

NATIONAL GMDSS IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE

Newsletter and Summary Record of 26 September 2013 Meeting

1. **The Summary Record.** This summary record is provided for information and will be posted on the Task Force portion of the Coast Guard web site: www.navcen.uscg.gov/?pageName=MaritimeTelecomms (click GMDSS, then GMDSS Task Force). The summary record is also distributed to all Task Force members to serve as a Newsletter summarizing GMDSS developments and other issues in marine telecommunications. The GMDSS Task Force met on 26 September 2013 at the Sheraton Hotel in San Diego, California during the joint Annual Meetings of the RTCM and the NMEA. In some cases the remarks at the Task Force meeting have been augmented with selected items from similar RTCM presentations earlier in the week. The documents listed below were distributed and are available on request:

USCG Federal Register Extract on elimination of 2 MHz coastal watches
Draft Task Force Position on VHF-DSC Alerting and Procedural Issues

2. **The Coast Guard Reports:** The following presentations were made by the persons indicated.

a. The Case for Emergency Beacons for R/Vs Offshore. The Coast Guard Office of Boating Safety was unable to send a representative but it is understood that they briefed the Coast Guard Marine Safety and Security Council on the positive recommendation of the National Boating Safety Advisory Council (NBSAC) and are presently analyzing statistical data as a preliminary to taking further steps.

Task Force member Gordon Garrett presented an interesting slide show summarizing selected SAR cases involving R/Vs from the past two years. The successful outcomes mostly included boaters with emergency alerting systems and the ability to provide an accurate position. The incidents involving loss of life invariably lacked timely notification and useful position information. His power point presentation is available on request to Gordon Garrett (gordon.garrett@bayfirst.com).

b. Declaration of Sea Area A1. Larry Solomon reported that with the essential completion of the Rescue 21 Project, the Coast Guard plans to declare Sea Area A1 operational. Sea Area A1 is created when there is a continuous shore watch on the DSC Calling and Distress channel 70. The initial declaration of Sea Area A1 will not include Alaska but will include the Continental U.S. coasts, the Great Lakes, Guam, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. According to provisions of the FCC Rules, a declaration of Sea Area A1 will require that all non-SOLAS vessels mandatorily equipped with VHF but operating with a DSC waiver, upgrade to VHF-DSC within one year. The present regulations require a class A VHF-DSC for these mandatory non-SOLAS vessels but the FCC and the Coast Guard are consulting on procedures that could accept a lower cost Class D radio for these vessels. The expectation is that Sea Area A1 will be declared officially near the end of 2013.

c. Sea Area A2 (MF Coverage). Larry Solomon also reviewed the decision that the coastal Medium Frequency safety watch on 2182 kHz and its DSC counterpart 2187.5 kHz will no longer be maintained by the Coast Guard. This action was taken because of the deteriorated condition of the equipment and antennas and lack of funding which would be needed to restore the system to full reliability. Contrary to earlier expectations that some 2 MHz services might be continued, all 2 MHz operations ceased at all Sectors and Communications Stations including termination of weather Broadcasts on 2670 kHz on 1 August of this year.

Even though no lead time is provided for users to make other arrangements, it was pointed out that vessel 2 MHz operations will continue in a ship-to-ship mode and that all SOLAS vessels are required to retain 2 MHz capability and watch on the DSC Distress frequency, 2187.5 kHz. Virtually all 2 MHz equipment is sold as a combined MF/HF radio, that is one of the GMDSS options for Sea Areas A3 (Inmarsat coverage) and Sea Area A4 (High seas outside of Inmarsat coverage). The Coast Guard has no future plan to declare Sea Area A2 operational which means that SOLAS vessels sailing beyond Sea Area A1 (about 20 miles) will have to outfit for Sea Area A3. Non-SOLAS mandatory vessels that sail beyond 20 miles offshore are presently required to have 2 MHz equipment and this will presumably require a change in the FCC Regulations. In the mean time, mandatory non-SOLAS vessels affected should maintain the watch on 2187.5 kHz or one of the HF Safety calling channels. The Task Force plans to recommend appropriate changes to the regulations for these vessels.

