG on Arctic MSI services.
 - ii) The Secretary of the Panel has continued to act as Secretary of the IHO Working Group tasked with reviewing and updating all of the joint IMO/IHO/WMO maritime safety information documentation.

- iii) Since WWNWS2, Panel members have contributed to the IHO Capacity Building Programme MSI training courses for the benefit of the South-West Pacific Hydrographic Commission (SWPHC) held in Australia and for the joint benefit of the South West Atlantic Hydrographic Commission (SWAtHC), South-East Pacific Hydrographic Commission (SEPHC) and the MESO American & Caribbean Sea Hydrographic Commission (MACHC), held in Brazil.

Having the “key players” available from the various NAVAREAs covered by these courses added an extra dimension to the proceedings and further enhanced the success of each event. This provided the opportunity for the instructors to offer practical advice and guidance on best practices to the NAVAREA Co-ordinators, in conjunction with explaining the basic elements of establishing National procedures for the promulgation of MSI to the prospective National Co-ordinators.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

- 7. The Sub-Committee is invited to note the information provided.