This letter is in response to the Coast Guard’s solicitation of public comment on high frequency radio broadcasts of weather forecasts and warnings. Due to the fact that we live on Prince William Sound, Alaska, nearly full-time in the summer, as well as due to the lengths of trips we take, the voice HF weather forecasts and warnings are the first things we listen to in the morning and the last thing at night. The forecasts play a major role in our planning as safety is our prime consideration when traveling marine waters in our 40’ boat. While these forecasts are expensive to produce, it may be far cheaper in the long run to continue producing them than to rescue small (and large) craft owners because they could not obtain weather advisories.

In Prince William Sound we rely solely upon the NOAA weather forecasts. We know of no other services we can access. In fact, the owner of a small boat in Fairbanks called this a.m. asking us to relay the forecast before they decided to drive to Valdez to go out on the sound. HF radio weather is one government service that would have a large, negative impact on the marine community if it were to be cancelled.

This fear and trepidation. I can only imagine that user cost would be too excessive for my limited budget. [6b] I can only imagine that the usefulness of the information would be adequate. The loss of Coast Guard HF marine weather broadcasts would affect me so severely that I do not think that I could continue to cruise without fear and trepidation. I can only imagine that the “alternatives” mentioned might be adequate and alleviate this fear and trepidation. But for now, it would put an end at least temporarily to my voyaging.

I would like to add that I believe that HV Voice service is so important that if it goes away, so probably will I.
Alternatives mentioned might be adequate and alleviate this fear and trepidation. But for now, it would put an end at least temporarily to my voyaging.

This is a solicited comment on the need to continue providing HF radio broadcasts of weather forecasts and warnings. As a recreational voyager via sailboat on inland, coastal, and blue water ocean passages over the past 15 years, I can attest to the safety value of the radio facsimile and voice weather broadcasts. My colleagues and I use these services to voyage safely, for route planning, and to avoid inclement weather conditions. I personally use the voice and fax transmissions several times daily while transiting. Due to occasional difficulties with reception of one or the other, I believe that both are valuable. I do not use SITOR. I do not have access to satellite phone, nor do the majority of boaters that I know who do similar passage making. I find the fax transmissions to be more valuable than voice, because they contain more data, but this mode also requires a working computer. Newer technology (online access) is rarely available at sea where this forecast information is most needed. Consulting route planners do not always provide the full picture or appropriate interpretation of the data. I fully understand the limitations of outdated equipment and costs of replacement, but I strongly urge refurbishment of at least some strategic broadcasting stations to allow continuation of HF radiofax broadcasts. Lives depend on it, and it is one of the best functioning federally funded programs I have experienced.

I am the captain and owner of a 42 foot sailboat "Gemini" cruising the coasts of Mexico, Central America and South America since 1999 with my wife Diane. We are both USCG licensed masters and we do delivery work along the Pacific and Caribbean coasts of Mexico and Central America when time and weather permit. Whether we are cruising or doing deliveries we use USCG HF radio broadcasts, weatherfax and NAVTEX along with any local, internet or commercial sources that are available to us. We use the USCG sources to confirm and crosscheck all other sources before making any decisions. We use the Coast Guard HF radio voice broadcasts during times of unsettled weather and find them essential when monitoring tropical
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Details</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Richard C. Beesley</td>
<td>4355 J Cobb Parkway Suite 140 Atlanta GA 30339</td>
<td>I am the owner of a 45 ft sailboat which makes frequent ocean passages. I utilize the radiofax and voice HF broadcasts to receive weather info when offshore as well as VHF broadcasts when near shore. I have no satellite reception capabilities on board. When near coastal I am also able to receive internet weather broadcasts. Yes, I do use Coast Guard HF voice broadcasts to receive weather. This service is utilized approximately 30 days per year. They are extremely critical to my safety as they are my only source of voice weather when offshore. Yes, I do use Coast Guard HF radiofax broadcasts to receive weather. The service is utilized approximately 30 days per year. They are extremely critical to my safety as they are the only means of receiving weather maps when offshore. No, I do not use SITOR. If the USCG HF broadcasts were not available, I would be forced to pursue the commercial Iridium of Globalstar satellite products. I find that the costs of these products are out of my financial capability. I am also concerned with the poor coverage of these products. Even if I were able to purchase one of these products, I would much prefer to have the redundancy of the Coast Guard HF broadcasts in case the satellites were out of range or failed. The loss of the HF broadcast would significantly affect me in that it would put my safety at peril. I spend approximately 80% less than 25 miles from shore, approximately 10% of my time 25 to 200 miles offshore and 10% more than 200 miles to sea. My cruising grounds are primarily the Atlantic East Coast, Bahamas and Caribbean.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David S. Wake</td>
<td>481 Paystreak Circle Wasilla AK 99654</td>
<td>I use HF radio weather voice broadcasts every time I am on the ocean. I spend a lot of time in Prince William Sound, cook inlet and the north gulf coast waters of Alaska. The weather. We find the Coast Guard HF radiofax broadcasts the most reliable and the most necessary of all the services we use in determining suitable weather. There are many poor alternative sources from paid sources and volunteers, depending on the area that we are cruising in. We have tried both and found them sorely lacking. We find the Coast Guard HF marine weather broadcasts very helpful and quite convenient. The loss would definitely affect the quality of information available. Example: many forecasters for pay or volunteer have predicted great conditions from their computer station located somewhere in the world. We always check for corroborating information before proceeding on a planned voyage. Losing the Marine weather would take the most important tool for our safety out of our hands. This is especially true when we are out at sea. Our area of operation is the Eastern Pacific high seas and the southwestern Caribbean seaward. While there are other means of getting weather information, these are internet-based, require more complex equipment than we are able to sustain financially or physically our vessel. We are always out of range of NOAA VHF radio network; the USCG broadcasts are currently the ONLY operational means of getting weather information in a direct and timely manner. Setting aside operational status, the alternative means of getting information (e.g. radio email, satellite phones) involve much more complex systems at both ends and have many more points of failure. The current system of “broadcasting” the same information to large numbers of users is very efficient and keeps the best information available at my fingertips.</td>
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857

859
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<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Favorite Weather Source</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>861</td>
<td>Bill Northington</td>
<td>5758 Churchland Boulevard Portsmouth VA 23703</td>
<td>I am the owner/operator of a 36 foot cruising sailboat. Like many sailors, I rely on the NOAA website and other websites for daily forecasts and planning when I’m on shore. When sailing on the Chesapeake Bay and up and down the Mid-Atlantic Coast, I tune to weather broadcasts transmitted via VHF radio and the NOAA website when the Internet is available. I receive weather forecasts exclusively via HF radio broadcasts when offshore. Yes, Daily when offshore. Yes, Daily when offshore. No. None. Sadly, there aren’t any alternatives that are within the budget of the average cruising sailboat. Without these services, I would be less willing to go offshore but I would continue to sail offshore. I believe that loss of these services would increase the number of Coast Guard rescues and loss of life and vessels. I sail the Chesapeake Bay and near coastal from New York to the Chesapeake Bay. I plan to sail to Bermuda approximately 650 miles offshore and to the Caribbean.</td>
<td>Keep up the good work. There simply isn’t any other reliable and affordable source of weather information on the high seas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>863</td>
<td>Eric R. Govan</td>
<td>South V Sirena of Oare TYSC Baltimore MD</td>
<td>HF broadcasts are an essential tool when sailing offshore. I am the captain of an offshore 42’ sailboat involved in long offshore passages. This is the only economical method of obtaining reliable weatherfax and spoken forecasts. Navtex does not provide reliable reception offshore.</td>
<td>HF broadcasts are an essential tool when sailing offshore. I am the captain of an offshore 42’ sailboat involved in long offshore passages. This is the only economical method of obtaining reliable weatherfax and spoken forecasts. Navtex does not provide reliable reception offshore.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>864</td>
<td>Frederick R. Snow</td>
<td>Merchant Marine Captain 29168 Piping Rock Road Sun City CA 92586</td>
<td>I use the radiofax weather transmission from Pt. Reyes, CA station to ascertain weather info for Pacific Coast of Mexico and Sea of Cortez. Very important during hurricane season. Mexico predictions from Mexico sources are not reliable or accurate. My equipment onboard my boat will become useless if you cancel the weatherfax transmissions and I will be using less reliable info to deal with serious safety issues. Please do not cancel the broadcasts of weatherfax from Pt. Reyes.</td>
<td>I use the radiofax weather transmission from Pt. Reyes, CA station to ascertain weather info for Pacific Coast of Mexico and Sea of Cortez. Very important during hurricane season. Mexico predictions from Mexico sources are not reliable or accurate. My equipment onboard my boat will become useless if you cancel the weatherfax transmissions and I will be using less reliable info to deal with serious safety issues. Please do not cancel the broadcasts of weatherfax from Pt. Reyes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>865</td>
<td>John K. Lewis</td>
<td>632 Chapman Street San Jose CA 95126</td>
<td>My primary sources for marine weather forecast information are the internet, HF weather fax, VHF weather broadcasts Yes I do use CGHG to receive USCG weather fax transmissions. I use them twice a month on average and they are my primary source of weather information when offshore I do not use SITOR to receive weatherfax The options I see, in the even the USGC discontinues this service, is the weather fax transmissions of other countries (mostly aimed at the needs of their fishing fleets) and satellite internet access that is prohibitively expensive. The loss of USCG weatherfax would leave me with limited and dated weather information when offshore. It would leave me without a good way to know the position of the pacific high and react to its influences on wind patterns needed for sailing.</td>
<td>The options I see, in the even the USGC discontinues this service, is the weather fax transmissions of other countries (mostly aimed at the needs of their fishing fleets) and satellite internet access that is prohibitively expensive. The loss of USCG weatherfax would leave me with limited and dated weather information when offshore. It would leave me without a good way to know the position of the pacific high and react to its influences on wind patterns needed for sailing. Follow-Up Comment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>867</td>
<td>Mickey Spillane</td>
<td>25 Young Street Newport RI 02840</td>
<td>I am a delivery captain, sailing frequently between the US East Coast and the Caribbean and Europe. Your SSB Weather products are vital to my safety and navigational routing, mainly Spring and Fall, but occasionally Winters too. The internet is fine for departure info but offshore, the SSB is my only source of weather info. I use both voice and weatherfax products. Please keep these systems alive.</td>
<td>I am a delivery captain, sailing frequently between the US East Coast and the Caribbean and Europe. Your SSB Weather products are vital to my safety and navigational routing, mainly Spring and Fall, but occasionally Winters too. The internet is fine for departure info but offshore, the SSB is my only source of weather info. I use both voice and weatherfax products. Please keep these systems alive.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
868  Clifford B. Fletcher  
P.O. Box 8309, PMB 410  
Saint John USVI 00831-8309  

I find these broadcasts not only useful, but critical in safe voyaging on the ocean. Good weather information is one of the most important tools any small vessel operator can use. In addition, cost is always a factor. These broadcasts make good weather reception available to any vessel operator for only the cost of a portable SSB receiver (around $100 - 200 US), which is far below the cost of a dedicated SSB transceiver with modem/laptop hookup or satellite phone/internet connection. My only complaint with the current system is that I would like the broadcasts to be repeated with greater frequency, say hourly rather than the current 6 hours.