d. Coast Guard Proposal for Changes to the FCC Rules. Larry Solomon updated this project that had been discussed at the previous Task Force meeting. In an effort to move the project forward, no further changes are being incorporated into the proposal. This is a very comprehensive document with over 300 pages of track changes and probably the most effective way to bring the FCC Rules up to date. Release of the Coast Guard proposal had been expected earlier but is presently on hold pending clearance by officials in the chain of command. The FCC is expected to move promptly to put the document out for public comment.

e. Developments in E-Navigation and AIS/ECDIS Regulations. Jorge Arroyo reported with the following highlights drawn from his Task Force remarks and his RTCM presentation earlier in the week:

1.) Automatic Identification Systems (AIS): The U.S. Rulemaking for AIS Carriage closed for comments in April of 2009, and is ready for publication but it is caught in the regulatory backlog and will hopefully be published later this year. There has been recent progress in adopting standard symbology for displaying Aids to Navigation (AtoN) AIS facilities on electronic charts. The U.S. is planning to use AIS to monitor vessel traffic in the Arctic. A related RTCM presentation described an extensive AIS monitoring network in Alaska managed by the Alaska Marine Exchange. The Network has 110 stations connected to a 24x7 live watch in Juneau with the connecting infrastructure supported by the State of Alaska.

2.) ECDIS Rulemaking: The U.S. Marine Transportation and Security Act (MTSA) of 2004 mandated Electronic Navigation Charts (ENC) for all vessels required to be fitted with Automatic Identification Systems (AIS). The Coast Guard has been working closely with the RTCM and its Special Committee 109 to amend the RTCM Electronic Chart System (ECS) Standard. Version 6 of the Standard which is now under development will most likely be used in forthcoming regulatory action since it incorporates the use of AIS in an ENC. Coast Guard work on this Rule Making is proceeding and the greatest challenges are determining its economic impact and which non-SOLAS vessels should be outfitted. Until this Rulemaking is concluded, vessels will have to continue to carry paper charts.

3.) Differential GPS: Continued operation of the Differential GPS Navigation Service is under review with a comment period that closed on 13 July 2013. There were relatively few responses to the Federal Register Notice that does not auger well for continued operation. There are 85 differential reference stations operating in the U.S. and over 400 worldwide. The aeronautical WAAS service has taken over some users even though it is less accurate and subject to blockage. IALA has called for an International Differential GNSS system and RTCM is developing a standard that embraces all GNSS systems.

4.) E-Navigation Developments: E-Navigation encompasses a wide variety of technologies in addition to those mentioned above. The RTCM has several committees devoted to various aspects of e-navigation including SC-109, 112, 121,129, 130, and 131 (See paragraph 10 below). Application Specific Messaging is being tested in Tampa Bay, San Francisco and Delaware Bay using the VHF communications channel of AIS to transmit brief safety messages. Marine Safety Information (MSI) broadcasts will soon be formatted to facilitate direct display on chart plotters. This same reformatting will facilitate incorporation into databases, which can be downloaded by ships from the internet.

3. The FCC Reports: Ghassan Khalek reported for the FCC noting that the solicitation for new COLEMs had resulted in several new additions to the list. Since the COLEMs are permitted to examine candidates for licenses, this should be helpful to the Training Companies. The FCC appreciates the effort the Coast Guard expended in preparing suggested changes to the Rules but since it is taking a long time to get them sent to the FCC officially, the FCC plans to proceed with processing several petitions from the RTCM and the Task Force which have been pending for some time. Prior to the May meeting, Ghassan had advised that the revisions to all GMDSS question pools had been approved. This information has been passed to the Coast Guard's National Maritime Center (NMC) representative who noted that the Training Schools were now free to use the new Question Pools for their exams.

