

GMDSS TASK FORCE

Newsletter and Summary Record of 15 June 2023 Meeting

1. The Task Force Meeting. This Newsletter reports on the recent hybrid meeting of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) Task Force sponsored by the U.S. Coast Guard and the Radio Technical Commission for Maritime Services (RTCM). The Task Force is dedicated to monitoring the success and shortcomings of the GMDSS. The Task Force is also active in current efforts to modernize the GMDSS and monitors related developments in maritime radio and electronic navigation (e-navigation). The Task Force advocates voluntary use of radio safety equipment by all vessels and makes recommendations to government authorities to improve safety at sea regulations.

Change in Leadership. At this meeting Captain Jack Fuechsel announced his decision to retire and turn the leadership over to fellow RTCM Board member Bill Cairns. Captain Fuechsel has led the Task Force for almost 30 years and wishes to acknowledge his appreciation at having received RTCM's first award of the new RADM Marshall E. Gilbert award for extraordinary service and leadership to RTCM presented at the opening session of the 2023 RTCM Assembly.

2. Task Force membership. Membership is open to individuals associated with commercial vessel operations, recreational vessel interests, training institutions, service agents, manufacturers, government authorities and any interested person or organization, and there is no fee for participation. New members are welcome, to join, send your name, organization (if any), email address, and telephone number (optional) to the new Director, Bill Cairns, at bcairns@rtcm.org. Members who are unable to attend Task Force meetings are invited to participate by email and to connect with Task Force meetings by conference call or virtual meeting platform. This Newsletter goes out to over 6000 members after each meeting. The Task Force also maintains a website at <https://www.navcen.uscg.gov/task-force-background>.

3. The Summary Record. This record of the meeting is provided for information and will be posted on the Task Force portion of the Coast Guard web site. The GMDSS Task Force held a hybrid meeting on 15 June 2023. The meeting was attended by about 50 members live and another 14 on line supported by Microsoft Teams or phone call.

4. Distribution of Information Papers: The following Papers of interest were displayed and are available to all on the website: <https://www.joecl.com/GMDSTaskForce>

- IEC Man Overboard Standard 62nd announced 39 Adopted
- NTSB Report on SECOR POWER advising mariners to wear PLBs
- Safety Alert 12-22 on Radar SARTs
- Safety Alert 3-23 on Configuration of DSC Radios
- ITU-R Changes to Radio Procedures
- USCG ALCOAST 440 of 2022 – i-phone 14 will be able to text via satellites
- HR7776 NDAA 2023 – Upgrade R21 in AK and let F/V mark nets with AIS
- FCC NPRM on Routing of 911 Emergency Calls
- New Maritime Cybersecurity Assessment and Annex Guide

5. **The Coast Guard Reports:** Jerry Ulcek and others reported with the following highlights:

a. Planning for the NCSR-10 Conference: Pat Gallagher reported on highlights of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) sub-committee for Navigation, Communications, and Search & Rescue (NCSR-10). Revision of Resolution A.1001 had been on the GMDSS Modernization work plan for some time along with NAVDAT and both will be further considered by the Experts Group. The revised resolution will provide more broadly for GMDSS mobile satellite systems of all types, rather than just geostationary systems such as Inmarsat. MSI is not being sent by all providers to Iridium for broadcast despite urging by NCSR and incentives from Iridium. Beidou was recommended to MSC for recognition as a GMDSS Provider. NCSR Meetings will remain on the Task Force agenda.

b. Update on Four Digit Numbering of VHF Channels: Joe Hersey reported that we now have a new date for implementation since SOLAS ships must be able to use four-digit numbering by the first radio survey after 1 January 2028. Actions remaining to implement this change include a revised GMDSS Circular for SOLAS ships, amending the IEC standard for class D radios, incorporating the change in FCC Regulations once the IEC standard is updated, and educating the public. The new RTCM Standard being developed by SC-101 will require 4 Digit numbering and the Task Force plans to query Manufacturers to ascertain their plans to implement the change in their equipment. This item will be retained on the Agenda.