869  Arnold S. Gould  
46 Wildwood Drive  
Bedford MA 01730  

Recreational sailor  

Yes  

No  

I don’t know; Very expensive; Not as easily used  

Yes, I rely on the CGHF MWF constantly – 4-6 times/day when sailing; 20-100 miles offshore; Occasionally more.  

Follow-Up Comment

870  James G. Evans  
630 Anchor Drive  
Forked River NJ 08731  

My vessel type is 36' sailboat. I am the owner.  

Follow-Up Comment

871  Peter N. Graber  
11 Reservoir Avenue  
Apartment 1  
Bristol RI 02809  

Weather broadcasts via HF radio are critical to the navigational safety of small craft. While shipping has large budgets and alternatives for receiving weather information, the most cost effective and smallest way for small vessels to receive offshore weather info is via HF. Discontinuing this valuable service will place life and property in jeopardy.  

I rarely use SITOR or Teletype to receive MWF. I receive and use MW Fax via SSB radio daily. MW Fax is critical to my operation. My daily routine at sea is orientated around receiving MW Fax broadcasts in the morning. The only alternative sources of MWF are satellite systems. They are expensive to install and operate and don’t work well on small sailing boats at sea. At sea I’m not certain how I would receive MWF without CGHF radio voice and Fax. Other than satellite systems that provide NOM based MWF via the Internet, SSB radio is the only source. We operate in the western Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea, Bermuda and East Coast of the US.

872  Brian L. Christie  
4 Driftwood  
Irvine CA 92604  

31' Sailboat – Pacific Seacraft – Owner  

Follow-Up Comment

873  Richard V. de Grasse  
De Grasse Marine  
308 Penny Road  
Ideauxport ME 04848  

I am a USCG licensed captain of auxiliary sailing vessels. I obtain MWF via NOAA VHF weather radio when within range and NOM via SSB radio when offshore. I also use GRIB files received via SSB radio. Most important are MW Fax broadcast from Belle Chase, LA. I use CGHF radio voice broadcasts and MW Fax to receive MWF when offshore. Voice broadcasts and MW Fax are critical because they are the only sources where the Internet is not available or I am out of range of VHF radio. I use both SSB voice MW radio and Fax at least once a day when offshore. I rarely use SITOR or Teletype to receive MWF. I receive and use MW Fax via SSB radio daily. MW Fax is critical to my operation. My daily routine at sea is orientated around receiving MW Fax broadcasts in the morning. The only alternative sources of MWF are satellite systems. They are expensive to install and operate and don’t work well on small sailing boats at sea. At sea I’m not certain how I would receive MWF without CGHF radio voice and Fax. Other than satellite systems that provide NOM based MWF via the Internet, SSB radio is the only source. We operate in the western Atlantic Ocean, Caribbean Sea, Bermuda and East Coast of the US.

874  Gayle H. Smith  
482 Quince Street  
Windsor CA 95492  

Yes. Please keep the HF radio broadcasts of weather information and storm warnings. It is a vital service to mariners, particularly those of us who circumnavigate. We depend on your broadcasts for accurate information and warnings.

Follow-Up Comment
I use the HF facsimile weather charts from Boston when sailing in Atlantic waters on my personal sailing yacht. I have found these transmissions to be easily received and the charts to be of a high quality with valuable additional comments. It would be a great shame if the service is withdrawn. Satellite communication systems for yachts are very expensive and the simplicity of HF radio is hard to beat. Please keep this great service running!

Darrell T. Smith
208 Avenue I
Redondo Beach CA 90277

I am the owner and captain of a 42' Krogen trawler. I keep her in Redondo Beach CA. I purchased in Texas and brought her on her own keel through the Panama Canal and home. Planning to go to Alaska for the summer next year.

Victor M. Martin
P.O. Box 735
Girdwood AK 99587

After spending over 20 years in the USAF I find it incomprehensible that the USCG would be eager to discontinue one of the most reliable weather transmission systems in the world. HF communications is and has been one of the most reliable long range systems available to the average mariner and needs to be kept in operation if for no other reason to provide a backup should our constellation of satellites fail from a hostile attack or a super sunspot era. Thank you for your consideration.

Lowell D. Stanley
3001 Ginnbrooke Lane
Knoxville TN 37920

My wife and I own a 40' foot cutter rig sailboat (Pacific Seacraft 40) I am owner Captain. It is only my wife and I aboard and we listen to HF weather forecasts every six hours while underway, and at least daily while anchored in the Caribbean. We sail out of our homeport of Beaufort, NC. We coastal cruise during the summers in between hurricanes. In the fall we sail from Beaufort offshore to the Bahamas, through the Crooked Island Passage to Great Inagua, then through the Windward passage to the Cayman Islands and the western Caribbean. In the spring, we return to the US via the Yucatan Channel to the Florida Keys then up the coast to Beaufort, NC. Until the last 2 years, we made this trip annually. I have returned to work until July.
2008. We plan to make the above trip in the fall of 2008. And plan to sail to Europe in the summer of 2010. Up until the last couple years, my boating has been from Ensenada, Mexico to Santa Barbara. For the last two years we have spent 6 – 7 months in Mexico. Now that we are home, we will be cruising from San Diego to San Francisco for about the next year. We will then depart for the Caribbean and Eastern coast of the United States for a few years. We use our boat extensively.

Follow-up Comment

881  Edward V. Weber
231 Tilden Street
Port Ewen NY 12466-1165

Vessel is a 38' Yacht of which I am owner & Captain.

Where:

a) Hudson River & NE coast of US.
b) Ocean between NYC and Nova Scotia and shore of Nova Scotia.
c) Ocean between Beaufort, NC and Bahamas and around Bahamas.

How Often:

a) several weeks each summer.
b) & c) typically 4 months each second year

Follow up comment

882  Wayne F. Kocheloue, DVM
20 Wood Street
Jefferson MA 03522

I am the master of a 38' recreational sailboat and I also crew on other similar vessels.

I use HF to receive both standard spoken weather forecasts as well as facsimile, especially for weather charts.

My sailing is about equally divided between coastal cruising within 45 miles of shore and offshore sailing, mostly between Rhode Island and either the Canadian Maritime, Bermuda and the Caribbean. I spend about 20 – 25 days a year sailing offshore where I use HF weather reports.

Follow-Up Comment

Finally, I have made a substantial investment in hardware and software in order to receive these transmissions.

883  Kenneth H. Britten
30100 Positas Road
Winters CA 95694

I own and operate a 45-foot offshore cruising sailboat, Aquila. My wife and I are planning a 15-month South Seas voyage starting in under a year. Our planned route forces us to be...
at some risk of crossing paths with major tropical storms (eastern Pacific). We are planning to use HF weatherfax as our primary means of tracking and avoiding such storms, since this equipment is already installed on the boat. Losing this valuable information would significantly and negatively affect our vessel's safety on this trip. We do not at present have any other means of getting this information once offshore, though if the service is discontinued we would be forced to buy into some alternative equipment at significant cost. We do not yet know what system we would choose. If there is a significant operating cost to the alternative, like there would be for a satphone based internet connection, we would probably use it far less often, also materially affecting our safety. The daily weather chart, is, in my view, one of the most important services to our cruising community that the Coast Guard provides, and its termination would statistically almost certainly lead to the deaths of American citizens traveling offshore.

| 884 | Kris Greene  
|---|---
| P.O. Box 512  
| Hyde Park VT 05655 | I sail a 44 ft recreational sailboat as owner/captain... cruising the southeast atlantic seaboard and in the Bahamas. I am aboard about 6 months of the year, half in the Bahamas. |

Follow-Up Comment  
I cannot receive fax or internet weather reports while cruising, and much of the time I am out of range of VHF NOAA forecasts. Please do not discontinue the HF broadcasts.

| 885 | T. Harrington  
|---|---
| 2217 East Rancho  
| Phoenix AZ 85016 | Recreational boater  
| HP Radio (USCG); Paid subscription; seldom – only if impending (bad) weather change; when at sea – daily using computer program auto/tuned download | Paid subscriptions, private vendors. Would expect private vendor to increase subscription cost once USCG companion ceases. Information generally the same – but private vendors have more 'bells and whistles' |

Follow-Up Comment  
I cannot receive fax or internet weather reports while cruising, and much of the time I am out of range of VHF NOAA forecasts. Please do not discontinue the HF broadcasts.

| 886 | Patricia L. Wing  
|---|---
| Cap'n Patty Charters  
| P.O. Box 3667  
| Valdez AK 99686 | We operate a 38’ power vessel from the Port of Valdez, Alaska. We have a sportfishing charter business, and are on the water daily (most days) from just before Memorial Day Weekend through Labor Day weekend, and also utilize the vessel privately before and after these dates at times. Again, the radio broadcasts are vitally important to us, especially on overnight and multi-day trips when we don’t have phone or internet access to forecasts. We also use the hourly updates to determine what track we will be using to get back to Port when the weather is ‘iffy’. |

Follow-Up Comment  
First of all, thank you for your follow up. If lets us know that someone is really looking into this. You had questions about what/where we operate, so here it is...

| 887 | Johnny J. Muycleck  
| Mat-Su Borough, Emergency Services Department  
| P. O. Box 872671  
| Wasilla AK 99687 | As a daily user of NOAA local weather broadcasts for personal & emergency services reasons, I sent in earlier comment. Except for one or twice a year of recreational boat activities (on friends' boats), I do not use broadcasts for marine purposes. |

Follow-Up Comment  
Coast Guard request was on NOAA Weather Radio for the Matanuska-Susitna Borough—not on a marine band.
888  Mark J. Savalla
709 Pacific Cove Drive
Port Hueneme CA 93041
I am the owner of a 39' sloop. Used for personal recreation, cruising.

891  Stephen E. Runals
11280 Magnolia Place
Smithfield VA 23430
pleasure sail 34 ft/owner CAPT
Operating location - off East Coast, vic of Chesapeake Bay out as far as Bermuda, monthly with offshore passages twice yearly.
Follow-Up Comment

892  Landfall Learning
Sharon E. Watkins
411 Walnut Street #3011
Green Cove Springs FL 32043
Please continue HF weather broadcasts. We are full time cruisers and rely on these weather reports for our safety at sea virtually every day. We are contemplating adding radiofacsimile equipment but could not justify the cost without assurance these broadcasts will continue.
Follow-Up Comment

893  Nuno S Matta
7220 Northeast 221 Street
Melrose FL 32666
I'm a Yacht Captain for over thirty years, on power and sail. Also as an electronics engineer, by trade, I'm being installing and servicing marine electronics for the same time. Voice broadcasts and radiofax. At least twice daily, it’s my primary source of MWF. Normally I will receive four or five charts daily. In times of tropical activity it may increase. SITOR equipment isn’t normally available on pleasure or fishing vessels. On deep sea routes, only satellite services will be available. XM and SIRIUS still lacking offshore coverage. Sat C is becoming widely used, and it may provide the text version of NOAA forecasts. Fleet and V-Sat are expensive and bulky for most pleasure boaters and fishermen. It will affect most of blue water sailors. CGHF weather is the easiest to receive. Anyone anywhere may keep a SW receiver. I carry a small battery operated one that I may use as a backup. Primarily up to 2 or 3 hundred miles offshore, but I also have several trips between Europe and USA.
Follow-Up Comment

894  Phillip J. Scaman
2419 East Harbor Boulevard
#121
Ventura CA 93001
I am a private sailor, sailing my own sailboat. Prior to a trip the NOAA web site, just before departure VHF local broadcast - While underway both VHF and HR WPXs. YES, whenever I am sailing more than 20 miles off shore - once every couple of months - Extremely critical. YES - every months or so - extremely critical. No, do not have the equipment to receive this type of broadcast. CGHF is very expensive and out of my budget range at this time and I do not expect the alternate units to reduce in price to be a viable alternative source of MWF. (i) The information is very useful and could replace the current technology IF IT WERE AFFORDABLE. (ii) They are the ONLY current affordable source of accurate long distance marine forecast (within my budget) currently within 200 miles of the CA coast - I sailed from California to New Zealand in 19978 at which time the CGHF service was my ONLY weatherfax service and was critical to my safety and navigation. I plan to depart for the South Pacific once again in the spring of 2009. At which time the CGHF will once again be my ONLY source of regular and reliable weather broadcasts. Again the safety of myself and my crew will depend 100% on your regular and reliable CGHF weatherfax services.
I sincerely hope that I have answered your questions fully and completely and that it will help in gaining the funding (as small as it is for a government agency service) which this service needs so badly. On behalf of the cruising community in both the Atlantic and Pacific let me please say “thank you for being there and to please continue such a great service.