4. Reports on Maritime Programs of Interest to the Task Force: There were several special reports on specific satellite services as follows:

a. Update on Cospas-Sarsat Services. Dany St. Pierre reported on plans to upgrade the Cospas-Sarsat system for the new MEOSAR Constellation that will utilize GPS-3 satellites as well as GLONASS and GALILEO satellites as they come on line. Position by calculation will be faster and more accurate and latency will be reduced. The system will be backward compatible with existing beacons and a return link will be provided on the GALILEO satellites. When fully deployed, there will be up to 75 participating satellites. At the same time Cospas-Sarsat is developing a new generation of beacons with the goals of locating 90% of beacons on the first burst, improving accuracy, latency and homing and reducing false alerts and beacon cost.

b. Update on Inmarsat System Services. Howard Hughes of Inmarsat provided a briefing on current issues and future plans for the Inmarsat system. The date of closure for the Inmarsat-B system has been extended until the end of 2016. This extension has been given because the numbers of vessels continuing to utilize the Inmarsat B service is still significant and Inmarsat believes that additional time is needed to allow vessels to migrate to alternate services such that Inmarsat and its partners can continue to provide the services that these vessel owners value highly and rely upon. The new Ka band Global Express service will launch in 2014. There are no plans to phase out Inmarsat-C but all SafetyNET messages will be archived in a database available for download by ships as desired when the Maritime Safety Data Service is launched. The approximate count of various Inmarsat terminals is as follows:

Inmarsat Maritime terminals	about 240,000 sold
Inmarsat-C	about 145,000 in service
I-Sat Phone Pro	100,000 sold

c. Update on the Iridium System: Brian Pemberton reported in an RTCM presentation that the Iridium system has applied to IMO to be accepted for participation in the GMDSS, the next step is to provide details to the new Navigation, Communication, and Search and Rescue (NCSR) Subcommittee meeting in June 2014. Iridium has 50,000 subscribers including 15,000 SOLAS vessels. They already participate in the Long Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT) system and the Vessel Monitoring Service (VMS) used by Fishing Vessels. The Iridium system supports telephony, broadcast, and data including broadband.

d. Update on the Orbcomm System. Andrew Loretta reported in an RTCM presentation that the Orbcomm tracking system had been especially useful in aiding interdiction efforts relating to domestic drug smuggling, weapons supply to Syria and illegal fishing in African waters. Other applications using correlation with Radarsat and other sensors have included monitoring of pirated vessels, detecting vessels cutting across Australia's Great Barrier Reef and oil spill detection.

e. Update on the Exact Earth Environmental Monitoring System. Chandler Smith reported in an RTCM Presentation that Exact Earth in partnership with the Alaska Marine Exchange is monitoring vessel traffic in the Arctic. Recent northwest passages included the cruise ship THE WORLD with 508 people on board and the 416-foot mega

yacht OCTOPUS. The Exact Earth system has 4 satellites in orbits that cross the poles 14 times per day and can track 90,000 vessels. Their coverage of Greenland and the Antarctic is also attracting customer interest

f. Update on the Chinese BeiDou Satellite Navigation System. Yi Jiang Qu of the Chinese Shenzhen Maritime Safety Administration reported in an RTCM presentation that their new system is initially concentrated on the region 55 degrees North to South and 55 to 180 degrees East. Worldwide coverage will be achieved with 5 GEO and 27 MEO satellites by about 2020 providing 25-meter horizontal accuracy. The system will be compatible with and interoperable with the other satellite navigation systems. Their geodetic reference, China 2000, is similar to the World Geodetic Standard (WGS 84) used for GPS with a difference of about 5 cm.

5. Reports and Issues, Commercial Vessel Task Group. Jack Fuechsel reported for the Commercial Vessel Group with the following highlights:

a. Review of the Standards for Safety Radio Equipment on Small Passenger Vessels. This proposal recommending upgrades in radio equipment carried by small passenger vessels is on hold in view of the Coast Guard termination of 2 MHz coastal services that will necessitate a few alternative recommendations.

b. Continuing Issue – Alerts Causing Auto Shift to Channel 16 on C/V with Multiple VHF-DSC Radios. A draft Task Force position was circulated dealing with various aspects of the complaints about excessive alerts and certain other procedural issues with VHF-DSC operations. Joe Hersey made major contributions to the draft paper and the limited discussion revealed certain changes that should be made. Time restrictions limited discussion on the paper but a revised position paper was offered for the next Task Force meeting. Any members wishing a copy of the Draft paper should contact Jack Fuechsel (gmdss@comcast.net).