c. Reliability of VHF in Alaska: Pat Gallagher reported that most of the microwave links and almost all generators have been replaced recently. Since management of VHF coverage is doing its best under the circumstances, this agenda item will be discontinued. Ed Thiedeman added that the CG has stood up a Maritime Public Communications Working Group as an Integrated Product Team working on a Mission Needs Statement and Concept of Operations (CONOPS) to support future acquisitions of future public maritime communications systems supporting but not limited to communications in Sea Area A1, communications in Alaska and the Arctic, and NAVDAT.

d. Report on IMO/ITU Experts Group-18: Ed Thiedeman reported that there was a virtual meeting of the Experts Group in September 2022 leading up to the 18th session scheduled for 5-9 December 2022. The Group reviewed pertinent output from the 106th session of the Maritime Safety Committee in November and the ICAO session in October. Principal topics for the Experts Group include the following:

- 1.) Coding of MMSIs in EPIRBs (not used by the U.S.),
- 2.) Class D VHF Radios used as Coast Stations ashore,
- 3.) WRC 2023 Item 10 to address VDES R-Mode,
- 4.) Improved Promulgation of Marine Safety Information
- 5.) Digital Voice on VHF Channels (VDES R Mode)
- 6.) Further consideration of Resolution A.1001
- 7.) Review of Interim Report R.1371-5 and continue at NCSR-10
- 8.) IMO/ICAO Joint Session including IAMSAR Manual

e. LED Lighting – Report from SC-137: Joe Hersey, the Chair of RTCM SC-137, gave an update on progress toward developing a standard to deal with LED lighting interference to VHF maritime radios and Automatic Identification Systems (AIS). The Special Committee has completed the voluntary standard that has been released and announced by MSIB 03-22. Review by IEC is still moving ahead and interference to navigational lights will be included. This item will be retained on the Agenda.

f. SC-101 Action on Class D DSC Radios: Joe Hersey, the chairman of SC-101 reported that they were meeting regularly to produce recommended changes to the IEC Class D DSC Standard IEC 62238 to deal with operational problems such as Distress Alerts received with no position and no MMSI number. DSC Alarming, MMSI Reset, Four Channel Numbering and use of class D radios as Coast Stations are under review. The SC-101 recommendations will be submitted to IEC in September to complete the revisions. This item will be retained on the Agenda.

g. Report of MMSI Management ad hoc group: Joe Hersey reported that this ad hoc Group has been active recently and that the explanation of MMSIs on the NAVCEN Website has been updated. BOATUS and the U.S. Power Squadrons are assigning ship station MMSIs to handhelds. Shine Micro has also been assigning MMSIs. The NMEA had been considering becoming an MMSI Assignment Agency but was unsuccessful in obtaining a grant for this purpose and is no longer a prospective assignment Agent. This item will be retained on the Agenda.

h. Safety Alert 12-22 on Radar SART Performance: Joe Hersey reported the Alert recognizes that solid state radars don't detect Radar SARTs or RACONS reliably and that AIS SARTs have a much higher detection range, especially from Aircraft. The discussion brought out the fact that Coast Guard helicopters are not fitted to detect AIS, a major short coming.

i. MSI Dissemination – NAVDAT vs Satellite: Jerry Ulcek reported that build out of a NAVDAT Network in the U.S. is still the official plan despite the uncertainty of funding and that users want to keep NAVTEX that need upgrading to be reliable.

j. Transition of SARSAT Program from NOAA to Coast Guard: Layne Carter explained that a decision had been made that due to sunsetting of the NOAA Low Earth Satellite constellation and associated funding, the Coast Guard would assume Lead Federal Agency/program management responsibilities from NOAA in FY25. The Coast Guard's extensive mandate in Search and Rescue was a major factor in this decision. The U.S. Air Force will share funding responsibilities with the Coast Guard, while NOAA will maintain and operate the ground system on behalf of the Coast Guard. NASA will assume additional engineering services and systems evolution responsibilities. There are expected to be new positions at Coast Guard which will provide additional bandwidth to the program. The additional bandwidth will help the program in many ways, including greater public outreach, more agile processes, and other program enhancements.