895  Debra J. Axness
411 Walnut Street #1417
Green Cove Springs FL 32043
We live aboard our sailboat, sailing the East Coast of the US, Caribbean Sea, and longer passages. We have used the Offshore Weather and High Seas weather reports from HF and rely
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<tr>
<td>896</td>
<td>Norman H. Bird</td>
<td>15714 Lakeview Houston TX 77040</td>
<td>As a frequent Gulf Coast fisherman and homeowner near Freeport, I utilize NOAA weather broadcasts frequently. When tropical storms approach this area, I also monitor them to quickly inform personnel at more than 30 Houston area banks that I support of possible detrimental weather. USCG needs to continue the radio broadcasts and update their equipment if necessary.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>897</td>
<td>fav bal</td>
<td>457 Lancer Lake Brownsville TX 78521</td>
<td>It would be a great disservice if the Radiofax weather advisory system were to be taken away. Please upgrade the transmitters in order to provide this great service to the people of the United States and Mariners.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>898</td>
<td>Clyde Hancock</td>
<td>P.O. Box 693 Silt CO 81652</td>
<td>In regard to the proposed elimination of HF weather broadcasts. The current users are generally cruising sailors, mostly American, and ships which do not have satellite reception available. Obviously this is a dying method of transmitting information to mariners. In my opinion it should be continued with the existing equipment. Then, to save the taxpayers money, not buy new HF equipment and discontinue transmission. Perhaps taxpayer money should be spent, instead, to enable a handheld gps device to be able to receive in addition to gps signals, text weather broadcasts as well as gif file graphical broadcasts. That is the way to go with our government tax dollar. For now,... I don’t have satellite connection so I rely on the ssb receiver and the NOAA forecasts for offshore weather info. Currently I'm listening closely on TS soon to be hurricane Dean information.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>901</td>
<td>Richard A. Mikulec</td>
<td>33 Clarke's Crossing Prism Technologies Inc. Fairport NY 14450</td>
<td>I would like to see a 14 day forecast not historical data from the Ocean Prediction Center. When I select a 14 day report, I get a report that unfortunately starts 15 days late. As an example, a W Atlantic Surface Analysis - 14 day loop report selected today starts with 12 UTC 01 Aug 2007 and ends 06 UTC 15 AUG 2007. I believe most mariners would prefer to have forecast data to plan a voyage as it is difficult for some of us to travel back in time.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>902</td>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td></td>
<td>HF weather transmissinos are a risk mitigation measure that must be sustained to ensure safety to mariners. Recent events in the USA and around the world demonstrate the fragility of the communications infrastructure during natural disasters and extreme weather events. Maintain this capability.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
905  Kurt M. Stephens
New Port Richey FL
34652

I am a retired Coast Guard Officer who now enjoys sailing in the Gulf of Mexico and on occasion the Atlantic.

Most certainly I do. I use them daily and not just underway. I use them no matter what my venue is at the time. I also use them for Hurricane monitoring and track storms through the weather fax information. It is much more important than local broadcasts if I'm in port or underway.

Yes, I use this feature daily, in port and underway. It’s a great feature. They are critical to the safety of all souls onboard and to the safety of the crew.

I can’t answer this question because I have not pursued alternative methods, however, I do know that it would cost me, in the form of new and additional equipment and fees associated with them. By using the HF system I have a “zero” cost.

Yes. I do, and I use them nearly every day. They are critical to the safety of all souls onboard and to my vessel, a cruising catamaran sailboat. I currently have no other source of obtaining weather information. All other sources require additional equipment purchase and usually have fees associated with them.

Most certainly I do. I use them daily and not just underway. I use them no matter what my venue is at the time. I also use them for Hurricane monitoring and track storms through the weather fax information. It is much more important than local broadcasts if I'm in port or underway.

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Most certainly I do. I use them daily and not just underway. I use them no matter what my venue is at the time. I also use them for Hurricane monitoring and track storms through the weather fax information. It is much more important than local broadcasts if I'm in port or underway.

Yes, I use this feature daily, in port and underway. It’s a great feature. They are critical to the safety of all souls onboard and to the safety of the crew.

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K. Arvaj
Merchant Vessel
Ascarius

907

Coast Guard HF marine weather broadcasts are less than acceptable to us:
1. They are more costly
2. They are not available everywhere
3. They would significantly affect our itinerary
4. They are not as convenient

We are using it constantly, both on the Atlantic and Pacific, and would be very much disappointed if these services were terminated.

The only one service which can be discontinued is HF voice and SITOR as most of us do not understand English in such extent to follow it quickly on voice transmitted navigational warnings and have SATCOM-NAYTEX Warnings. HF SITOR is never used. Facsimile data are invaluable for executing voyages safely.

Peter Barbous
8331 Laurelwood Drive
Huntington Beach CA 92646

Recreational operator of a 41 foot cruising sailboat, instructor for the United States Power Squadrons (USPS) educational department, Chief Radio Officer for a California coastal city’s Radio Amateur Civil Emergency Service (RACES) emergency communications program and a communication volunteer for the center of the American Red Cross within the Pacific Service Area (geographic area that includes the Pacific Island territories of the United States). The following comments are strictly my personal opinions regarding the USPS’s need to continue HF radio broadcasts and not an official position of any of the organizations that I am currently associated with.

a. National Weather Service (NWS) resources via internet while ashore in modern, developed areas with the complex infrastructure required to support affordable and reliable high bandwidth / high speed internet access.
b. National Oceanic & Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) VHF Weather Radio broadcasts in coastal waters within range of the transmitter, in locations without reliable internet access infrastructure or in or mariners. Continuing this service would lead to greater down time and unavailability. The onboard components have significant cost, physical footprint and electrical demands that exceed the traditional HF broadcast receive station. For smaller vessels upgrading onboard power systems to provide for the requirements of satellite based voice and data and finding the space to accommodate the equipment and required antennas becomes impractical.
c. USCG HF voice & radiofax broadcasts while offshore, beyond the range of VHF coastal stations or coast guard facilities. Continuing to provide HF voice and communications infrastructure has been disrupted.
d. USPS Offshore Navigation (USPS) resources to accomplish both of the above roles. With reliable and economical weather data the community is simply the best use of these resources.

a. Yes.
b. I receive Coast Guard HF radio voice broadcasts and demonstrate their use in USPS Offshore Navigation and Marine Electronics educational programs. I have planned for the use of HF radio voice broadcasts on a daily basis for future passage making and cruising in the offshore waters of the Western Coast of the United States. These broadcasts would be critical to the safe operation and navigation of the vessel while offshore. The other delivery methods of this data would be unavailable, disruptive to the communication method or cost prohibitive to my vessel and plans.

c. Coast Guard HF radioSimplex Teletype over Radio (SITOR) for future passage making and cruising in the offshore waters of the Western Coast of the United States. This communication method would be critical to the safe operation and navigation of the vessel while offshore. The other delivery sources this forecast data would be unavailable, disruptive to the communication method or cost prohibitive to my vessel and plans.
d. Alternative sources would include satellite based voice & data systems. These alternatives are not ideal and have serious drawbacks for all users of these systems.

b. Satellite based voice & data would be cost prohibitive for my vessel. In areas where greater connectivity is required, additional complexity will likely lead to greater down time and unavailability. The onboard components have significant cost, physical footprint and electrical demands that exceed the traditional HF broadcast receive station. For smaller vessels upgrading onboard power systems to provide for the requirements of satellite based voice and data and finding the space to accommodate the equipment and required antennas becomes impractical.

c. Amateur radio voice broadcasts would cost prohibitive for my vessel. In areas where greater connectivity is required, additional complexity will likely lead to greater down time and unavailability. The onboard components have significant cost, physical footprint and electrical demands that exceed the traditional HF broadcast receive station. For smaller vessels upgrading onboard power systems to provide for the requirements of satellite based voice and data and finding the space to accommodate the equipment and required antennas becomes impractical.

d. USPS Offshore Navigation (USPS) resources to accomplish both of the above roles. With reliable and economical weather data the community is simply the best use of these resources.

a. Yes.
b. I receive Coast Guard HF radio Simplex Teletype over Radio (SITOR) and demonstrate its use in the USPS Offshore Navigation and Marine Electronics educational programs. I have planned for the use of HF radio Simplex Teletype over Radio (SITOR) for future passage making and cruising in the offshore waters of the Western Coast of the United States. This communication method would be critical to the safe operation and navigation of the vessel while offshore. The other delivery methods of this forecast data would be unavailable, disruptive to the communication method or cost prohibitive to my vessel and plans.

c. USPS Offshore Navigation (USPS) resources to accomplish both of the above roles. With reliable and economical weather data the community is simply the best use of these resources.

a. The loss would negatively impact me. It would severely impact the safe operation of the vessel and planned cruising on the West Coast of the United States. Its loss would require additional complex equipment to obtain replacement information or simple doing without the weather information. Its loss would require reliance upon a complex system both aboard the vessel and the link ashore to provide replacement information.

b. The loss of HF marine weather broadcasts would eliminate a reliable source of weather information in areas experiencing communication disruptions. A key benefit of the HF broadcast service is that transmission sites are likely to be well outside of an impacted area so a minimum level of current weather data can be maintained in a disrupted area.

Currently the vessel operates in the West Coast coastal and offshore waters. Future plans extended this operational area to include the Pacific, Alaskan coastal, offshore and high seas areas.

The Coast Guard provides unique benefits to the nation because of its distinctive blend of military, humanitarian, and civilian law- enforcement capabilities. To serve the public, the Coast Guard includes in its fundamental roles ‘Maritime Safety’. Continuing HF broadcasting provides a basic tool to mariners to prevent dangerous situations, ensure the safety of crew and protect the environment. It is clear that HF broadcasting continues to be a critical component of Maritime Safety.