c. Canadian Marine Advisory Council (CMAC) Consultation Paper on EPIRBs: Russ Renaud circulated a paper indicating that consideration was being given to expanding the required carriage of emergency beacons by additional classes of boats in Canada. The inquiry was triggered by a report of the Auditor General of Canada that led Transport Canada to undertake a Distress Alerting Risk Assessment (DARA). The present Canadian EPIRB requirements are for commercial vessels of 20 meters beyond sheltered waters, commercial vessels of 8 meters beyond home-trade III voyages, and tugs on voyages over 50 nautical miles. The Consultation Paper invites maritime stakeholders to respond by the end of the year to a questionnaire including reasons for choices made. The questions deal with EPIRBs, PLBs, and VHF-DSC with connected GPS. Russ invited U.S. parties to respond as well. A copy of the Paper may be obtained from Jack Fuechsel (gmdss@comcast.net).

d. Restrictions on Shipboard ESV Terminals (Satellite terminals operating in the C, Ku, and Ka bands). Joe Hersey reviewed this issue in a paper he presented to the RTCM Assembly. Shipboard use of the satellite bands cited has been subject to an ITU

rule requiring that operation of the ESV shipboard terminals be capable of being shut down if vessels are operating within specified distances from land should interference to other satellite services be encountered. It has been determined that the responsibility for curtailing operations is on the operator of the ESV Satellite service rather than on the ship. The specified distances from land are 300 km for C Band and Ku Band and 125 km for Ka Band. This restriction is not thought to be a significant problem since the satellite service operators can determine in advance which administrations have operations in the bands that need protection and have been actively coordinating with those countries.

e. New Issue – Recognition of Alaskan AIS Monitoring Network to Extend VHF Distress Coverage in Alaska. An RTCM presentation by the Marine Exchange of Alaska noted that their extensive AIS monitoring network of 110 stations provided substantial coverage of the Alaskan coastline including the Aleutian Islands. Some of the stations have been equipped with DSC receivers but it is not clear whether any transmitter capability could be added. The network power and connectivity are State supported and managed from a 24x7 watch location in Juneau. Given the limited plans for Rescue 21 in Alaska and the delayed time schedule, it seems highly desirable to use this network to watch for Distress Calls. Use of the AIS Application Specific Messaging (ASM) capability is limited to brief Safety messages and it has yet to be authorized for Distress Calls. There may be options for adding receivers on channels 16 and 70 to the network or new authority to send Distress Calls through the ASM channel. The possibility of achieving this expanded distress coverage is important and the Task Force will follow the issue and advocate inclusion of Distress Alerting.

6. Reports and Issues, Service Agents and Manufacturers Task Group. Ralph Sponar reported for his group with the following highlights:

a. Standardized Inspection Checklists. The Group has worked with the Coast Guard, the FCC, and Classification Society inspectors to update checklists for mandatory inspections of selected vessel types. The three Inspection Checklists on the FCC website are linked to the Task Force website. Further review is being conducted on Checklists for Bridge-to-Bridge Radiotelephone and AIS Class A and B. The Fishing Vessel Checklist published in 2003 is being reviewed prior to posting on the web sites along with the other checklists. The checklist issue is complicated by the fact that neither the Coast Guard nor the FCC wants copies of completed inspection reports. This leaves the only option as retention of the latest inspection report on board with an entry in the log. In at least some cases, the interval between inspections needs to be reduced to provide realistic oversight of EPIRB battery replacement. Most of these issues should be resolved with the Coast Guard's proposed changes to Part 80 of the Rules.