k. NTSB Advocacy of PLBs for Most Mariners: The Task Force was briefed by Morgan Turrell, Director, Office of Maritime Safety at the National Transportation Safety Board

(NTSB). Under his leadership the NTSB has become a prominent advocate for providing commercial mariners with Personal Locater Beacons (PLBs) that can be worn on the life jacket to improve survival in marine disasters. He cited several recent disasters including the SCANDIES ROSE, a fishing vessel lost enroute to the Bering Sea, the cargo ship EL FARO lost in the Bahamas during hurricane Joaquin, the SECOR POWER a liftboat that capsized off Louisiana in a severe thunderstorm and a fire on the F/V Blue Dragon that provided multiple beacon alerts to SAR Controllers.

Mr. Turrell also advocated the use of Satellite Emergency Notification Devices (SENDs) that alert through watch at a commercial response center. The sinking of the F/V AMBITION got an immediate response from the commercial center even though the Coast Guard never received the captain's 'mayday' call.

While these examples suggest that the employer should provide the mariners with the PLBs it is safe to assume that the NTSB agrees that recreational boaters should provide and wear their own PLBs in the interest of safety. The thrust of the NTSB Program is fully consistent with the Task Force's proposals for regulating R/Vs to require carriage of emergency beacons, a concept fully endorsed by the National Boating Safety Advisory Committee.

An intervention by Ed Thiedeman, a Coast Guard SAR official, indicated that the NTSB recommendations were under study by a group at Headquarters seeking an appropriate regulatory solution to the problems cited. He also commented that the CG has challenges with regulating non-commercial vessels with regulatory authority primarily at the state level.

I. Operational Problems Encountered by SAR Controllers: Christopher Eddy, a SAR Controller from RCC Miami briefed the Task Force on operational problems encountered by the watchstanders that included the following:

- 1.) False alerts most of which seem to be accidental including those set off by hurricanes that wash off EPIRBs from multiple moored vessels.
- 2.) Missing or false MMSIs are typical and prevent contact with owners through the database. This is frequently because of sale of a boat with failure to re-register with new owner. This validates the findings of the Task Force Working Group on MMSI problems.
- 3.) More and more alerts are coming in from cell phones and the RCC responds but the Task Force reminds users that they need to know the limits of offshore coverage for their system and the importance of keeping the phone fully charged.
- 4.) Vessels with AIS are easy to locate with Coast Guard fixed wing A/C but here again the fact the Coast Guard helicopters lack AIS capability is seen as a significant problem that needs to be fixed.

m. Update Briefing on the Inmarsat Satellite System: John Dodd provided a virtual briefing with the following highlights:

1.) The merger of Inmarsat with ViaSat has been ongoing and should be essentially complete by the fourth quarter of 2023. Corporate assurances have been clear that all Inmarsat Safety Services under the GMDSS will be supported indefinitely.

2.) Australia and New Zealand will utilize one of the new I-8 satellites for a new Southland Service that will greatly improve positioning accuracy.

3.) Three of the I-6 L Band satellites will also provide Ka Band service.

4.) The Orchestra System includes Elera that provides Global Express and terrestrial service at a 5G level and Rescue Net that provides Distress Chat to 40 RCCs

5.) Fleet Safety includes the “505” fleet broadcast service that is not yet GMDSS qualified but is under development to become fully GMDSS qualified.

6.) There are estimated to be some 132,000 Inmarsat- C terminals still in service.

n. Update Briefing on the Iridium Satellite System: Kyle Hurst provided a live briefing with the following highlights:

1.) MSI providers are increasingly furnishing broadcast alerts for SafetyCast in response to urging from IMO.

2.) Improvements in SAR Operations can be achieved in the future by faster alerting of SAR assets and technology improvements such as notifying authorities of potential SAR operations before a Distress Alert is declared.

3.) SAR operations are adversely impacted by false alerts, the slow pace of adopting new technology and known short comings such as poor positions and bogus MMSIs.