Another fundamental roles the Coast Guard provides is ‘Maritime Mobility’. Once again HF broadcasting can and does provide a basic tool for all mariners. This tool is cost effective, simple and reliable. It negates the needs of maritime commerce to help eliminate interruptions and impediments to the efficient and economical movement of goods and people, while maximizing recreational access to and enjoyment of the water. Continuing to provide HF voice and data weather products to the maritime community is simply the best use of resources to accomplish both of the above roles. With reliable and economical weather data the movement of commercial and recreational vessels arriving and departing from American ports of call will continue to be done to minimize dangerous weather. Such weather if not avoided will require assistance of the USCG in rendering aid to mariners who are injured or whose vessels damaged or lost due to contact with inclement weather. The costs involved
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<tr>
<td>Douglas R. Browning</td>
<td>Morehead City Yacht Basin 208 Arendell Street Morehead City NC 28557</td>
<td>The system changes the bandwidth requirements significantly. Now this identical data must be transmitted multiple times – on demand if you will – to every user in the area. The bandwidth available to amateur radio operators is not sufficient to provide for this delivery method and it is arguable if the bandwidth available in some of the satellite delivery systems can provide the required bandwidth reliably. Broadcasting is hands down the most reliable, economical and efficient method to distribute weather data to the high seas. In substitute methods place an undue burden on the maritime community and have serious limitations. Reliable weather data is a cornerstone of safe navigation and the USCG should be proud to be providing this fundamental resource for our citizens and visitors arriving and departing ports of the United States. In addition the availability of HF broadcast data during disasters that impact the communication infrastructure must not be overlooked.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David A. Jensen</td>
<td>11521 Brayton Drive Anchorage AK 99516</td>
<td>I am a recreational boater who frequently makes medium-range (less than 1500 miles/ open ocean transits). While we use a private weather forecaster and routinely get weather information from OCENS via satellite phone, we would be deeply concerned with our safety if NOAA weather information was not available by HF voice and radio facsimile transmissions. We do not use SITOR. Our weather forecaster is occasionally not available at critical times. We often get NOAA radio faxes and copies of HF voice forecasts via OCENS but this is dependent on a satellite connection which often fails in the open ocean. PLEASE continue this valuable service.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Teresa A. Rothbauer</td>
<td>2204 216th Avenue South East Sammamish WA 98075</td>
<td>Yes, I use HF radio broadcasts, specifically NMG and NNM. Yes, I use HF radio fax broadcasts 2 or 3 times a week, for 8 months, when planning cruises. The faxes have led me to make No. I don’t know. It is expensive to change to satellite sources and I am frequently in locations where there is no internet access or radio/tv info. Yes, I use HF radio broadcasts, specifically NMG and NNM. Yes, I use HF radio fax broadcasts 2 or 3 times a week, for 8 months, when planning cruises. The faxes have led me to make No. I don’t know. It is expensive to change to satellite sources and I am frequently in locations where there is no internet access or radio/tv info. Yes, I use HF radio broadcasts, specifically NMG and NNM. Yes, I use HF radio fax broadcasts 2 or 3 times a week, for 8 months, when planning cruises. The faxes have led me to make No. I don’t know. It is expensive to change to satellite sources and I am frequently in locations where there is no internet access or radio/tv info. Yes, I use HF radio broadcasts, specifically NMG and NNM. Yes, I use HF radio fax broadcasts 2 or 3 times a week, for 8 months, when planning cruises. The faxes have led me to make No. I don’t know. It is expensive to change to satellite sources and I am frequently in locations where there is no internet access or radio/tv info. Yes, I use HF radio broadcasts, specifically NMG and NNM. Yes, I use HF radio fax broadcasts 2 or 3 times a week, for 8 months, when planning cruises. The faxes have led me to make No. I don’t know. It is expensive to change to satellite sources and I am frequently in locations where there is no internet access or radio/tv info. Yes, I use HF radio broadcasts, specifically NMG and NNM. Yes, I use HF radio fax broadcasts 2 or 3 times a week, for 8 months, when planning cruises. The faxes have led me to make No. I don’t know. It is expensive to change to satellite sources and I am frequently in locations where there is no internet access or radio/tv info. Yes, I use HF radio broadcasts, specifically NMG and NNM. Yes, I use HF radio fax broadcasts 2 or 3 times a week, for 8 months, when planning cruises. The faxes have led me to make No. I don’t know. It is expensive to change to satellite sources and I am frequently in locations where there is no internet access or radio/tv info.</td>
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times a day. They are my primary weather source. I rely on the voice broadcasts for my safety. I use the information about adverse or deteriorating wx conditions to plan cruises. When in port I use the information to ensure my safety by changing anchorage locations or increasing my anchor’s holding ability if necessary. I have used your broadcasts to adequately secure my boat successfully through the passage of two hurricanes within 60 NM of my location. I frequently share the information I hear on your broadcasts with vessels which do not have the capacity to receive it.

We attempt to access weather forecast data from all possible sources. Our primary sources of marine weather data depend on the venue: A) Shore-side we rely heavily on the Internet, when available, to access NOAA/OPC weather products. Again, we use VHF as a supplemental source for coastal weather forecasts and warnings and, when offshore, HF voice for the most current weather and warnings plus Inmarsat-C for High Sea test forecasts and warnings. Since the Internet is not an official NOAA/USCG operational source of weather forecasts and

Yes. HF voice for USCG marine weather forecasts and warnings is used when underway or at anchor and beyond range of US based VHF marine weather and warnings. Frequency is as noted in (4) below. This service is a key factor in continuing longer offshore passages.

Yes. Frequency of use depends on the number and duration of coastal and offshore passages, perhaps 6 to 10 passages per season. During these times it is used at least once daily and, if weather conditions are suspect, twice daily. We don't leave dock without it! In addition, when at anchor we use it daily as our single, most complete and reliable source of weather data for the duration, ranging from a total of 45 to 90 days per season. We consider HF WFX as to be the single most actively used safety system on our vessel second only to the horn, but hope never actively ‘used’, PFD’s and harness/tether systems.

The alternative would be to access the Internet via SSB. This would certainly be a added cost but could provide essentially the same NOAA/OPC weather products so it would be a useful alternative. When offshore, beyond VHF range, we would have no voice source. As stated in (2) above, we do not consider this to be a reliable source since it is not an official NOAA/USCG operational source of weather forecasts. From a reliability perspective, this Internet access suffers from too many links to assure reliability.

We would have to seriously reevaluate our coastal and offshore passage planning. Even shore-side we sometimes find Internet access to be difficult to obtain and, occasionally, unavailable requiring the use of HF services for WFX products. Passages extending beyond 24 to 36 hours would require a more conservative plan with more ‘escape’ options planned. Further, during extended anchoring we would be seriously deprived of the complete overview provided by NOAA/OPC weather products, surface analysis and forecasts, 500mb analysis and forecasts, and related weather charts. This

As indicated in these comments, our cruising takes us both to coastal and offshore waters. We currently cruise the southeast United States coast as well as the waters of the Bahamas. We have previously cruised for 25 years on the Great Lakes, particularly Lake Superior, prior to moving to the U. S. East Coast.

I feel that HF Voice weather bulletins are vital to the safety of mariners. I use HF as a backup to VHF comms and find that many times I'm out of VHF range.

HF is also a great backup in the event of a VHF radio failure on the USCG side. Without the Coast Guard providing this service, mariners would be left either using satellite services which can be expensive and not as reliable or relying on the dedicated volunteers that operate the amateur radio networks on HF whom relay some of the information. The Coast Guard would have a more robust and timelier delivery of these bulletins which could save lives.

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warnings, we do not consider it to be reliable when underway.

We strongly believe, based on several years of sailing in the Caribbean and Pacific, that USCG should continue voice broadcast and radio facsimile broadcast of weather information. This is often the only source of info which can be truly vital to the safety of a sailing passage. We have no experience, and therefore no comment, re SITOR.

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We have a 150' cargo sailing ship that operates in the Mid to South Pacific Island group. We use your HF weather transmissions daily and hope that you will continue them.

With the rapid growth of recreational boating and the improvement in yacht design and ease of navigation, it is essential for safety and comfort that the yachtsman have accurate offshore weather forecasts. A rescue of a yachtsman and his crew is dangerous and costly. It is penny wise and pound foolish to not replace and maintain HF weather stations.

I used the hf broadcast to monitor a potentially developing tropical wave that ended up not developing. We sat it out in La Ciba, Honduras. The other boat with us depended on us due to there was no available weather, internet or other contact at that time. A third boat in the area sitting out this potential cyclone also had hf radio and stayed glued to the reports as well. Without this we could have been in a...
Life threatening situation if his system had developed. This service provides life saving information for those of us at sea.

The USCG is asking for comment on the need to continue the weather radio broadcasts in Prince William Sound and Katchamak Bay. I always check the forecasts and coastal reports and check out what the winds and seas are doing. This provides another layer of safety for my boat and family both on and off the water. Please continue this valuable service.

I'm weekend boater out of PWS and I'm on the water about 15 weekends a year. I monitor PWS weather broadcast twice a day while I'm out on water, and it is one of my critical information while making decisions. I would like USCG to continue with weather service. If current system is outdated can it be upgraded to newer system or reliable satellite weather service?

I am for keeping the weather forecast and coastal reports for Prince William Sound. I am always checking the weather on that channel and I think it is great tool for safe boating.

Weather information provided by high frequency (hf) radio is critical to the well being of hundreds, if not thousands, of cruisers in the Southwest North Atlantic, the Gulf of Mexico and the Caribbean Ocean. With an hf receiver, a $2.00 patch cord, a free shareware program and a laptop computer, anybody can download the High Seas forecast, and the periodic weather fax transmissions. This info is vital to a mariner in making informed decisions about the response to an upcoming weather event. On a daily basis, this information goes into the mix of wx information available to aid the mariner in deciding whether to stay in port or make the passage. After spending three years cruising in the Eastern Caribbean my experience is that the only way that a mariner can receive unadulterated wx information is through hf radio. Depending on local governments to provide timely information is foolhardy. The money required to up grade the radio equipment will save lives.

We do not currently use SITOR. There is no reasonable alternative. Satellite equipment and service are prohibitively expensive. (Even if I had to good fortune to have satellite capability, we would want HF as a backup system.) The loss of USCG HF marine weather would be a tremendous blow. We have already invested in a SSB radio, FACTOR II modem, backup Xaxero modem, installation costs and time invested for learning to operate High seas (North and South Atlantic, Pacific, and Indian Oceans) for the next 5 years. Home waters are New England with voyages to Newfoundland, Bermuda, and the Caribbean.

Occasionally DAILY CRITICAL TO OUR SAFETY. Our only weather source at sea, and our primary source of weather information when we are land based.

Our only source of wx information is USCG HF radio broadcast; secondary: shore side internet; additionally: VHF in home waters.

Our primary weather source at sea, is USCG HF radio broadcast; secondary: shore side internet; additionally: VHF in home waters.

Primary: USCG HF radio broadcast; secondary: shore side internet; additionally: VHF in home waters.

Owner/operator 64' cruising sailboat, Captain USCG, 50 GT Master Near Coastal. Currently on a 5 year voyage to include North and South Atlantic, South Pacific, and Indian Oceans.