b. Continuing Issue – Should “3 Strikes Rule” be Rescinded? Some Task Force members had previously raised the issue that the rule limiting to three the number of ‘tries’ to enter MMSI numbers in VHF-DSC radios was proving counter productive. Discussion at the last meeting suggested that a manufacturer furnished passcode that could be furnished to dealers and service agents might be a more convenient arrangement. The Coast Guard and FCC discussed the issue further at their monthly

meeting and had no objection to removing the “three strikes” rule. The forthcoming Coast Guard proposal to the FCC on Part 80 is reported to contain appropriate recommendations for domestic use. If corresponding changes need to be made to any international documentation, appropriate recommendations will be undertaken through the proper channels.

c. The Firestorm “Intelligent Radio Direction Finder”. Stu Boyd made a presentation on this new facility for use in locating survivors. The essential piece of equipment is a sophisticated direction finder which can locate an emergency beacon quickly provided a monitor has been established in the area or the device is airborne and in the vicinity of an operation where it may be needed. The advantage in direct detection lies in avoiding the elapsed time between the beacon alert and the routing of the contact to the responding RCC. Portable units are available but the antenna needs to be mounted on the aircraft.

7. Reports and Issues: The Recreational Vessel Group Report. David Kennedy of Boat U.S. reported for his group with the following highlights:

a. Emergency Beacons on R/Vs Offshore. This is a very important Task Force initiative the status of which was reported in paragraph 2. a. above.

b. ad hoc Group to Promote Proper Use of VHF-DSC Radios Including Registration for MMSI and Connection to GPS Receiver. Many comments at the meeting stressed the need for an aggressive public relations program. In particular, it was emphasized that formal government announcements rarely reach the boating public unless interpreted by boating magazines that are widely read. Although the Task Force continues to advocate connecting GPS to fixed mount VHF-DSC radios, we realize that the connection is difficult for owners to accomplish without technical help. Our reason for stressing the benefit of handheld DSC radios with integral GPS is that R/Vs are especially prone to capsizing and that renders fixed mount radios inoperable.

c. Possible use of Insurance Discounts to Encourage Fitting of Safety Alerting Equipment on R/Vs? This item was added to the agenda at the suggestion of a member and appeared that it might offer incentives for R/Vs to fit appropriate safety equipment. Initial inquiries revealed that this would be complicated by differing state regulatory requirements. There is also the difficulty of formulating a standard plan that could perhaps be accomplished through the National Association of Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA)? In the course of initial investigation, it was learned that the Power Squadrons offer an insurance discount for boats that pass their courtesy examination.

8. Reports and Issues: Training Task Group. Kurt Anderson, Head of the Training Group was unable to attend the meeting but he had previously laid out a number of issues recommended by his Group for improvement of GMDSS Training. There have been no new developments on these issues recently but the status at the last meeting is repeated here for information.

a. Make Changes to the Question Pool Format? There had been various suggestions that the ROC Question Pool be combined with the GOC Question Pool to constitute the first half of the combined Pool. The Training Group was split on this suggestion and it appears that most of the effort would be in combining the Pools. This issue will be revisited in 2014 when further changes to the Question Pools will be considered.

b. Offer Joint ROC/GOC Classes with the ROC being the first part of the combined class? The Group's opinion was against offering a combined class at this time. A Task Force comment was that this might not be attractive to students unless the Declaration of Sea Area A1 generated a big increase in applicants for the ROC Course. Further consideration of this proposal is deferred to gauge the impact of the pending declaration of Sea Area A1.

c. Require Recertification of GMDSS License Holders? Five year GOC recertification is now recommended by the 2010 Manila STCW Convention to assure better qualified operators. There is already precedent for recertification in the U.S. that has long required recertification for Radar/ARPA. Most of the Training Group also disapproves of recertification based on sea time alone. Recent action by the FCC to issue GOC Licenses for life has further clouded the recertification issue. This issue is difficult because it would change what has been the U.S. approach for 15 years, but one the Training Group believes important to improve operator qualification and enhance marine safety. The Task Force plans to study this issue further and consult with Coast Guard officials who represent the U.S. at STCW meetings and manage U.S. Training Policy at the National Maritime Center (NMC).