4.) In an earlier session, the book “Eccentric Orbits” by John Bloom was recommended as an excellent history of the Iridium System.

6. The FCC Reports: Ghassan Khalek reported with the following highlights:

a. Waiver of Rules to allow use of IEC Standard for MOB in the U.S: Ghassan indicated that after discussions with the Coast Guard, the FCC agrees that the quickest way to allow use of the new International Standard IEC 63269 in the U.S. would be through a waiver of the Rules. RTCM SC-119 has been reactivated to complete action. This item will be continued on the agenda until completed.

b. FCC Enforcement on Unauthorized AIS Devices: a suggested solution to legitimize use of AIS to mark fishing nets has been proposed and consensus has been reached with authorities managing use of the proposed AMRD channel 2006 (160.9 MHz), currently used by railroads in the US. Finding a solution for this problem was essentially directed by the Defense Authorization Act. This item will be dropped from the Agenda.

c. Rules change to enable new International EPIRB Specs to take effect in U.S.:

The Coast Guard petitioned the FCC to change their Rules to require EPIRBs sold in U.S. to Have Integral GNSS. The FCC will grant waivers for this until the necessary change to the Rules have been made. This item will be continued on the Agenda until completed.

d. Plans to Improve Routing of Emergency Calls: The FCC has embarked on a program to improve the prompt handling of emergency calls through the “911” call system. There have been no announced results so far but the Coast Guard is hoping to see prompt routing of calls from vessels to Coast Guard RCCs. This item will be continued on the Agenda.

e. Impact on Termination of Great Lakes Agreement: Twelve months since announcing termination of the Agreement will expire on 2 November 2023. Impacts noted so far are very few. Regulated vessels of both countries on the Great Lakes will need to carry full GMDSS equipment suites and comply with licensing rules. Canada is phasing in a four year program for regular GMDSS inspections. There has been no announcement of a comparable inspection program from U.S. but the U.S. owes Canada a response to inquiries regarding our Port State Control inspections.

7. Reports from other Governmental and International Agencies:

a. Update from NOAA’s National Weather Service: Wayne Presnell previously reported that he would share responsibility for the UNCLOG Meetings with Pat Gallagher of the Coast Guard but he has since taken a new position in NOAA and that Darren Wright has also taken a new position with NOAA’s Ocean Service. Greg Schoor, Chief of the Marine, Tropical and Tsunami Services Branch announced that the NWS began operational use of Iridium’s SafetyCast for broadcasts of METAREA IV and XII High Seas Forecasts and Warnings on 12 June 2023. Broadcasts of Tropical Cyclone and Tsunami Bulletins will also be broadcast on both the SafetyNet (Inmarsat) and SafetyCast (Iridium) Systems.

b. COSPAS/SARSAT Update: At the October meeting it was reported that authorization was pending for U.S. users of Galileo EPIRBs and PLBs to utilize that system’s Return Link Service (RLS), NOAA reported that that the RLS could be implemented on EPIRBs and PLBs but that implementation on aeronautical ELTs was more problematic. The RTCA has not taken a position on ELTs. RLS on maritime beacons is being recommended as an optional feature. SC-110 is expected to take on this issue in the near future.

c. National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency (NGA): Don Meyer reported with the following highlights:

1.) Don reviewed the World Wide Navigation and Warning System that sends alerts to mariners through the EGC Broadcasts of Marine Safety Information on the SafetyNet (Inmarsat) and SafetyCast (Iridium) systems. IMO has renewed its advice to MSI providers to use both systems and some improvement has been noted recently.

2.) NGA has been modernizing its role in API availability, MSI mobile App (MARLIN), S-124 Navigational Warnings, Source Maritime Automated Processing System (SMAPS), S-123 Marine Radio Services and Pub. 117 (Radio Aids to Navigation).

3.) The Marine Safety Mobile App. (MARLIN) puts NGA's safety information at your fingertips with Anti-Shipping Activity, Mobile Offshore Drilling Units (MODU), Navigational Warnings, Lights, Radio Beacons, Differential GPS and World Ports. MARLIN is available in Google Play (Search for NGA MARLIN).

d. Canadian Maritime Issues: Alexandre Lavoie of Transport Canada reported with the following highlights:

1.) Discontinuing the Great Lakes Agreement was begun with a Diplomatic note to the U.S. Department of State in November of 2022 indicating that by 2 November 2023 it would take effect.