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<th>Role</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>928</td>
<td>Guy Cosby</td>
<td>Owner/operator Sundeer 64 sailboat, USCG 50 Ton Near Coastal, on a world cruise.</td>
<td>Primary, USCG HF radio fax, Secondary, USCG voice, tertiary, VHF.</td>
<td>Yes, secondary to radio fax. Yes, every day, the receipt of radiofax is critical to my safety at sea. It is my preferred method for obtaining weather info. No.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>930</td>
<td>Eric S. Posmentier</td>
<td>6105 Fairchild Dartmouth College Department of Earth Sciences Hanover NH 03755</td>
<td>USCG 50 Ton Near Coastal, on a world cruise.</td>
<td>Yes, secondary to radio fax. Yes, every day; the receipt of radiofax is critical to my safety at sea. It is my preferred method for obtaining weather info. No.</td>
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<tr>
<td>931</td>
<td>Linda Wanta'scheck</td>
<td>15501 South West Portulat Way Beaverton OR 97007</td>
<td>USCG 50 Ton Near Coastal, on a world cruise.</td>
<td>Yes, secondary to radio fax. Yes, every day; the receipt of radiofax is critical to my safety at sea. It is my preferred method for obtaining weather info. No.</td>
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<tr>
<td>932</td>
<td>John S. Stavrakas</td>
<td>9 Grace Drive Medfield MA 02052</td>
<td>USCG 50 Ton Near Coastal, on a world cruise.</td>
<td>Yes, secondary to radio fax. Yes, every day; the receipt of radiofax is critical to my safety at sea. It is my preferred method for obtaining weather info. No.</td>
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<tr>
<td>933</td>
<td>Terry L. Sparks</td>
<td>P.O. Box 1604 747 Taylor Road Kalama WA 98625</td>
<td>USCG 50 Ton Near Coastal, on a world cruise.</td>
<td>Yes, secondary to radio fax. Yes, every day; the receipt of radiofax is critical to my safety at sea. It is my preferred method for obtaining weather info. No.</td>
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<tr>
<td>934</td>
<td>Mario Carata</td>
<td>2645 Bosquet-1 Montreal Quebec H1N 2S3</td>
<td>USCG 50 Ton Near Coastal, on a world cruise.</td>
<td>Yes, secondary to radio fax. Yes, every day; the receipt of radiofax is critical to my safety at sea. It is my preferred method for obtaining weather info. No.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Daniel Corcoran</td>
<td></td>
<td>It would be a great disservice if the Radiofax weather advisory system were to be taken away. Please upgrade the transmitters in order to provide this great service to the people of the United States and Mariners.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lauren Bachman</td>
<td>WO 27th Avenue, Seattle WA 98122</td>
<td>I would just like to add my request to upgrade the HF weather transmitters. As someone who uses them on a regular basis in the Pacific while racing and delivering sailboats, this is an essential safety system that would be a devastating loss to the maritime community.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Kim Bruno</td>
<td>430 East 63rd Street, New York NY 10065</td>
<td>I think it’s important to keep the HF Weather Broadcasts operational as the costs are minimal compared to its importance to maritime interests.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Richard F Barnes</td>
<td>936 David Place, Anchorage AK 99501</td>
<td>I depend on HF radiofax broadcasts by the USCG for safe navigation of my 57-foot documented motor vessel. I use the weatherfaxes throughout the North Pacific. I do not have access to any other source that provides this vital information. Please continue USCG high frequency radiofax broadcasts.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Terrence D Sargent</td>
<td>411 Walnut St #2446, Green Cove Springs FL 32043-3443</td>
<td>I have lived aboard a cruising sailboat for over 19 years and have depended upon the HF Radio broadcasts from the USCG for weather information that provides safety to my vessel, myself and my family. A vessel at sea does not have the luxury of obtaining information from the Internet unless it is equipped with very expensive satellite transceivers which, in my case, cost nearly as much as my vessel. To cease HF radio broadcasts would be a travesty — it would place mariners in harms way through the lack of weather information.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Capt. Richard J Buehn</td>
<td></td>
<td>I operate vessels both professionally and recreationally and both power and sail, 3-5 times a week in Brevard County, FL, and adjacent coastal waters. I use these broadcasts every time I operate these vessels, and the safety and enjoyment of me and my guests would be jeopardized if these broadcasts were terminated.</td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jim Mihue</td>
<td>P.O. Box 791, Girdwood AK 99587</td>
<td>I spend a lot of time on pws in the summer and would miss not being able to access an up to date weather forecast while there.</td>
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<tr>
<td>942</td>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>Capt. of Cement carrier</td>
<td>My primary sources for obtaining marine weather forecasts are: Inmarsat-C, Navtex. We do not use Coast Guard HF radio voice broadcasts to receive marine weather broadcasts. We do not use Coast Guard HF radiofax broadcasts to receive marine weather broadcasts. We do not use Coast Guard HF radio Simplex Teletype over Radio (SITOR) to receive marine weather broadcasts. WE would pursue NERA F77 ISDN System.</td>
<td>No</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>943</td>
<td>Robert C. Austin, MD</td>
<td>1200 La Paz Street Pensacola FL 32507</td>
<td>It is imperative that the HF radio weather broadcasts continue. There are thousands of both recreational and commercial (mostly fishing vessels) which rely on the HF weather service. The loss of this weather capability will increase the loss of vessels and increase the cost of SAR far more than the cost of the upgrade and operation of the transmitters. The cost of one rescue attempt in severe weather, which could have been prevented, is enough to justify the continuation of the service. Let alone the risks both to mariners and CG members. This is a service which is silently used by multiple mariners—and other people who go into extreme latitudes and distant places, which you never hear from. The reason that there are not more comments is that this site takes a good deal of time to access and many people give up in frustration.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>944</td>
<td>Brian Karcheski</td>
<td>2301 Green Forest Drive Palmer AK 99645</td>
<td>Please continue with the weather broadcasting for the Prince William Sound area as we recreational boaters rely on this to make sound judgments regarding our movements within the PWS area.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>945</td>
<td>Todd P. Kelley</td>
<td>13591 Westwind Drive Anchorage AK 99516</td>
<td>To whom it may concern, Please continue to provide HF radio voice broadcasts of weather forecasts and warnings, as it has been and will always be an important tool for marine navigation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>946</td>
<td>Richard P. Barnes</td>
<td>936 David Place Anchorage AK 99501</td>
<td>Duplicate of 938</td>
<td>Duplicate of 938</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 947 | Andrea Sciutto | Skipper of a 50' sailing vessel | WeatherFax - Grib files via Sailmail/saildocs - Metarea via sailmail/saildocs. yes - daily - same level as Gribfiles
yes - daily - These are the most accurate and most reliable sources of weather since they have been compiled by expert meteorologist. no
Gribfiles from Noaa servers. These are not reviewed by meteorologist and can be inaccurate. There is really no serious alternative to weatherfax forecasts. Satellite system don't allow for the same flexibility and reliability as weatherfax receivers (Satellite systems requires user interaction plus pc/computer interface which is not weather proof nor resistant to shocks). Even Sailmail requires the use of a PC. Loss of HF broadcast would possibly put my life, my crew's life and the vessel integrity at risk by relying on incomplete or inaccurate weather models. Let me remind that GMDSS still list HF as requirements for all commercial vessel sailing in A3/A4 areas. |
| 948 | Ken Pearson | 911 135 Street East Bradenton FL 34212 | My experience on the water has always been planned around receipt of these broadcasts…my brother in law failed to check in the past and actually sailed into a hurricane that developed in the Caribbean and entered into the Gulf… the service to mariners is
<table>
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<tr>
<th>ID</th>
<th>Name</th>
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<th>Detailed Information</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>949</td>
<td>Dan Corcoran</td>
<td>5 Doti Court Huntington NY 11743</td>
<td>Owner of a cruising 39 foot sailboat. NOAA Weather Radio, Sirius Satellite Weather Radio (limited due to product problems and power requirements). Yes, it is sometimes my only source of weather information, like it is now. Currently the Sirius information is wrong for the Long Island Sound Area. Also, Sirius and combination display equipment use a lot of power. No. I don't know that there are any good options that work within the power limitations of my sailboat, or the small amount of time I have available as the single qualified sailor on my boat to devote to weather research especially when the weather appears to be good. Yes, I will be less aware of current weather after I leave port. Normally less than 20nm from shore in New England area.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>950</td>
<td>Terry L. Sparks</td>
<td>P.O. Box 504 747 Taylor Road Kalama WA 98625</td>
<td>Follow-Up Comment After faxing back the letter you sent, I thought of an additional factor, and maybe the most important factor, that should be considered. Decreasing the significance of HF radio by eliminating Weather Fax reception or any other Coast Guard product is not in the best interest of the Coast Guard or Mariners. Since the invention of cell phones, many coastal and inland boaters have been trying to utilize the cell phone for marine communications. The primary issue here is that while the cell phone works well to call the coast guard it does not work well to call the boat you can see off in the distance to ask for help. Putting this on a global basis with satellite phones, the same issue applies on a larger scale. Boats at sea should have HF on board to communicate with others and to aid in emergency situations. Pushing folks to move to Satellite by eliminating HF services will result in reduced communication at sea and increased cost for Coast Guard rescues and phone calls. My point is primarily focused on the non-commercial mariners as they are the ones that will make the choose to go Satellite or HF and the ones most likely to call the Coast Guard for help.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>951</td>
<td>John R. Forde</td>
<td>4255 Southwest 91st Drive Gainesville FL 32608</td>
<td>The availability of HF weather broadcasts and weatherfax is critical information to those US citizens who are cruising in sailboats or powerboats. Timely weather information that is often unavailable from any other source makes decision- and passage-making immensely more safe, and provides us with the tools to make our lives more enjoyable and less dangerous.</td>
</tr>
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| 952 | Steven Henkind, M.D.  | 7 South Ridge Road Larchmont NY 10538 | By way of background, I am a professional sailor (USCG 200 ton sail license) and sailing instructor. I also am a member of the Coast Guard Auxiliary (including coxcoman and AuxOp qualifications) and I am a fully qualified CG A1 crew member as well. I sail offshore rather frequently (I have over 20,000 ocean miles logged) and, in virtually every one of
those trips, we relied heavily on the HF services including voice and weather fax. It is my belief that these services are also extensively used by other offshore sailors as well. I believe that it is essential to keep these services active as removal of them would likely lead to significant safety issues which ultimately would increase the workload (and associated expense) for the CG because of the need to increase SAR activities. Said another way, it is much easier to prevent accidents and mishaps than it is to respond to them.

I am the captain of a 40' sailing yacht. I have been sailing in the Pacific Ocean since 1993. My primary marine weather forecast sources are: HF radio Wefax from Honolulu, Honolulu and Guam text forecasts available from the internet via HF radio. Yes, I do use Coast Guard HF voice broadcasts. I only use these occasionally - maybe once or twice weekly. They are critical when I have difficulty receiving fax broadcasts and internet e-mail forecasts using the HF, however my primary sources are most important to me more than 90% of the time. Yes, I do receive the Coast Guard HF radiofax broadcasts for marine weather forecasts. I receive these normally twice daily, and consider them the most important source of weather information. No, I do not use SITOR broadcasts since I am beyond the range of them. I would increase my use of internet e-mail receipt of text weather information from Honolulu and Guam and also seek alternative fax services from Japan or Australia. There is no user cost for any system I use since I am using amateur radio. The internet text weather is not as useful as the graphic fax service because it is more general in nature and doesn't always address the specific areas where I am sailing. The fax broadcasts also offer more total information than I find in text messages.

I wish to let you know that we use the HF radio report daily for weather conditions whether we are going fishing or traveling by road. It is very important to us.