d. Should the U.S. Have a Certified Path to Qualification as a GMDSS Maintainer? Although the STCW Convention deals extensively with GMDSS Maintainers, there is no course offered in the U.S. leading to such certification. The Task Force Service Agents Group has long advocated a meaningful certification of technicians capable of maintaining GMDSS equipment and felt that holding the FCC Maintainer License was not sufficient evidence of competence. With IMO Rules calling for a "qualified" technician in many cases, this remains an open issue. After the January 2013 meeting, we were informed that the California Maritime Academy is considering developing a GMDSS Maintainer's course as part of their Extended Learning program. This issue remains under active consideration.

e. Reinstate Training in the IAMSAR Manual? SAR training was dropped by NMC as a requirement for all Deck Officers despite the STCW requirement that all Deck Watch Officers on ships over 500 tons have a working knowledge of the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue (IAMSAR) Manual. The 70-hour GMDSS Course is too crowded to work in IAMSAR training but it is a needed competence. The Task Force agreed to refer this issue to U.S. SAR authorities but has not yet received a response.

9. Reports and Issues: GMDSS Modernization Group. Ed Gilbert, Chairman of the Task Force Group on GMDSS Modernization and Bob Markle, Chairman of the International Correspondence Group, reported with the following highlights:

a. GMDSS Modernization Review by the IMO/ITU Experts Group. Bob Markle's International Correspondence Group is responsible for advancing the GMDSS Modernization work between meetings of the supervisory Committees. In addition to considering a wide range of issues of interest to both organizations, the Experts Group was tasked to review the initial report of the GMDSS Modernization Correspondence Group. The Experts Group Report commented on all recommendations of the Correspondence Group and in the absence of a definitive overview by Comsar 17, is considered the latest guidance for further work by the Correspondence Group. The Experts Group will meet again in London 14-18 October 2013 and will review two new reports from the Correspondence Group. The first, EG 9/4, entitled "Preliminary Draft Outcome of the High Level Review of the GMDSS" is the next step in the work plan following approval of the earlier report to COMSAR 17. The other document, EG 9/4/1, entitled "Discussion of Issues and Preliminary Outline of the Detailed Review of the GMDSS" begins the detailed review. The report of the review of GMDSS Modernization by the Experts Group and a revised report from the Correspondence Group will be submitted to the Navigation, Communications, and Search and Rescue (NCSR) Subcommittee meeting in June 2014.

b. Unscheduled Workshop on GMDSS Modernization held on 25 September. Ed Gilbert moderated the workshop that was scheduled because the Task Force meeting would provide only a limited amount of time for discussion. All interested RTCM and NMEA representatives were invited to attend. About 23 attended the workshop including several representatives from other countries. There was a wide-ranging conversation with an objective to get ideas introduced; there was no attempt to reach a consensus on the issues and the inputs do not necessarily reflect the views of the Task Force. Highlights of suggested principles are listed below:

- Incorporate e-navigation requirements in modernized GMDSS
- Incorporate security requirements in modernized GMDSS
- Include alternative satellite systems in GMDSS
- Consider relaxation of requirement for in-orbit spares for GMDSS satellites
- Consider changing MSI Broadcast requirement for all GMDSS satellite systems (Note consider changing Resolution A.1001 (25) provisions that require all satellite systems to perform all the functions currently performed by Inmarsat; this especially applies to MSI broadcast because both providers and users prefer one system vice potentially many.)
- Improve throughput of Navtex for coastal MSI
- Display MSI on chart plotters and ECDIS
- Include survival craft upgrades for long range communication and alerting (This should be especially applicable for ships operating in Polar Regions.)

- Utilize for GMDSS systems actually used by ships such as broadband
- Define functional requirements in lieu of equipment specifications
- Specify use of updatable software for GMDSS equipment
(A recurring theme was that too little attention is being paid to software systems and their maintenance and upgrades)
- Utilize goal based performance specifications
- The role and possible use of rechargeable batteries needs to be addressed
- Adopt a GMDSS Code to make changes easier
- Stress interoperability between SOLAS and non-SOLAS vessels
- Phase out of Inmarsat B has been delayed until 2016
- Training remains very important; a common interface would be very helpful, and there needs to be an operator recertification program.
- AIS has been very successful, and its importance is growing. While concerns about distress messages transmitted via AIS are understandable because reception is not assured, this issue needs continued attention. AIS

alerting

can contribute to the safety program as demonstrated by about 100 AIS stations in Alaska, that could provide valuable distress alerting coverage.

