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CLARIFICATION OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF  
THE 1988 SOLAS AMENDMENTS FOR THE GMDSS

The Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications (COM 37/17 paragraph 3.33) at its thirty-seventh session agreed the clarifications of certain provisions of the 1988 SOLAS Amendments for the GMDSS attached, and pending consideration of the proposed clarifications by the Committee, instructed the Secretariat to bring them to the attention of the Member Governments as advance information.

Member Governments are advised that equipment which has already been approved by an Administration should not be required to be replaced because of these clarifications.

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**ANNEX****CLARIFICATIONS OF CERTAIN PROVISIONS OF  
1988 SOLAS AMENDMENTS FOR THE GMDSS****1 Position from which the ship is normally navigated**

This is commonly the navigating bridge.

**2 VHF DSC watchkeeping facility (Reg. IV/7.1.2)**

This requirement can be met by:

- a separate VHF channel 70 watch receiver; or
- a dedicated VHF channel 70 watch receiver combined with the VHF radiotelephone; or
- a standard VHF radiotelephone permanently locked on channel 70 for reception and transmission of DSC calls only.

**3 VHF radiocommunications from the wings of the navigating bridge for navigational safety (Reg. IV/6.3)**

This requirement can be met by:

- a standard VHF radiotelephone; or
- a facility consisting of a loudspeaker and a microphone with channel selector; or
- a facility consisting of a loudspeaker and a microphone (in this case the channel selector will be convenient to the conning position); or
- a portable VHF equipment with channel selector (it may be the equipment required by reg. III/6.2.1).

**4 MF DSC watchkeeping facility (Reg. IV/9.1.2 and IV/10.1.2.3)**

This requirement can be met by:

- a separate MF DSC watch receiver locked on 2,187.5 kHz; or
- a dedicated MF DSC watch receiver combined with the MF radiotelephone.

If DSC operation is desirable on other frequencies, an additional scanning receiver shall be provided.

A single DSC decoder may be used to serve both the DSC watch and the additional scanning receiver only if continuous watch for distress and safety calls can be maintained.

5 MF/HF DSC watchkeeping facility (Reg. IV/10.2.2)

This requirement can be met by:

- a separate MF/HF DSC scanning watch receiver for distress and safety DSC frequencies only; or
- a dedicated MF/HF DSC scanning watch receiver for distress and safety DSC frequencies only combined with the MF/HF radiotelephone.

If DSC operation is desirable on other frequencies, an additional scanning receiver should be provided.

A single DSC decoder may be used to serve both the DSC distress and safety frequency scanning receiver and the additional scanning receiver only if continuous watch for distress and safety calls can be maintained.

6 Reception of MSI by HF (Reg. IV/7.1.5)

This requirement can be met by:

- a separate HF-MSI receiver; or
- the receiver of the MF/HF radio installation.

7 NAVTEX-Receiver (Reg. IV/7.1.4)

The NAVTEX receiver shall receive on the frequency 518 kHz as a minimum. Manual switching to receive on frequency 490 kHz is permissible. The capability to receive on 4,209.5 kHz is recommended. Combined equipment, e.g. with weather facsimile, can be accepted, if receiving and printing of all selected NAVTEX information have priority.

8 Means of initiating the transmission of ship-to-shore distress alerts by a separate and independent system (Reg. IV/8.1, 9.1.3, 10.1.4 and 10.2.3).

The satellite EPIRB required by regulation IV/7.1.6 can be accepted if it is installed in the vicinity of the bridge, e.g. in the wings, on top of the wheelhouse, if accessible by stairs, or if its activation is possible by remote control from the position from which the ship is normally navigated. Where intended for remote activation, the EPIRB should be installed so that it has unobstructed hemispherical line of sight to the satellites.

Another possibility is to install another satellite EPIRB in the navigation bridge.

The requirement for transmitting ship-to-shore distress alert on HF using DSC can be met by installing an MF/HF radio installation in lieu of the MF radio installation required by regulation IV/10.1.2. This MF/HF radio installation does not have to operate direct-printing telegraphy nor maintain a DSC watch on other frequencies than 2,187.5 kHz.

9 Telex communications (Reg. IV/10.2.1.3)

Automatic reception of shore-to-ship direct-printing telegraphy is not necessary. The communication connection may be set up manually after announcement via DSC.

10 Initiation of distress alerts on VHF channel 70 (Reg. IV/7.1.1.1)

The requirement to initiate the transmission of distress alerts on channel 70 from the position from which the ship is normally navigated can be met by:

- the VHF radio installation which is installed on the navigating bridge; or
- the remotely installed VHF radio installation which can be switched to channel 70 and readily activated from the navigating bridge; or
- the remotely installed VHF radio installation which is locked to channel 70 and can be readily activated from the navigating bridge.

11 Initiation of distress alerts by the MF radio installation (Reg. IV/9.2 and 10.3)

The requirement to initiate the transmission of the distress alerts by the MF radio installation from the position from which the ship is normally navigated can be met by:

- the MF radio installation which is installed on the navigating bridge; or
- the remotely installed MF radio installation which can be switched to the frequency 2,187.5 kHz and readily activated from the navigating bridge; or
- the remotely installed MF radio installation which is locked on the frequency 2,187.5 kHz and can be readily activated from the navigating bridge.

If the transmitting antenna is not connected continuously to the transmitter it shall be connected automatically in case of initiation of distress alerts.

12 Initiation of distress alerts by the MF/HF radio installation (Reg. IV/10.3)

The requirement to initiate the transmission of the distress alerts by the MF/HF radio installation from the position from which the ship is normally navigated can be met by:

- the MF/HF radio installation which is installed on the navigating bridge; or
- the remotely installed MF/HF radio installation which can be switched to any MF/HF DSC distress frequency and readily activated from the navigating bridge.

If the transmitting antenna is not connected continuously to the transmitter it shall be connected automatically in case of initiation of distress alerts.

- 13 Radio installations on the navigating bridge where a separate radio room exists

On ships complying with the GMDSS provisions and which do not have all radio installations on the navigating bridge, at least:

- i) the permanent monitoring of the distress and safety frequencies including maritime safety information;
- ii) the means to conduct the radiocommunications for navigational safety; and
- iii) the initiation of distress alerts

should be possible from the navigating bridge. Remote control facilities for distress and safety communications could be placed at the navigating bridge.

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