We are a 44' sailboat currently in the seventh year of an overseas cruise. We are in the Solomon Islands. We have been sailing for many years and offshore cruising for 17 years. HF Fax transmissions, satellite photos and streamline charts are a principal source of weather information. We have also used the coastal and offshore voice broadcasts extensively. If the HF fax transmissions were discontinued we would use other
weather faxes. At this time we do not have sat phone or direct satellite capability. An acceptable alternative would be fax transmission via low cost direct satellite receivers - world wide, similar to the ones coming into use for commercial radio. But this system is not yet worldwide and not in use for fax or data as far as I know. We have relied on the HF Fax for many years, and often, for our weather information and would be at a safety disadvantage if this system were discontinued without a replacement.

M/V Fintry
James L. Woodward
1080 Hillside Street
Milton MA 02186

I, and many other commercial and recreational Masters of relatively small boats (30-100') use the USCG Radiofacsimile service as our principal source of weather information offshore, both making passages from New England to Bermuda and the Caribbean and Trans-Atlantic. There is no other easy, inexpensive source of weather maps available to us -- the various Inmarsat and Iridium services require equipment costing five thousand dollars and up and, in the case of Iridium, significant fees for use. Navtex, while useful within 300-500 miles, is not useful offshore and, in any event, does not provide maps. Various voice broadcasts on HF do work (although many are not in English), but a map is much better than a voice description of a map. A MF/HF radio transmitter is not expensive technology -- it would be a shame to compromise the safety of many passage-makers for the lack of a few hundred thousand dollars.

Diana Collins

Attainable Adventure Cruising Ltd
John H. Harries
#4 Harbour House
Hamilton Bermuda HMEX

The HF Weather Fax is a very important means of weather information for sailboats. There are 1000's of us that sail in areas that have no internet or other means of getting Wx info except by WxFax, and 95% of use cannot afford satellite or other forms of communications. By dropping the WxFax, you would be putting many people at risk by denying them the information needed to make proper decisions. On a personal note: while not in port, I use WxFax on a daily basis to keep me informed on potential weather problems and for planning. Please keep the WxFax on the air.

As voyaging sailors who spend much of our time in the North Atlantic we are very concerned about any plans to discontinue the high frequency transmission of weatherfax charts. These charts are our primary method of staying up to date with weather movements and impending storms while at sea. To receive this graphic information by satellite would be too expensive for us because of the large
size of the files resulting in data charges in the region of US$20.00 / chart. We need at least 5 charts a day to stay up to date with developing weather. If HF transmission is discontinued it will effect our safety at sea negatively.

We can receive text forecasts via Navtex or satellite and GRIB files via satellite in cost effective manor, therefore HF voice radio is much less important to us than HF weatherfax. In summary HF weather fax provides an invaluable overview of developing weather for small recreational and commercial vessels that can’t afford to source this information via satellite. We suggest that the retention of HF weather fax transmission may even be cost effective for the US Coast Guard since the cost of even a few major rescue missions would, I think, exceed the cost of the HF weatherfax service.

In summary HF weather fax provides an invaluable overview of developing weather for small recreational and commercial vessels that can’t afford to source this information via satellite. We suggest that the retention of HF weather fax transmission may even be cost effective for the US Coast Guard since the cost of even a few major rescue missions would, I think, exceed the cost of the HF weatherfax service.

I'm a taxpayer and offshore sailor. While NOAA does a nice job of delivering their content via the internet, access to the internet is not as universal or as reliable as HF radio. These broadcasts are truly a public service and should be continued.

Thank you for your consideration.

I hold a 50 ton coast guard licence. I have used the service while crewing for yachts in the caribbean and bound north to and from Bermuda. The HF equipment can be difficult to operate particularly for the uninitiated and I find it much more useful to download and save graphic charts using Global Star phone services. In addition reception can be questionable in certain areas. Recently I have taken satellite phone calls from friends sailing offshore to explain weather conditions while I am at my computer via their satphone because the HF transmission is too difficult to receive. It may be like giving up on our old loran receiver.

No Replacement technology, such as internet satellite, is currently too costly in terms of both equipment and recurring costs. In addition to the limited space and power available in my craft and as such are not a viable option. Satellite based communication does not fulfill all the communications requirements I need, and hence would not be able to replace the HF equipment, but would need to be installed in addition.

No

In general, no I do not depend on the voice broadcasts. In areas when I am more inclined to listen to a voice broadcast I am usual within VHF range and use that.

Follow-Up Comment
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<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Email</th>
<th>Message</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Paul J. Reid</td>
<td>152 Robin Way, Los Gatos CA 95032</td>
<td></td>
<td>The HF broadcasts provided by NOAA for weather forecasting are invaluable to the marine/boating community. As a long time recreational boater (20+ years, over 50,000 miles at sea) I can attest that these broadcasts are regularly downloaded and analyzed by boaters from around the world, not just the United States. This information is so important to boaters in determining when to make a safe passage, how to best route to avoid storms when on passage, etc. Without these broadcasts there will be without a doubt more lives lost at sea and many more dollars spent in S&amp;R operations that will be spent in upgrading to new/more reliable radio hardware. Please do not shut down these broadcasts, they a vital part of the the marine community today.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jean H. Daugherty</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I urge Congress to fund restoration of all HF Weather transmitter facilities. When outside the range of VHF weather transmissions I rely exclusively on HF weather. We would be sailing blind without it.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F/V Northern Light</td>
<td>P.O. Box 920474, Dutch Harbor AK 99692</td>
<td></td>
<td>I am writing in about the Radio transmissions for the weather here in Alaska. Emily Hansen wrote me saying I had to finish questions 2,4,5,6,7. I can not seem to find thoes questions. I type in the web address <a href="http://dms.dot.gov">http://dms.dot.gov</a> to google and this is where I was sent. Like I said before. If you are asking for public coment on the need for weather broadcasting. It HAS TO BE EASY. !!!! This is not...!!! We are Fisherman, Not computer programers... Sorry to vent my frustration on you..</td>
</tr>
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</table>
967  Charles Dana Gibson
P.O. Box 638
Camden ME 04843

Private motor yacht – owner & master

East coast of U.S. south to Virgin Islands; At least one trip south annually; and times more.

Follow-Up Comment

968  Dennis Driscoll
610 Dorian Road
Westfield NJ 07090

43 ft. sloop; Watch captain/navigator

NE US coastal waters to Bermuda; Annually, I crew this boat during annual races to Bermuda

Follow-Up Comment

969  Sandra L. Larson
16630 North Seventh Street
Lakeland MN 55043

It is come to our attention that the Coast Guard is considering abandoning the high frequency (HF) weather services in voice, radiofacsimile and SITOR formats.

As pleasure sailors, we rely heavily on VHF weather forecasts, but use the above HF transmissions - particularly on the weather fax and voice portions- while sailing beyond the distance where VHF weather forecasts are available. We also supplement the VHF forecasts, when available, with weather fax. We have never used SITOR.

We sail annually for several weeks in the mid-Atlantic, New England, Bahamas, and/or Gulf of Mexico, and use the Boston and New Orleans weather fax regularly.

If the HF services are discontinued, it would greatly increase our danger when sailing offshore and in the high seas.

We, as undoubtedly thousands of others, will find it impossible to purchase alternative weather forecasting services, because of their high cost. It is highly probable that many boaters will sail without adequate weather information, endangering both themselves and their rescuers.

Follow-Up Comment

970  Bill Cottingham
I own and operate a cruising sailboat.

My primary sources of marine weather information are VHF Weather Radio, HF Voice and Radiofax, NAVTEX, HF Cruising Nets, and shoreside internet.

HF Voice broadcasts are, for me, less important than the others listed above.

HF Radiofax is my single most critical source of information. Integrating weather charts with satellite images gives the "big picture" that puts observations and forecasts into perspective.

I have not used SITOR.

If the USCG broadcasts were discontinued, I would rely on shoreside information before departure (if available), HF Cruising Nets and HF e-mail from friends and family. This is clearly a high-risk alternative.

I am not aware of alternative sources for HF Radiofax or NAVTEX information for vessels of modest means while underway. For me and most other cruising yachts that I know, these broadcasts are a sole source of weather information critical to safety.

974  James R. Gracie
Apartment 829
1025 Grenon Avenue
Ottawa Ontario K2B 8S5 Canada

canadian naval officer for 32 years then cruising sailboat for past twenty years.

HF radio fax.

yes, whenever in range of your robot voice mechanical mike. it is a necessary alternative to weather data. yes, three or four times daily to ascertain the storm tracks. current and forecast weather data is critical to the safe and timely arrival of small sailing vessels.

HF e-mail. yes as there would be large gaps in open ocean coverage.

Our vessel transits oceans and is presently on passage from Japan to Vancouver Island at the end of an eighteen year circumnavigation. Our vessel transmits weather and is on passage passed Vancouver Island at the end of an eighteen year circumnavigation.
978
Richard J. Preston
P.O. Box 32438
Juneau AK 99803

I am a commercial mariner - possessing a Master’s Any Gross Tons license and numerous first class pilotage endorsements. I sail for the Alaska Marine Highway System on a route which routinely crosses the Gulf of Alaska at all times of year. I am also a retired USCG Captain - with over 13 years at sea and in command of cutters.

I feel that radiofax and voice transmissions should continue. These methods of providing critical weather information are vital to all mariners. I concur with proposal that SITOR (NBDRP) should be dis-continued... I don’t know of any ships using that method anymore.

Radiofax, and voice provide the greatest coverage of the marine user groups - from recreational sailing vessels to the largest commercial vessels. While many ships now have satellite internet connectivity - there is a larger groups which is not so equipped...such as my fleet. We need to have a reliable method of getting weather updates - at all times. The redundancy of radiofax and voice is very important to ensure the info’s availability should one system or the other be out of service.

979
Maritime Pilots Institute
George B. Burkley
401 North New Hampshire Street
Covington LA 70433

The HF wx broadcast program is a vital and important service to shipping and must be funded and updated.

There are over 6000 vessels worldwide participating in the volunteer observing ship program and these vessels, while in US waters, rely on the HF broadcast system to receive their weather charts. Thousands of mariners submit their weather reports every six hours and then look to the HF weather report to see their and other ship reports on the HF charts. These weather reports are mission critical, directly affecting the safety of shipping, especially during tropical weather system season.

Additionally, the graphical weather reports include a vast amount of information lacking in the verbal reports and text reports. Losing the HF broadcast program is unthinkable to a mariner. Continue funding the HF weather fax program.

980
Hapag-Lloyd
Al Murray
M/V Charleston Express
401 East Jackson Street
Tampa FL 33602

I am a licensed Master who has sailed on Commercial Container, Break Bulk, Tanker,Ro-Ro, Military Support and Research. My last position was Chief Mate onboard a US Government LMSR Ro-Ro. I have worked in all Ocean Regions including Antarctic waters, Indian, Pacific, and Atlantic Oceans.

My primary sources of forecasts are Weatherfax and high seas broadcast to receive marine weather forecasts. However I do feel an urgent need for them to be available for times when they are a necessary source of information.

I do not often use Coast Guard HF radio voice to receive marine weather forecasts. However there is a need for these services because of the lack of information from high tech sources of information when a serious occurrence develops. With out this system being maintained it would not be available to help marine weather forecasts if Coast Guard HF broadcasts were no longer available. I would rate the alternative(s) in terms of (a) cost is excessively high for an unreliable and dangerous source of information the weather routing services provide. And (b) the information as compared to the Coast Guard HF broadcast it replaces IS

I do not often use Coast Guard HF radio-fax broadcasts to receive marine weather forecasts. We collect weather fax twice a day for reference purposes.