2.) Carriage Requirements after that date would include 1 or 2 VHF radios including observance of a 1 watt limitation on channel 13, maintenance of watch by a qualified operator and a reserve source of energy.

3.) Inspection of Canadian vessels would be valid for 4 years and Port State Canada would no longer enforce U.S. ships to carry a valid Inspection Certificate. They are awaiting a reply from U.S. Port State Authorities that they would no longer enforce the '13 month rule' for Canadian vessels.

4.) Canada has experienced most of the same operational problems observed in the U.S. especially in the MMSI management area.

e. CIRM: Michael Richards reported with the following highlights:

1.) CIRM will meet next in Izmir, Turkey 2-5 October 2023.

2.) MSC 105 adopted GMDSS Modernization intending it to come into force 1 January 2024 but the necessary Test Standards will likely not be completed until a year later.

3.) CIRM is working with IEC on Digital Interfaces, GMDSS Standards, Inmarsat-C, GNSS, ECDIS and VDES.

8. Reports and Issues, Recreational Vessel Group: Gene Danko reported on the untimely death of his predecessor, George Hallenbeck and was pleased to note that the RTCM had honored George posthumously with a Husick Award given to those who have made significant contributions in the area of maritime communications. A posthumous Husick Award also honored Martin Jackson, a Coast Guard engineer who also made valuable contributions to the Task Force. Gene Danko's report included the following highlights:

a. Report of the National Boating Safety Advisory Committee: Mr. Dave Marlow of the Brunswick Corp. and Chairman of NBSAC since October 2021, reported virtually with the following highlights:

1.) NBSAC has had 6 meetings since becoming a committee, 4 virtually and 2 in person. Our main task when we started, was to review all current and open resolutions, review and if approved, move them forward as new recommendations. A total of 13 re-approved recommendations were moved forward by the committee. One of them, likely of interest to the GMDSS task force, was NBSAC 2022-03-02, Emergency Locator Beacons.

2.) We also worked collaboratively with the USCG and presented recommendations for a new Strategic Plan which was recently signed and adopted. The plan introduced three new initiatives:

- a.) positively influence recreational boater behavior,
- b.) positively influence recreational boat and accessory manufacturers, and
- c.) leverage recreational boating data

3.) From those initiatives, six task statements have been put to the committee for action. They include:

- a.) bringing 33CFR standards up to date
- b.) recommendations to improve rental vessel safety
- c.) recommendations to reduce boating accidents based on human factors data
- d.) recommendations to the USCG on developing a more inclusive and structured communications plan
- e.) update of safety equipment requirements for the recreational boater
- f.) provide recommendations for alternative methods of demonstrating compliance to US Coast Guard requirements

4). We will meet virtually in October 2023 and in January 2024. The committee plans to have its next face to face meeting next April 2024 in Austin, TX

b. Should Task Force reopen Beacon Proposal for R/Vs Operating Offshore? Jack Fuechsel noted that the original proposal was dated 2006 and the Coast Guard sent it to NBSAC for review and Recommendation. In 2012 the NBSAC made a very positive recommendation to proceed with regulatory action. The results of a 2018 survey identified a sizeable number of R/Vs that acknowledge going more than 20 miles offshore, of these only about half were fitted with an appropriate beacon system. It was decided not to reopen the Task Force Beacon proposal at this time since the Coast Guard had indicated that a new regulatory approach had been started.

