



IHB File No. S3/3075

CIRCULAR LETTER 24/2015
16 March 2015

**REPORT ON THE 2ND SESSION OF THE IMO SUB-COMMITTEE
ON NAVIGATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND SEARCH AND RESCUE (NCSR 2)**

References:

- A. IHO CL 50/2014 dated 9 July - *Report on the 1st Session of the IMO Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications, and Search and Rescue;*
- B. IHO CL 78/2014 dated 1 December - *Report on the 94th Session of the IMO Maritime Safety Committee;*
- C. IHO CL 20/2015 dated 6 March - *Contribution to the implementation of E-Navigation - Proposed Submission to the 95th Session of the IMO Maritime Safety Committee.*

Dear Hydrographer,

1. As announced in Reference A, the 2nd session of the Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR 2) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) was held at the IMO Headquarters in London, United Kingdom, from 9 to 13 March 2015. The IHO was represented by Director Gilles Bessero, Assistant Director David Wyatt, Mr Peter Doherty, the Chair of the World-Wide Navigational Warning Service Sub-Committee (WWNWS-SC) and Mr Christopher Janus, Branch Chief, NGA Maritime Watch - NAVAREA IV/XII. Representatives from eleven Hydrographic Offices (Brazil, China, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Netherlands, Poland, UK, and USA) also attended the meeting as part of their national delegations.

2. The agenda for NCSR 2 included the following items of interest to IHO Member States:

- Agenda Item 3: Routeing of ships, ship reporting and related matters;
- Agenda Item 6: E-navigation strategy implementation plan;
- Agenda Item 8: Analysis of developments in maritime radiocommunications systems and technology;
- Agenda Item 10: Further development of the GMDSS master plan on shore-based facilities;
- Agenda Item 11: Guidelines on Maritime Safety Information (MSI);
- Agenda Item 18: Amendments to the IAMSAR Manual;
- Agenda Item 22: Any Other Business.

The relevant discussions are summarized hereinafter.

Agenda Item 3 - Routeing of ships, ship reporting and related matters

3. The Sub-Committee approved the establishment of two-way routes in the south-west Coral Sea, the establishment of a new area to be avoided in the south-west Coral Sea and the establishment of five new areas to be avoided in the region of the Aleutian Islands. These provisions will now be submitted to the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) for adoption at its 95th session in June 2015. Implementation will be not less than six months after adoption by the MSC. The Sub-Committee also approved two model document templates for proposing new or modified ships' routeing and reporting systems. The templates include requirements to provide information on the state of hydrographic surveys and nautical charts in the area concerned by the proposal and a recommendation that *“Governments, who do not have the necessary hydrographic information, may, at a very early stage in the formulation of the routeing system, seek the assistance of the IHO in obtaining such information”*.

Agenda Item 6 - E-navigation strategy implementation plan

4. The NCSR finalized a draft consolidated guideline on Software Quality Assurance (SQA) and Human Centred Design (HCD) for e-navigation that had been prepared by a Correspondence Group. The Sub-Committee agreed that there was no requirement for input from the Sub-Committee on Human Element, Training and Watchkeeping (HTW) at the present time and endorsed the draft guideline with a view to approval by the MSC.

5. The endorsement of the SQA and HCD guideline completed the planned output on e-navigation for the biennium 2014-2015. Future work on e-navigation by the Sub Committee will be subject to the approval of the MSC of new outputs for the subsequent biennial agendas (see References B and C).

Agenda Item 8 - Analysis of developments in maritime radiocommunications systems and technology

6. The NCSR agreed that a definition of interoperability based on the functional requirements of the future GMDSS was needed. Views were expressed that this concept should be applicable to all the GMDSS service providers and that it might be included in a future revision of SOLAS Chapter IV - *Radiocommunications*. The NCSR endorsed a draft outline of the detailed review of the GMDSS to be progressed by an intersessional Correspondence Group on the review and modernization of the GMDSS. Concerns expressed by some representatives regarding costs associated with the approval of additional GMDSS service providers for MSI coordinators, SAR authorities and ships were noted and it was agreed that the Correspondence Group should consider this issue with the aim to identify possible sources for costs.

Agenda Item 10 - Further development of the GMDSS master plan on shore-based facilities

7. The NCSR agreed in principle on new definitions of GMDSS sea areas A3 and A4 and recognized certain consequential matters needed to be considered with regard to the new definitions. These could include HF carriage requirements, promulgation of MSI by HF, obligations for shore authorities, provision of services and implications for the GMDSS Master Plan. It was recognized that these matters could be considered by the Correspondence Group on the review and modernization of the GMDSS and the Joint IMO/ITU Experts Group on Maritime Radiocommunications Matters.

Agenda Item 11 - Guidelines on Maritime Safety Information

8. The Sub-Committee received reports from the Chair of the IMO NAVTEX Panel, in which details of proposed new NAVTEX transmitters were provided, and the Chair of the IHO WNWNS-SC, in which was highlighted the results of the year long survey which revealed an apparent lack of system knowledge and a potential gap in GMDSS training for on-board users. The Sub-Committee noted that amendments to the GMDSS Master Plan had been distributed in GMDSS/Circ.17 and Administrations were encouraged to check their national data for accuracy. It is expected that GMDSS/Circ.18 would be issued in September 2015, allowing time for amendments to be submitted. It was agreed to merge Agenda Items 10 and 11 in future sessions under a new item *“Updating of the GMDSS Master Plan and guidelines on MSI”*.

Agenda Item 18 - Amendments to the IAMSAR Manual

9. The amendments to the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue (IAMSAR) Manual, resulting from the work of the 12th meeting of the IHO Document Review Working Group conducted last year, and which aligns the publication with IMO Resolutions A.705(17), as amended, *Promulgation of Maritime Safety Information*, and A.706(17), as amended, *World-Wide Navigational Warning Service*, and with the Joint IMO/IHO/WMO Manual on MSI, were accepted without change. The revised manual will be submitted to MSC 95 for approval.

Agenda Item 22 - Any other business

10. The IHO submitted a document reporting on the monitoring of ECDIS issues and chart coverage (NCSR 2/22/2). The IHO also highlighted that some port authorities were requiring the carriage of paper charts in addition to the adequate set of ENC's, carried in accordance with the requirement set out in SOLAS Regulation V/19.2.14. The Sub-Committee noted with concern that situation. The Cook Islands highlighted the recent successful meeting of the South West Pacific Hydrographic Commission (SWPHC) held in Rarotonga. In relation to the indication in the IHO report that an IHO-led crowd-sourced bathymetry programme was being developed, the Cook Islands cautioned to ensure a quality assurance mechanism would guarantee the quality of crowd-sourced bathymetry data, whilst acknowledging the potential value of such data to improve nautical charts.

Election of Chair and Vice-Chair for 2016

11. The Sub-Committee unanimously elected Mr Ringo Lakeman (Netherlands), as Chair, and Mr Nigel Clifford (New Zealand), as Vice-Chair, for 2016.

Report to the Committee

12. The full report of NCSR 2 (NCSR 2/23) will be available on the IMODOCS website (<https://docs.imo.org/>) when issued.

Dates for NCSR 3

13. NCSR 3 is currently scheduled to be held at the IMO Headquarters in London, United Kingdom, from 29 February to 4 March 2016.

On behalf of the Directing Committee
Yours sincerely,



Gilles BESSERO
Director