MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE
86th session
Agenda item 23

MSC 86/23/7
23 February 2009
Original: ENGLISH

WORK PROGRAMME

Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation

New symbols for AIS-AtoN

Submitted by Japan

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1   The following proposal is submitted in accordance with the Guidelines on the organization and method of work of the Committees (MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.2), taking into account the High-level Action Plan for the Organization and priorities for the 2008-2009 biennium (resolution A.990(25)) and Circular letter No.2831 regarding the new format for IMO documents.

Background

2   Since the AIS Aids to Navigation (AIS-AtoN) is effective for the promotion of the safety of navigation, many countries have been developing the practical use or the consideration of the practical use of the AIS-AtoN. However, the AIS based service includes new information concept, such as virtual AtoNs, which is not contained in existing AtoNs; therefore, such a new service should be defined to avoid confusion of mariners on board.

3   Japan established a study committee on the operation of the AIS-AtoN that consisted of authorities and experts on AIS and the study committee developed a draft of new symbols for AIS-AtoN taking into consideration of the users' convenience. The draft is attached in the annex to this document.

4   Japan proposed it to IALA e-Navigation Committee to consider the new symbols for AIS-AtoN. The Committee recognized and supported the necessity of the new symbols and has also encouraged Japan to propose the draft to the IMO's Maritime Safety Committee as a new work programme for the Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation, since the new symbols need to be internationally standardized.

Scope of the proposal

5   To develop new symbols for AIS-AtoN taking user-recognizability into consideration and to amend SN/Circ.243 and, if necessary, related documents.

Need or compelling need

6   The AIS-AtoN is expected its utilization since it is useful and effective for providing accurate location of floating AtoNs, setting emergency wreckage marks, etc., in addition to reduction of establishment and maintenance cost of AtoN, and ultimately for the safety of navigation.

7   There are currently two symbols of AIS-AtoN defined by SN/Circ.243, the Real AIS-AtoNs and the Virtual AIS-AtoNs. However, navigators and mariners cannot easily and immediately recognize the types of AtoNs with only these symbols. Especially, since the virtual AtoN is a totally new one without any physical AtoN on its position, the confusion of navigators and mariners should be avoided in its utilization.

8   Consequently, an amendment to SN/Circ.243, which defines the symbols of AIS-AtoNs, is indispensable in order to make the navigators and mariners clearly and promptly recognize the roles of the AIS-AtoNs, since there are needs of new symbols which match the purposes of the AtoNs and the improvement of the user-recognizability.

Analysis of the issues involved, having regard to both the costs to the maritime industry, and global legislative and administrative burdens

9   The symbols should be internationally standardized. There is a possibility of improving navigational displays for the presentation of the symbols; however, no immediate cost is expected to the maritime industry since the proposal only develops the symbols but not facilities.

Benefits which would accrue from the proposal

10   The new symbols can timely and appropriately provide the accurate information of the AIS-AtoN to ships equipped with AIS and, hence, significantly contribute to the safety of navigation and the marine environment protection.

11   Developing a guidance of the new symbols for AIS-AtoN will promote the use of AIS-AtoN information and enhance the effectiveness of its related systems.

Priority and target completion date

12   AIS-AtoN has already become utilizable on navigational displays of radar or ECDIS by resolution MSC.191(79) and, therefore, the development of the new symbols should be highly prioritized in order to enable its users to effectively utilize the AIS-AtoN without confusion and to secure the safety of navigation with the target completion date in 2013.

Is the subject of the proposal within the scope of IMO's objectives?

13   The proposal is within the scope of the IMO's objectives, as it aims to enhance usability of AIS and, thereby, to ensure the safety of navigation.

How is the proposed item related to the scope of the Strategic Plan for the Organization and fits into the High-level Action Plan?

14   Since the proposal is directly related to standards for shipborne navigational aids, the subject is within item 5.2.4 of the High-level Action Plan.

Do adequate standards exist?

15   The existing SN/Circ.243 of Guidelines for the Presentation of Navigation-related Symbols, Terms and Abbreviations could be a base of standard for the consideration.

Do the benefits justify the proposed action?

16   The benefits described in paragraphs 10 and 11 justify the proposed action.

Estimation of the number of sessions needed to complete the work

17   Four sessions of the NAV Sub-Committee starting at its fifty-sixth session (NAV 56) are necessary, principally to provide time to liaise with the relevant organizations, i.e. IALA, IEC, IHO, ISO, ITU, etc., and to draft the amendment to SN/Circ.243.
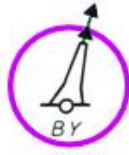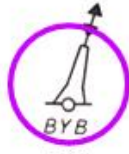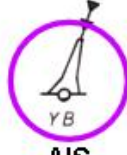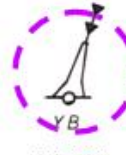
Action requested of the Committee

18   The Committee is invited to include this proposal in the agenda of the NAV Sub-Committee as a new work programme item on the development of new symbols for AIS-AtoN.

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ANNEX

Draft of New Symbols for AIS-ATON

No.1

Fig No	Type of ATON		Real AIS-ATON		Virtual AIS-ATON		Remarks
			Floating	Fixed	Floating	Fixed	
1	Cardinal Marks	North Cardinal Marks	AIS	AIS	V-AIS	V-AIS	
2		East Cardinal Marks	AIS	AIS	V-AIS	V-AIS	
3		South Cardinal Marks	AIS	AIS	V-AIS	V-AIS	
4		West Cardinal Marks	AIS	AIS	V-AIS	V-AIS	
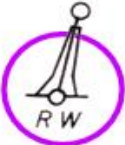
Draft of New Symbols for AIS-ATON

No.2

Fig No	Type of ATON		Real AIS-ATON		Virtual AIS-ATON		Remarks
			Floating	Fixed	Floating	Fixed	
5	Lateral Marks (Region B)	Port hand Marks	AIS	AIS	V-AIS	V-AIS	
6		Starboard hand Marks	AIS	AIS	V-AIS	V-AIS	
7		Preferred channel to Port	AIS	AIS	V-AIS	V-AIS	
8		Preferred channel to Starboard	AIS	AIS	V-AIS	V-AIS	

Draft of New Symbols for AIS-ATON

No.3

Fig No	Type of ATON	Real AIS-ATON		Virtual AIS-ATON	
		Floating	Fixed	Floating	Fixed
9	Isolated danger Marks	AIS	AIS	V-AIS	V-AIS
10	Safe water Marks	AIS		V-AIS	
11	Special Marks	AIS	AIS	V-AIS	V-AIS
12	Lighthouses	AIS	AIS	V-AIS	V-AIS