It was learned that the NBSAC passed a further Resolution at it's meeting 28-30 March 2022 reaffirming its earlier support. The Task Force will follow this renewed NBSAC Resolution. In a related action, the NTSB has renewed it's earlier call for all F/V crewmen to

wear PLBs and the same PLB recommendation was made for crewmen in the SEACOR POWER capsizing. This item will be carried forward on the Agenda.

c. Some Foreign Flag Commercial Vessels have registered for MMSIs from the USPS Number Block: This violation was apparently done by foreign applicants seeking to obtain MMSI identity at no cost and is still under investigation. This is a suggested topic for the next Coast Guard/FCC meeting. This item will be transferred to the FCC section and continued on the Agenda until resolved.

d. Resolution of Duplicate MMSIs Issued by Sea Tow: This item has been on the Agenda for some time without a definitive plan of action. There are believed to be about 80-100 duplicate assignments and the logical way to resolve them is to contact the assignment holders and arrange for one of them to be reregistered. This would be best undertaken by one of the government agencies rather than the Power Squadrons that inherited the Sea Tow MMSI customers when the latter discontinued assigning MMSIs. This item will be carried forward on the Agenda until resolved.

e. New Program for Relaying MSI Alerts to Cell Phones That Register for the Voluntary Service: This service was previously referred to as "Aqua Alert" after a bill in Congress proposing an expansion of methods to disseminate MSI to interested users. The Coast Guard Districts would maintain a list of voluntary local subscribers who desired that broadcast MSI alerts be additionally sent by text to their cell phones. Although we don't know the outcome of the bill in Congress it has apparently already been implemented in one or more Districts. This item will be continued on the Agenda pending further developments.

f. Modify Voluntary Inspection Check List to Invite Discussion on MMSI Registration and Connection of GPS. Because the failure to properly register for an MMSI number is greatest among recreational vessels, the Task Force had been working with the Coast Guard Office of Boating Safety to hopefully modify the latter's checklist for voluntary safety inspections. The intent has been to open a dialog between the inspector and boat operators on the importance of registering for an MMSI number and the need to connect GPS receivers to VHF radios to provide often-missing position. There are also other issues such as Four Digit Channel numbers (see 5.b. above), LED lighting interference (see 5.e. above) and MMSI Management generally (see 5.g. above) that suggest mounting a more formal Public Education Program. This Agenda item will be carried over until resolved.

9. Report and Issues of the Commercial Vessel Task Group. Jack Fuechsel reported with the following highlights:

a. Shipboard Weather and Environmental Observations by AIS: Increasing shipboard weather reporting to augment weather forecasting has been a Task Force goal for some time. Dr. Greg Johnson of Serco has done work of this type under contract to USACE and offered his remarks with the following highlights:

1.) Trials conducted with volunteer ships fitted with automatic weather stations programmed to transmit observations by Class A AIS at synoptic intervals and reliable reception

of the AIS reports by satellite has fully demonstrated the viability of the concept. The data sent included air temperature, wind speed and direction and barometric pressure. Other data of interest such as wave height would need to be a manual input if included in the future.

2.) The automated weather station used in the trials was produced by Airmar and the cost is estimated at about \$1200 with an additional cost of about \$600 to install and program the connection to AIS. Some ship operating companies might be persuaded to absorb this expense but a wide spread program could more readily be advanced if the government procured the terminals.

3.) The limited number of ships participating in the trial would need to be greatly expanded to produce meaningful improvement in forecasting and emphasis should be placed on enrolling research vessels and others that operate outside of the major ocean routes.

4.) Inclusion of other ocean data for an international database would be welcome but needs development of concept such as cost of disposable bathythermographs and shipboard readout and processing.

b. MSIB 02-22k on CyberSecurity Trends and Insights: MSIB 02-22 was published as an update to NVIC 01-20. LCDR Leslie Kennedy provided a presentation with the following highlights:

1.) The Maritime Transportation Security Act designated important facilities that required protection from cyber attacks and called for Facility Security Assessments (FSA) to identify vulnerabilities and Facility Security Plans (FSP) to deal with identified vulnerabilities. Incorporation of Cybersecurity in the FSA's and FSPs was due by 1 October 2022. It is hoped that the new Maritime Cybersecurity Assessment and Annex Guide will provide an additional resource for regulated facilities to enhance and expand their current efforts to assess cyber risks and vulnerabilities.