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a Master make a safety call on heavy weather avoidance.

unreliable and susceptible to company direction in terms of output of advice for weather routing. The routing services are a danger to shipping and the mariners aboard them.

the wheel house within the weather itself and places it in the companies' accounting department. Solutions always given are great circle in complete disregard of Type of Vessel, Load, and weather conditions. All factors in safely delivering goods, ship and people to the next port. These things are the legal responsibility of the Master and giving this liability to a meteorologist with no shipboard experience, seamanship or legal liability is a very dangerous proposition. Already the routing services has caused damage loss of time and money but admitting this among those that desire the services would fly counter to the control these services give a company bean counter to force Masters to take routes against their better judgment.

the risks of vessel, cargo and people in all climates they are called upon to operate. It is the master who is directly aware of the condition of his vessel, and cargo onboard. It is this awareness that has been developed after years of seagoing experience that deems him competent to be a ships master. The responsibility to maintain cargo and vessels free from damage during ocean transit in mandated under the legal obligations of national and international laws, insurance case law, and contract obligations. i.e. GENCON, Marine insurance act 1906, Hague rules, Hamburg rules... These developed over many centuries of casualties which led to the lose of life, damage to ships and the environment. These legal obligations directly spell out the ship's masters as the responsible party in performing due diligence and seamanship in relation to ship's actions to avoid damaging occurrences, i.e. ship weather routing.

A recent development has been the commercial ship weather routing services, which are pushing politically to remove alternative weather information sources. These services are commercial and charge a fee. They rely on shipping companies accounting department feelings that they are getting a return by forcing routes of less distance, thereby fuel savings, upon ships master who would not other wise of taken these routes due to his personal judgment as dangerous. The routes given to us as American sailors and to foreign masters I have discussed this with has been less then ethical concerning the pressure the companies are placing on a ships Master to follow these routes when they could cause damages to ships or cargo. Thereby placing the Master in risk of liability personally for decisions he was coerced not make. I have personal witnessed the great circle routes issued by routing services in complete disregard of current weather conditions of the north Atlantic in winter or of the vessel in service causing injury to crew and complete damage to ships structure, angle iron twisted, light fixtures wiped from bulkheads... These routes are even issued by the routing service with a disclaimer of responsibility but these routes are taken as law by the company. A Master who does not follow these routes will find his position in jeopardy, and there have been firings to date over a Master trying to express his duty for the ships safety over that as perceived by the company. These attempts at misdirecting responsibility by political moves, to make other sources of weather
information absent, and thereby undermining a masters ability to due diligence is a very bad trend. These are not being done within the legal framework of lifting the legal obligations on a Master as they still remain valid in case law. It is going to be harder to perform these responsibilities. Giving these to a person withdrawn from the vessel, local conditions, and lacking skills of seamanship would be difficult to pass through any court. I have personally observed the outcome of these routing upon masters who completely disregarded diligent oversight. Given a third port to call upon half way through a voyage, the master directed the ship on a course directly into the direction of reefs, and then waiting for word back from the routing services concerning what route to undertake. This attitude of "what ever the office says" and not taking the effort to adequately undertake basic seamanship because no matter what he sent to the office would be changed by the routing service is extremely dangerous. This attitude is becoming more prevalent and this damage to the normal practice of seamanship is what is called a chain of errors in accident investigation.

The weather maps provided by these routing services are one page and show a ocean basin with a position of Lows and Highs and wind direction only. They are useless to a mariner to make an informed decisions and are designed that way. The deep array of weather maps received by weather fax are a depth of information provided to mariners for many decades and have developed over time to be a more complete source of information. The deep Sea broadcasts are tied into the GMDSS console that is required on all Vessels for emergency communications. These systems are used as primary sources worldwide to provide weather information and other navigational warnings. Only the USA has failed to meet the standards the world has provided for these avenues of information. The quality and amount of information becoming less every year. These broadcast and fax supplement each other in giving a Master an opportunity to be able to make informed decisions, thereby being able to meet his legal obligations.

The reliance on e-mail and internet is not a safe option. The first to go in heavy seas is your Satellite connection as it becomes impossible to track a satellite. There are interference and places on the Ocean where the satellite coverage is poor or not possible. There is a pressure by companies to limit air
time on data transfers which require long download times. The first to be sacrificed is weather maps. They then are not maintaining a history of weather development that assists in determining future weather.

The Inmarsat-C/SafetyNet, USCG HF radio broadcasts, USCG medium frequency (MF) Radio Broadcasts, USCG very high frequency (VHF) radio broadcasts, NOAA Weather Radio, NAVTEX, are all apart of a low tech system and legally required to be carried onboard by the USCG and international GMDSS rules. The USA will be the first to end its required participation in these mandated systems for the Ocean regions they are assigned by international agreements.

The input by mariners into the AMVER sea program provides information on ship positions for reference in providing Search and Rescue or medical assist on the high seas. They also provide weather input to NOAA and other international agencies of the local conditions every few hours.

Removing the weather maps this information helps supplement, would also remove the desire to participate in AMVER, thus putting our deep sea search and rescue capabilities back about 50 years. The commercial weather routing relies on their own source of maps and they lack the input of seafarers in the environment they are posturing as safe. This lack of input may appear minor but the volume who rely on weather fax and deep sea broadcasts is enough to allow a fine tuning that is apart of NOAA's ability to provide the high caliber product they do.

The pressures are real within the shipping industry and if ignored or perceived as being ignored by the company places pressure on a Master concerning maintaining his position. When corners are cut due to an attempt to save a few dollars on a ledger in operating costs the Master is expected to be a company man and disregard due diligence and better seamanship. A perfect example of this company attitude can be read in the Marine Electric disaster investigations. Here is a perfect example of a company over riding good seamanship in pursuit of a few dollars saved in a budget. The cost in the end is much larger and a company may argue it is there vessel to route as they will. It is in fact 25 or so lives they are in fact risking. These office people can go home at the end of a day and the poor practices being developed and becoming common practice today is going to allow a crew
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Email/Address</th>
<th>Position/Details</th>
<th>Current Cruising Territory</th>
<th>Weather Forecasting Sources and Activities</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Martin E. Gilmore</td>
<td><a href="mailto:martingilmore@gmail.com">martingilmore@gmail.com</a></td>
<td>Owner and Captain of a 40-foot sailboat. We have been cruising the boat in the Pacific Ocean for at least six months of the year for the past three years. We have been to Mexico, Hawaii, and Alaska so we now have done some blue water sailing and some long coastal passages in remote areas. Good weather forecasts are essential to our safety in many of these areas.</td>
<td>Loss of USCG HF radio broadcasts would probably limit our cruising, either because we could not get accurate forecasts, or because of high cost. We would feel less safe on long passages without the USCG HF radio broadcasts.</td>
<td>Our primary sources of marine weather forecasts for any significant passage are USCG HF radio, particularly radiofaxes, and text forecasts from NOAA. We use NOAA weather radio when in range. We do not use SITOR.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laurence E. Shick</td>
<td><a href="mailto:laurence@corinthians.org">laurence@corinthians.org</a></td>
<td>Primary weather forecasting tool. Critical backup to satellite-based forecasts.</td>
<td>The commercial services are better for the Atlantic than the Pacific, where we cruise.</td>
<td>Our primary sources of marine weather forecasts for any significant passage are USCG HF radio, particularly radiofaxes, and text forecasts from NOAA. We use NOAA weather radio when in range.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Steven L. Wolper</td>
<td><a href="mailto:stevenwolper@bluewatercruising.com">stevenwolper@bluewatercruising.com</a></td>
<td>Owner and Captain of a 62-foot sailboat.</td>
<td>Loss of USCG HF radio broadcasts would probably limit our cruising, either because we could not get accurate forecasts, or because of high cost. We would feel less safe on long passages without the USCG HF radio broadcasts.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Suzan L. Nettleship</td>
<td><a href="mailto:suzan@bluewatercruising.com">suzan@bluewatercruising.com</a></td>
<td>Owner and operator of a 33-ton vessel cruising both nationally and internationally.</td>
<td>Loss of USCG HF radio broadcasts would probably limit our cruising, either because we could not get accurate forecasts, or because of high cost. We would feel less safe on long passages without the USCG HF radio broadcasts.</td>
<td>Our primary sources of marine weather forecasts for any significant passage are USCG HF radio, particularly radiofaxes, and text forecasts from NOAA. We use NOAA weather radio when in range.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
While we can access internet weather while at home, HF weather forecasts are absolutely critical for our safety while we are on trips. We have no other weather resource and the weather in these areas is very changeable and potentially dangerous. Even with the current weather availability, we are unable to access weather in some locations.

The primary source for marine weather is the HF marine weather broadcast. It provides an easy to view diagram of the weather, something that all the captains and crew members use. Voice broadcasts are used on a daily bases for plotting the course of a voyage. All information is critical.

The HF Fax is used daily and is the primary source of weather info. It is critical to the safe operation to the vessel. The HF SITOR/NPDB is just as important as the HF FAX. In cases where the picture is not clear, the text data helps the capt. and crew determine the safe course for the vessel.

None via HF: A few are available to SITOR but not in an automated and dedicated manner. We would loose our trusted primary source of weather information. We would have to spend over $30,000.00 per vessel to received a quality satellite data image. Plus we would have to pay for the data access.

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I would entertain any other modern means of obtaining weather advisories and information that would be cost effective for all parties involved. As a coastal and inland waters boater, the information provided by the USCG is very important to me as I often have my family with me. I will adjust as needed to the system that DOT/USCG puts into place. “As technology advances, so do we.”
endorsement. 4 times a day. The farther from shore the more important the HF broadcasts become. Information at certain times of the day. As stated, I do have other means for weather in port but once offshore the HF becomes more important for my safe and the safety of my vessel. Weather warnings 24 hours a day. Weather is the most important factor in planning any voyage.

991  Daniel Evans  I work on 130+ schooners. Coastwise and Caribbean and North Pacific; 180 days/year

992  Janet M. Bachelder  P.O. Box 4004 Bullfrog UT 84533 While sailing our catamaran off shore or near shore of the US we have frequently used the voice portion of HF Radio Broadcasts for routine weather forecasts and warnings associated with changing weather conditions. This information has been timely & very useful. I realize there is a greater variety of technology available for off shore/near shore sailing (as we do have some other technology on board)these days. However, when weather is changing rapidly, the use of the HF radio still remains our primary method of receiving weather updates in a timely and accurate manner. We will be greatly disappointed if this service is no longer available to us &it will make a difference in our sailing activities. We would encourage you to keep this service available into the future.

993  Bonnie Powell  #3412 411 Walnut  Green Cove Springs FL 32043 We are registered voters. Our lives depend on timely weather information at sea. We need NMN broadcasts as often it is the only weather information we can receive, especially during the hurricane season. BUY THE NEW EQUIPMENT - IT IS IMPORTANT, OUR LIVES AND MANY OTHERS DEPEND ON THESE BROADCASTS.