- LRIT remains a viable program, but its future need may be impacted by more extensive AIS coverage including satellite reception of AIS transmissions.
- Great care is needed to ensure the IMO/GMDSS process is perceived to be relevant; issues include:
 - More flexibility to adapt to changes quickly
 - More user inputs; unfortunately too few user inputs are received with the consequent perception that the process is dominated by regulatory issues
 - Intense efforts to ensure safety systems, except for EPIRBs, are used regularly for other purposes; this is important for many reasons, including operator familiarity, assurance the equipment is working and economies for provision, training, etc.
 - Whether to emphasize equipment or functions; inspectors say they can inspect a function, and because a functional emphasis is preferred by most users, it seems more relevant and adaptable.

10. The RTCM Report: RTCM President Bob Markle provided the following updates on the continuing work of the RTCM Special Committees during his earlier report to the RTCM membership. The following are highlights:

a. RTCM SC 101 on GPS in VHF-DSC Handhelds. The Committee has completed an edition of its standard on GPS in VHF-DSC handhelds. Prompt approval by the FCC is expected as part of the Coast Guard's proposal to revise the FCC Rules.

b. RTCM SC 104 on Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS). This Committee is working on incorporating Galileo, GLONASS, the Chinese BeiDou system

and the Japanese QZSS regional system into its standards that were originally developed for GPS.

c. RTCM SC 109 on Electronic Charting. The Committee is working on a new version of the standard and plans to include provisions for Voyage Data Recorder (VDR) functionality in Electronic Charting Systems.

d. RTCM SC 110 on Emergency Beacons. The Committee has completed a revised EPIRB standard with accompanying test standards for EPIRBs with GPS. They will revise the PLB standard to include GNSS and are also working on standards for a new generation of EPIRBs that will take advantage of certain characteristics of the next generation of Search and Rescue satellites. Existing EPIRBs will be compatible with the new satellite system.

e. RTCM SC-112 on Marine Radar Standards. This Committee is completing a standard on ship radar that is intended to replace the two 1990's era RTCM radar standards for vessels in domestic services. Publication should come later in 2013.

f. RTCM SC-119 on Maritime Survivor Locating Devices. This Committee was reactivated to consider man overboard AIS applications and other relevant technologies. The new standard has been published and the FCC has been petitioned to adopt it.

g. RTCM SC-121 on Automatic Identification Systems (AIS). This Committee continues work on AIS messaging and has a Working Group addressing AIS Application Specific Messages (ASM) such as those used in harbors and at locks. A 2013 publication date is expected for the new standard.

h. RTCM SC-123 on Data over VHF Channels. RTCM has petitioned the FCC to adopt RTCM Standard 12301.1 for transmitting data on VHF channels. The comment period closed with all comments favorable to the proposal. Early approval action by the FCC was expected but is still pending. The Committee is expanding its work to include data messaging on MF and HF channels as well as Encrypted AIS (EAIS).

i. RTCM SC-128 on Satellite Emergency Notification Devices (SEND). This Committee was chartered at the request of the Coast Guard to develop performance standards for emergency notification systems using private satellite systems such as SPOT. The Committee has completed and approved its new standard. The FCC has been petitioned to include the new standard in its Rules.

j. RTCM SC 129 on Portrayal of Nav-Related Information on Shipboard Displays. This Committee is just beginning its work.

k. RTCM SC 130 on Electro-Optical Imaging Systems (EOIS). The work of this Committee deals primarily with night vision systems, but the Committee work has been suspended pending industry resources to support it.

l. RTCM SC 131 on Multi System Shipborne Navigation Receivers. This new Special Committee has been approved by the RTCM Board to develop a standard incorporating space based and terrestrial navigation systems, and to include inertial systems as well. The standard will include provisions for resistance to interference, spoofing, and jamming.

m. RTCM SC 132 on Visual Emergency Signaling Devices. This new Committee was chartered at the request of the Coast Guard to review devices that might be used to replace flares on vessels.

n. Other RTCM Announcements of Interest. The 2014 RTCM Assembly including a Task Force meeting will be held concurrently with an International Meeting of the Co'mitee International Radio Maritime (CIRM) at the Lowes Hotel in Annapolis, Maryland the week of 27 April through 2 May 2014. It is expected that this joint meeting will prove popular with members of both organizations.