2.) Maturation of cyber awareness in facility planning includes designation of a CyberSecurity Officer (CySo), identification of cyber-enabled systems and networks, agreement on facility definition of Cybersecurity vulnerabilities, gathering information necessary to identify vulnerabilities, determining the remediation plan for each vulnerability and use of the Guide's Template to document physical vulnerabilities in the FSP.

10. Reports and Issues of the Service Agents and Manufacturers Group: Jack Fuechsel reported with the following highlights:

a. Update on NMEA Activities: The NMEA is exploring an MOU with the Power Squadrons on voluntary training. Hopefully this will include the salient points of radio safety that the Task Group on Recreation Vessels has been trying to incorporate in the Coast Guard Boating Safety Guidelines for voluntary inspections

b. NMEA a Candidate to Assign MMSI Numbers: The NMEA has been studying the issue of whether to join the other Assignment Agents in view of their membership of both

Manufacturers and Service Agents. At the present time the outlook is guarded since they were unable to obtain a grant from the Coast Guard to support the cost. There is still the matter of the unresolved MOU between the Coast Guard and the FCC and the Assignment Agencies. This item will be continued on the Agenda until resolved.

11. Reports and Issues of the Training Task Group. Kurt Anderson reported with the following highlights:

a. New Issue - Training Group will review FCC Elements 3, 8 and 9 Relating to GMDSS Maintainers: Most of the work of maintaining the question pool for Operator Licenses is based on FCC Element 7 but the other Elements contain guidance appropriate to Maintainer Licenses. This item will be carried on the Agenda until the review has been completed.

b. Need to expand carriage requirements so that trainees can be trained on all equipment appropriate for Sea Areas A1, A2, A3 and A4. This issue had been raised by the former leader of the Service Agents Group but was just transferred to the Training Group as a better 'fit'. The Task Force will develop a Petition recommending special equipment requirements for Schools and Training Vessels to enable students to train on all GMDSS equipment they may find on ships operating in all Sea Areas. This item has become very timely with the addition of Iridium as a GMDSS service provider. There is also a new reason to expedite this issue since MARAD has recently announced the acquisition of five new research vessels for state maritime training schools in California, Maine, Massachusetts, New York and Texas A&M. This Agenda item will be carried forward.

c. Iridium and STCW Lab Proficiencies: Kyle Hurst of Iridium has been working with the Training Group to develop appropriate Lab Proficiencies as Iridium enters full GMDSS Service and the Question Pools for Operator Licenses need to be adjusted accordingly. This item will be retained on the Agenda pending further developments.

d. Task Force Information Bulletins on Iridium Services: Both GMDSS Information Bulletins for Recreation Vessel Users were updated to acknowledge that Iridium has taken up full GMDSS service. The new Bulletins have been placed on the Task Force website for review.

e. F/V Exemptions, Waivers & Tonnage Issues: It is clear that the many exemptions and waivers issued and the sometimes confusing tonnage rules complicate the training of new operators and this item was intended as a discussion of these issues. Since time available did not enable a full discussion, this item will be carried over on the Agenda.

f. GMDSS Operator Requirements, Checks During Inspections: This new item was intended to open a full discussion of the knowledge a GMDSS Maintainer should possess in order to function as an inspector of GMDSS equipped ships including an evaluation of the adequacy of the training of those ships GMDSS Operators. Although allowed by the Regulations, the Task Force is on record as considering the mere holding a Maintainer License inadequate preparation for an inspector. Since time available did not enable a full discussion, this item will be carried over on the Agenda.

12. GMDSS Modernization: Bob Markle reported with the following highlights:

a. Revision of IMO Resolution A.1001: The revisions to SOLAS Chapter IV and the supporting resolutions (except for Resolution A.1001) are complete and set to come into force on 1 January 2024. Resolution A.1001 deals with the recognition of mobile satellite systems for the GMDSS. A correspondence group led by France is preparing the revision based on an IMSO submission that includes most of the provisions of the existing resolution, but includes more detail on monitoring the continuing performance of GMDSS mobile satellite systems. The correspondence group will submit its work to the December IMO/ITU Experts Group meeting for consideration by NCSR 10 in May and eventual publication as a new MSC Resolution.

