

**INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC
ORGANIZATION**



**ORGANISATION HYDROGRAPHIQUE
INTERNATIONALE**

Report of the World-Wide Navigational Warning Service Sub-Committee
(WWNWS SC) to the IRCC.

Submitted by Chairman: Mr. Peter M. Doherty - USA

The WWNWS SC (formerly CPRNW and PRNW) monitors and guides the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO)/ International Maritime Organization (IMO) World-Wide Navigational Warning Service (WWNWS) which includes NAVAREA and coastal warnings. The WWNWS SC is tasked to study and propose new methods to enhance the provision of navigational warnings to mariners at sea, to facilitate the implementation of the major changes in procedures for disseminating navigational warnings and to provide appropriate guidance to concerned IHO Member State Representatives to further the evolution of the WWNWS.

The 1st meeting of the WWNWS SC was held at the IHO in Monaco from 18 – 22 August 2009. The meeting was attended by 24 representatives from the following 14 Member States: Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, France, Greece, India, Iran, Norway, Peru, Spain, Turkey, United Kingdom and United States of America. These included 11 NAVAREA Co-ordinators, an observer from the WMO, and a representative from Inmarsat. Two representatives from Iridium also attended to give a presentation regarding Iridium's satellite service capabilities. Major agenda items for this meeting included: NAVAREA Assessments, WWNWS expansion into the Arctic Ocean, WWNWS Guidance Document Review, an IMO report, a WMO report and emerging technologies within safety of navigation services.

The full report of the meeting and all meeting documents are available from the WWNWS section of the IHO web site: <http://www.ihp-ohi.net/english/committees-wg/ircc/wwnws.html>

Some of the major initiatives of the WWNWS over the past 5 years include:

WWNWS Documentation Review/Update

The WWNWS relies on various IMO/IHO documents to provide guidance for the promulgation of internationally coordinated NAVAREA and Coastal warnings. Further, the WWNWS systems used for dissemination of the maritime safety information, SafetyNET and NAVTEX respectively, each have their own guidance documents. The WWNWS SC, being aware that there were discontinuities between various resolutions, documents and publications being used within the WWNWS, established a WG in 2005 with the intention of completing a holistic review of all WWNWS documentation and bring them into alignment.

The decision was taken for a top down review. The progress so far is as follows:

- IMO Assembly resolutions A.705(17), as amended, "Recommendation on the Promulgation of Maritime Safety Information" and A.706(17) as amended, "IMO/IHO World-Wide Navigational Warning Service Guidance Document". These were

submitted to and approved by COMSAR 12 in 2008. They were adopted by MSC later that year and came into force on 1 January 2010.

- Joint IMO/IHO/WMO Manual on Maritime Safety Information was submitted to and approved by COMSAR 13 in 2009 and adopted later that year by the MSC. It will come into force on 1 January 2011.
- The IMO International SafetyNET Manual was submitted to and approved by COMSAR 14 in 2010. It will be considered for adoption by the MSC in May 2010 and if adopted is expected to come into force on 1 January 2012. Alongside the review of the SafetyNET Manual the WG also reviewed IMO resolutions A.664(16) - Performance Standards for Enhanced Group Call (EGC) Equipment, and A.701(17) - Carriage of Inmarsat Enhanced Group Call (EGC) SafetyNET Receivers under the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS). A new MSC resolution to replace A.664(16) was approved by COMSAR 14 and is up for adoption by the MSC in May. It was concluded that A.701(17) was obsolete and the IMO Secretariat were invited by COMSAR to take the necessary action to have it deleted.
- The IHO WNWNS Document Review WG has now prepared a draft revised IMO NAVTEX Manual. This will be considered further at the WNWNS2 meeting in August 2010 before submission to IHO Member States and with the intention to submit to COMSAR 15 in March 2011, adoption by MSC in May 2011 and entry into force on 1 January 2013.

Although the work continues, the success of the WG to date can be directly attributed to the dedicated support and coordinated efforts of many experts and authorities involved with the dissemination of Maritime Safety Information. The WNWNS SC is extremely grateful for those individuals within the IHO, to include specifically the NAVAREA Coordinators, as well as members of the IMO, WMO, IMSO and INMARSAT for their contributions and support towards this project. A special note of appreciation is given to Mr. Guy Beale – UKHO, who has assisted this process as the WG Secretary and as the primary document editor for outstanding results.

Expansion of the WNWNS into the Arctic Ocean

The IMO/IHO recognized the increased use of the Arctic region by all elements of the maritime community; commercial, military and scientific, and the need for the Arctic Ocean to be respected as the other temperate oceans and navigated with similar concern for the presence of hazards to navigation. Accordingly, the IMO approved the establishment of a Joint IMO/IHO/WMO CG on Arctic MSI Services, to address the expansion of the WNWNS into the Arctic waters. As the agreement of the IHO is sought in proposed amendments to the WNWNS, the SC has taken an active and leading role in the review and endorsement of this important issue. Much work has been completed to date including formal IMO approval of the designation of Canada, Norway and the Russian Federation as NAVAREA/METAREA Authorities, area boundary limits, dissemination services, updates to the Inmarsat System Definition Manual, issuance of SafetyNET certificates, SafetyNET and NAVTEX scheduling timeframes, and MSI training.