10. Other Business and the Next Meeting of the GMDSS Task Force: The next Task Force meeting will be held at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday morning 9 January 2014 at the RTCM Headquarters in Arlington, Virginia. The follow-on meeting will be held at the Lowes Hotel in Annapolis, Maryland during the RTCM Annual meeting (27 April to 2 May 2014). The Task Force will probably meet on Friday morning 2 May 2014.

GMDSS TASK FORCE CONTINUING WORK LIST

26 September 2013

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 MSI broadcasting programs for compliance with GMDSS Standards (TF)
5. Review GMDSS Internet Web Sites and update Task Force portion of USCG site (TF)
6. Support SOLAS Working Group planning for IMO NAVCOMSAR meetings (TF)
7. Advocate Canadian coordination to extend GMDSS services to the Great Lakes (TF)
8. Advocate voluntary carriage of VHF and EPIRB/PLBs by all vessels offshore (TF)
9. Advocate overhaul of FCC policy and practice on MMSI assignments (TF)
10. Monitor non-GMDSS systems: AIS, LRIT, SSAS, VDR, VMS, & E-Navigation (TF)
11. Recommend updates for Coast Guard NVIC on GMDSS Requirements (TF)
12. Recommend means to facilitate Distress Alerts by Cell Phone & Internet (TF)
13. Advocate GNSS for U.S. EPIRB and PLB Standards (TF)
- 14. Advocate mandatory Distress Beacons on R/V more than 3 miles offshore (TF)**
- 15. Advocate use of the Alaska AIS Monitor Network for VHF Distress Guard (TF)**
- 16. Review GMDSS concepts and make modernization recommendations (MOD)**
17. Advocate intership calling on HF GMDSS channels (CV)
18. Recommend Safety Radio and VMS Requirements for Small Fishing Vessels (CV)
19. Recommend Safety Radio & Navigation Requirements for Towing Vessels (CV)

- 20. Recommend Safety Radio & Nav. Outfit for Small Passenger Vessels (CV)**
- 21. Advocate voluntary training programs for users of GMDSS systems (RV)
- 22. Encourage GMDSS handbooks and Internet and video training aids (RV)
- 23. Encourage users of VHF-DSC to Register for MMSI and connect GPS (RV)**
- 24. Advocate FCC let R/Vs retain existing MMSI when applying for Station Lic. (RV)
- 25. Recommend through NASBLA that State's boat Registrations include MMSIs (RV)
- 26. Encourage Mfgs. to upgrade GMDSS explanations in equipment manuals (SA)
- 27. Recommend proper interconnection of GPS receivers with DSC Radios (SA)
- 28. Advocate better FCC & USCG management of annual GMDSS inspections (SA)
- 29. Maintain Inspection Guidelines and Check Lists for selected vessel types (SA)**
- 30. Recommend Certification Path For GMDSS Maintainer (SA) and (TR)**
- 31. Maintain GMDSS Question Pools for FCC and Coast Guard Examinations (TR)
- 32. Advocate 5 Year USCG Recertification Training of GMDSS Operators (TR)**
- 33. Advocate Reinstatement of SAR Training for Deck Watch Officers/STCW (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) Modernization Task Group

Attachment: Draft Agenda for Task Force Meeting Thursday 9 January 2014 at the RTCM Headquarters in Arlington, Virginia.

Please refer questions and proposals to Captain Jack Fuechsel at 703-527-0484 or gmdss@comcast.net. If you have an Internet server with spam filters, please authorize receipt of messages from gmdss@comcast.net

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