MSC 107 adopted MSC.1/Circ.1676(107) which did not change the effective date of resolutions IMO MSC 511(105), IMO MSC 512(105), and IMO MSC 513(105), but it allows Member States to permit installation of equipment meeting the existing performance standards until 1 January 2028. (Affects VHF and MF & MF/HF radio installations, and Inmarsat-C ship earth stations.)

b. Revision of IEC Standards: The last loose end of Modernization is the revision of the IEC testing standards that need to be updated to account for new provisions in the IMO resolutions that come into force on 1 January 2024. IEC TC80 does not yet have these projects on its work program, which means the work will not be completed for several more years.

13. Review Summary Record of 11 May 2022 and Continuing Work List. The summary record of that meeting is posted on the Task Force website and only minor corrections have been made. The Continuing Work Program is appended to each agenda and updated as needed. A new Task Force item was added to “Advocate Earliest Fitting of AIS on Coast Guard Helicopters” and “Advocacy of terminating the Great Lakes Agreement” was dropped from the list.

14. Next Meetings of the GMDSS Task Force: The Task Force tentatively planned a hybrid meeting the during the NMEA Annual Convention in September but RTCM was unable to provide virtual support at that time so the Task Force elected to hold a virtual meeting at 9:30 am on 14 September.

GMDSS TASK FORCE CONTINUING WORK LIST

15 June 2023

1. Monitor FCC continuing action to update GMDSS Rules (TF)
2. Recommend actions to reduce false alerts in GMDSS systems (TF)
3. Monitor Coast Guard Port State GMDSS inspection program (TF)
4. Monitor programs that broadcast MSI for GMDSS Standards conformance (TF)
5. Review GMDSS Internet Web Sites and update Task Force portion of NAVCEN site (TF)
6. Support SOLAS Working Group planning for IMO NCSR and Joint Experts meetings (TF)
7. Advocate voluntary carriage of VHF and EPIRB/PLBs by all vessels offshore (TF)
8. Monitor FCC policy and practice on MMSI assignments (TF)
9. Monitor non-GMDSS systems: AIS, LRIT, SSAS, VDES, VMS, & E-Navigation (TF)

10. Recommend means to improve Distress Alerts by Cell Phone & Internet (TF)
11. Advocate mandatory Distress Beacons on R/V more than 3 miles offshore (TF)
12. Advocate use of the Alaska AIS Monitor Network for VHF Distress Guard (TF)
13. Monitor Developments in Cybersecurity and educate membership (TF)
14. Advocate Earliest Fitting of AIS on Coast Guard Helicopters (TF)
15. Review GMDSS concepts and make modernization recommendations (MOD)
16. Monitor automatic response to test calls to USCG HF Commstas (CV)
17. Recommend Safety Radio and VMS Requirements for Small Fishing Vessels (CV)
18. Recommend Safety Radio & Navigation Requirements for Towing Vessels (CV)
19. Recommend Safety Radio & Navigation Outfit for Small Passenger Vessels (CV)
20. Advocate better FCC & USCG management of annual GMDSS inspections (CV)
21. Maintain Inspection Guidelines and Check Lists for selected vessel types (CV)
22. Advocate voluntary training programs for users of GMDSS systems (RV)
23. Encourage GMDSS handbooks and Internet and video training aids (RV)
24. Encourage users of VHF-DSC to Register for MMSI and connect GPS (RV)
25. Encourage Mfgrs. to upgrade readability of GMDSS items in equipment manuals (SA)
26. Recommend proper interconnection of GPS receivers with DSC Radios (SA)
27. Coordinate with USCG-NMC and FCC on training uniformity (TR)
28. Maintain GMDSS Question Pools for FCC and Coast Guard Examinations (TR)

Key to cognizant groups:

(TF) Task Force
(CV) Commercial Vessel Task Group
(RV) Recreational Vessel Task Group
(SA) Service Agents and Manufacturers Task Group
(TR) Training Task Group
(MOD) GMDSS Modernization Task Group

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