The next stage in this implementation process includes a trial and test period of services. Effective 01 July 2010, an International SafetyNET Service for broadcasting navigational warnings and meteorological warnings and forecasts in the English language will be declared to be in an “Initial Operational Capability” (IOC) within the Arctic region. During the IOC

period, these Arctic NAVAREA/METAREAs will be providing navigational warnings and meteorological warnings and forecasts on an intermittent and test basis. The broadcasting of SafetyNET messages to the new Arctic NAVAREA/METAREAs will be addressed to rectangular area(s) until SafetyNET receiver modifications (inclusion of the new Arctic NAVAREA/METAREAs boundary limits and their identification) are in place. Reception of rectangular addressed messages should be automatic providing the ship's position is inside the addressed area. However, mariners will be advised to check their manufacturer's operation manuals to obtain information on the setting of their EGC receivers to receive relevant SafetyNET messages.

On 01 June 2011, the IOC service will transition to "Full Operational Capability" (FOC). At this time, MSI will be provided to the Arctic community on a full time service basis. Being a milestone in the delivery of MSI, the WNWNS is of the view that this declaration of full operational capability in the Arctic merits a significant recognition by the IMO, IHO and WMO. Discussions are in place between those organizations to use IMO COMSAR 15 as the most appropriate venue to recognize this achievement.

Procedures for the promulgation of Maritime Safety Information concerning acts of piracy

At COMSAR 14 a paper presented by the International Mobile Satellite Organization (IMSO) proposed the issue of an MSC Circular on "Guideline on operational procedures for the promulgation of Maritime Safety Information concerning acts of piracy and piracy counter-measure operations". These operational procedures provide specific additional guidance for naval and military authorities involved in the gathering and interpretation of information on acts of piracy and piracy counter-measure operations, and NAVAREA or National Coordinators within the WNWNS who are responsible for originating the broadcasts.

Because Maritime Safety Information (MSI) concerning acts of piracy and piracy counter-measure operations is broadcast through the World-Wide Navigational Warning Service (WWNWS), the Chairman of the WNWNS SC was asked to lead the discussion in this matter and come up with an immediate solution until the MSC Circular is approved.

Accordingly, it was agreed at COMSAR that Naval or military authorities wishing to provide information on acts of piracy and piracy counter-measure operations for broadcast under these procedures shall nominate a Military Navigational Warning Coordinator (MNWC) for all matters related to the release and coordination of information for broadcast. Further, it was agreed that messages concerning piracy and piracy counter-measures for input into the WNWNS shall be routed through the Chairman of the IHO WNWNS SC. The Chairman of the IHO WNWNS SC will review messages for format compliance in accordance with the Joint MSI Manual and then forward the approved text to the relevant NAVAREA or National Coordinator(s) for immediate broadcast. To date, over 85 messages have been coordinated through this process with excellent cooperation and results displayed by all.

The text of this MSC Circular will be submitted to MSC87 in May 2010 for adoption. The text approved by COMSAR is available in English, French and Spanish from the WNWNS page of the IHO web site.

Maritime Safety Information Capacity Building Training Course

In 2005 the WNWNS SC, in conjunction with support from the IHO Capacity Building Sub-Committee developed a comprehensive training course to provide practical guidance for those countries within a RHC who are concerned with drafting navigational warnings or with the issuance of Maritime Safety Information (MSI) for the high seas. This course is aimed at the operators who are likely to receive information and is designed to ensure that they can assess what merits transmission as MSI and how to get that information to the right authority for transmission. The course also plays an important role in fostering the introduction and communication between operators within a region. The course is presented on an annual basis at a selected RHC for a period of 3 days which includes 2 days of practical exercises. The course is supported with instructors from the United States National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, the United Kingdom's Hydrographic Office and the NAVAREA Coordinator within the RHC. The most recently held course for 2010 was in Namibia for the Southern Africa and Islands Hydrographic Commission. This was the 6th MSI training course held under the direction of the WNWNS SC. Previous courses have been held (in chronological order) at the following locations: Jamaica for the MESO American and Caribbean Hydrographic Commission, in Mozambique for the Southern African and Islands Hydrographic Commission, in Spain for the Mediterranean and Black Seas Regional Hydrographic Commission, in Ghana for the Eastern Atlantic Hydrographic Commission, and in Oman for the North Indian Ocean Hydrographic Commission and the ROPME Sea Area Hydrographic Commission.

Of note, the lack of participation by more IHO member states affiliated to the specific RHC's continues to be of concern. Despite considerable efforts of the IHO and the Regional authorities supporting these courses, issues with visa problems and travel requirements have had an effect on the numbers of those in attendance. Lessons need to be learned in relation to travel requirements being made by the students much further in advance to avoid these issues.

In closing, the WNWNS SC is extremely pleased with the results of this training effort and looks forward to continuing its support as the course is rotated to other Regional Hydrographic Commissions within the IHO. The course feedback from each session on all aspects relating to the training course, confirms the overall success of this training mission.

WWNWS CD-ROM

The WNWNS SC designed its own "WWNWS CD-ROM" as an effective way to keep all members informed on the progress of the work of the Sub-Committee. The CD provides each NAVAREA Coordinator a common platform for the multitude of historical guidance documents, manuals, publications, diagrams, meeting minutes, points of contacts, websites and major initiatives since WNWNS inception, including additional MSI source from the IHO, IMO and WMO. Each delegate is provided an updated copy of the CD_ROM at the Annual meeting. The Chairman requests that all members review the content of the CD-ROM as it is a standing agenda item for delegates to provide any updates, comments, and additional information they deem worthy of inclusion.

Next Meeting

The WNWNS SC will hold its next meeting (WWNWS2) in Sydney, Australia from 9 - 13 August 2010. Meeting information is made available from the IHO web site.