995  Keith C. Longly  117 East Louisa # 122 Seattle WA 98102 Response to HF weather transmissions

996  Keith C. Longly  117 East Louisa # 122 Seattle WA 98102 I am a 200 ton Master. I have been working on the Pacific Ocean from Alaska to Mexico for more than ten years. I have used all the above! Not every boat has every tool. I use what I can to get the information that I need. It is good to have multiple sources of weather! Yes, depending on the boat I am working on at the time. I will use it every day while at sea. Yes, depending on the boat I am working on at the time. I will use it every day while at sea! Yes, depending on the boat I am working on at the time. I will use it every day while at sea! It would be sad to lose HF weather broadcasts. The prudent mariner uses all tools at his or her disposal to make the wisest decisions for the safe operation of ship and crew. While internet is becoming more prevalent and the private sector is also providing new and exciting tools, they may or may not give the information needed, or they may not be available. For example internet if very difficult to come by in many places in Alaska! Of course it would affect me! It affects all mariners who ply waters off shore! I am a Captain for hire. I sail on many different vessels of varying tonnage and area. I have sailed from Nome Alaska to Cabo San Lucas. In many cases HF frequencies have been the only signals available with which to receive information about weather! It has been and always will be the responsibility of the USCG to provide tools for safer navigation of the seas! To lose those services of weather over HF transitions takes away from why the Coast Guard was founded. In working with NOAA and transmitting weather and warning over HF and VHF frequencies, you fulfill a desperately needed role in helping bring sailors home to their families! Let that never be forgotten."
997  Eric W. Fels  
1509 Bronwyn Road  
Richmond VA 23238

I believe we should keep the HF weather system. It is a reliable asset to mariners when technology, aka sat communications, fail and information is needed for the safe navigation of all types of vessels operating. thank you for allowing me to post.

998  Jack Venezia

I am responding to the article regarding the discontinuance of the HF weather radio broadcasts. I believe discontinuing this service would endanger lives on the waterways. I personally depend on these broadcasts as do many of my fellow boaters. Please make every effort to continue these voice broadcasts.

999  Edwin P. Cutler  
2637 East Atlantic Boulevard  
P.M.B. 180  
Pompano Beach FL 33062

When at sea or in foreign countries, we use USCG HF radio broadcasts extensively – both the voice and FAX. When we’re close to the U.S. shore we can pick up NOAA Weather Radio (Wx). When we’re ashore in the U.S., we use television (local stations, not cable or satellite) and if possible the internet.

YES! We listen to the voice broadcasts. Since the live speakers have been replaced with the computer generated voice, we all have a nickname: ours is Mad Max. The voice is very important for hurricane information and for the weather in our area.

YES! This is our main source of weather information! When at sea we collect every broadcast. We capture all the satellite images, the surface charts and the 500mb charts. They show us where the fronts are so we know what winds to expect. They show us where the hurricanes are and more important where they’re going which gives us days to make preparation or to take evasive action.

NO

We have no idea. We have depended on the Coast Guard since we started sailing in 1984. Many U.S. sailors, like us, cannot afford satellite communication. We would be left to our barometer which only gives six hours warning, too late to take evasive action.

It would be devastating! You make it possible to sail out of sight of land.

High Seas, more than 200 nm seaward  
We sail in the Caribbean Sea, and the mid-Atlantic and the north-Atlantic to Newfoundland.

1000  Michael E. McCarthy  
P.O. Box 957  
Homer AK 99603

I am very strongly in support of continuing the practice of broadcasting the weather reports. The notion that this practice is no longer needed is not only ludicrous but extremely dangerous. Let me cite some personal examples.

My wife and I were on an extended boat trip from Homer to Nuka Bay in the Kenai Fjords this past June. There were small craft advisories broadcast on our channel 2 weather band for the following day after we arrived in Port Chatham. The NOAA Coastal Pilot warns of the danger of transiting thru Chugach Passage in such seas. We were unable to receive the the weather radio broadcast because of surrounding mountains on our own radio. We made contact with a sailing vessel with a tall radio mast and learned on Channel 6, (Kodiak transmitter) that the seas were passable but warned of heavy fog near Gore Point. That information was invaluable. We followed the sailboat thru the fog on our radar when visability was less than 1/4 mile in fact sometimes it was less than 100 yards and this particular transit can be very dangerous with numerous rip tides noted on the navigation chart. A second critical use of the NOAA weather broadcast involved our effort to stay ahead of a tornado while traveling across Kansas. We were able to seek shelter while the tornado narrowly missed us. After living in...
I strongly support the continuation of NOAA weather broadcasts and warnings in Alaskan waters. Alaska is a unique and dangerous environment for recreational boaters such as me. I sport fish and boat out of Whittier and Seward. I recently purchased and am installing a multiband receiver with the expressed purpose to receive these transmissions, and would be very disappointed to learn that this service is no longer available.

I make frequent offshore trips in the coastal waters of Alaska, going as far south as the Leeward Islands. I often sail with other vessels, and would be very disappointed to learn that I may not have access to the same weather forecasts that my safety would depend on.

I feel that the Coast Guard should reconsider this plan to discontinue this important and safety related service. I strongly believe that this service is essential for the safety of mariners. I would be greatly diminished if this service is discontinued.
When I am at home in the planning phases of an offshore sailing trip I use the internet to access Marine Radio Fax charts (weather.noaa.gov/fax/marine.shtml) and various sites for Gulf Stream forecasts. I also use Grib.US (www.grib.us) for grib charts. The site is not expensive, but it is difficult or impossible to schedule and receive large files such as faxes - the use of this process is usually limited to short e-mails. The second method would be to buy a SAT phone and subscribe to a service - both relatively expensive at this time -- and connect to the internet to receive weather faxes through the SAT phone. There is also the problem with this method that none of the services are ideal for all areas, which might force one to subscribe to more than one phone service. Having the HF weather resource while far offshore in a relatively small boat adds to one's sense of well-being, comfort, and enjoyment. To replace my current method with an alternate would significantly increase my difficulty and costs.

Chesapeake to Bermuda, thence Nova Scotia, thence the Maine coast, thence coastwise back to the Chesapeake. After the hurricane season ends this year I will sail direct from the Chesapeake to the Virgin Islands, thence Puerto Rico, thence the Dominican Republic, thence the Turks and Caicos, thence up through the Bahamas to Florida, thence returning to the Chesapeake.

In my opinion, voice radio is a necessary mode of weather forecasting for the fishing fleet of Alaska and their families.

I would recommend to continue the weather broadcast over SSB. We own a 35-foot catamaran and were crossing the Atlantic East-West, cruising in the Caribbean and crossed the Atlantic back. We received the weather charts and also listened to the voice on the way back. Without that, it would have been very difficult for us to navigate safely and to avoid storm centers. The only alternative I know is the broadcast by Radio France Internationale, but they don't cover the whole Atlantic and you must be quite good in French to understand that.

we need the uscg wx on hf radio, thanks

I feel that it will be a terrible mistake to cancel this service. It will put a lot of sailors like me in danger.

please continue warnings
1011  Mike Boom  
2100 Montana Avenue,  
N.E. 
Saint Petersburg FL  33703  
I sail on a 40’ sailboat.  
I am the Captain.  
My vessel operates  
in the Gulf of 
Mexico and the  
Bahamas. I sail  
monthly on those  
waters.  
Follow-Up Comment

1012  Barrie D. Linley  
400 Biltmore Way  
PH 102  
Coral Gables FL 33134  
As a vacation yachtsman enjoying  
both British waters and Florida &  
Caribbean waters, I lay great store on  
the professional forecasts of the USCG  
and the UK Coast Guard services as  
my primary source of information. My  
long experience convinces me that  
most yachting problems arise from  
inadequate understanding of prevailing  
and near-term weather conditions.  
Follow-Up Comment

1014  Charles E. Anderson  
2501 West Golf  
Boulevard #131  
Pompano Beach FL 33064  
As a Captain and a tax payer I feel  
that, at least, the radiofax should NOT  
be stopped. Many people from many  
countries rely on the safety net that is  
supplied with these HF broadcasts. It  
appears to us who “are out there” your  
comment request has been made so  
difficult to find and submit that you are  
“stacking the deck” to assure that you  
do not need to continue these  
broadcasts. In order to get a fair  
response you need to make the  
comment process much, much easier to  
submit! I hope this does not become  
another thing that the government does  
do not do what the people need but rather  
let the private area charge for the  
information supplied by our tax  
dollars. Please do not stop this tax payer  
benefit.  
Follow-Up Comment

1015  Robert J. Foster  
100 Monument Road  
Pine Beach NJ 08741  
I'm owner operator of S/V Caravela, a  
36 ft cruising sail boat. I cruise/sail in  
Caribbean Oct to May every year for  
past 9 years and rely on receiving  
USCG weather reports on SSB to  
make my decision where and when to  
sail/cruise to minimize injuries to  
myself, my wife and my boat. I have  
ever had damage to my boat or  
injuries to my crew sailing/cruising in  
Caribbean in past 9 years. I plan on  
continuing my life style indefinitely  
and if the USCG discontinues weather  
broadcasts on HF using my SSB, I will  
be in danger. I strongly encourage the  
USCG to continue providing this  
service daily year after year.  
Follow-Up Comment

1016  Daniel S. Sagan  
1589 Blue Heron Drive  
Sarasota FL 34239  
I am the owner of a 45’ sailboat and navigator  
on a 51’ ocean race  
boat. Both vessels sail in  
the Gulf of 
Mexico, the  
Atlantic Ocean and  
the Caribbean Sea.  
I sail in these  
waters ten to  
twelve times a  
year.  
Follow-Up Comment

1017  Robert L. Reynard  
411 Walnut Street  
#3899  
S/V FoxSea 43 foot cutter  
rigged sailboat.  
Owner / Operator S/V  
FoxSea 43 foot cutter  
rigged sailboat.  
Location is critical. We  
use a number of weather  
resources:  
a. VHF when needing only  
current weather and we are  
assure that you do not need to continue these  
broadcasts. In order to get a fair  
response you need to make the  
comment process much, much easier to  
submit! I hope this does not become  
another thing that the government does  
do not do what the people need but rather  
let the private area charge for the  
information supplied by our tax  
dollars. Please do not stop this tax payer  
benefit.  
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USCG to continue providing this  
service daily year after year.  
Follow-Up Comment
Hi, I have been going to sea about 50 years. I am now retired and live full time (since 2001) aboard my 43' Catamaran and sail single handed offshore.

Listen to the voice broadcasts at least twice daily 0500 & 1730 even when at anchor and would never go to sea without listening for several days in advance. At sea I download the Radiofax with my ssh to my laptop daily.

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<tr>
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<th>Address</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>David E. Verrett, Tug</td>
<td>2726 Shelter Island Drive</td>
<td>I am a sailor on a small vessel…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dennis C. Johnson, Boat</td>
<td>301 Salem Drive</td>
<td>I am a sailor on a small vessel…</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Garrett Caldwell</td>
<td>Rancho Murieta Parkway</td>
<td>I am the owner of Executive yacht services servicing the Bay area. I am also an avid social sailor. I hold a 100 ton U.S. Coast Guard license and have been cert. to operate vessels to 100 tons with a coastal endorsement.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Old style analog systems must be easier to keep working in the event of the loss of the internet or sat. System.

A great back up for public safety.

Lars Axelsson,
Commercial Fisherman
705 Hughes Avenue
North Cape May NJ 08204
Captain of a 140' freezer trawler.
USCG HF radio broadcasts, VHF radio, NOAA Weather Radio
Yes, I use HF voice broadcasts two to four times a day. I am 70 - 150 miles from shore. Many times the vhf reception is just on the "fringe" and the different NOAA radio weather (vhf) will "talk on top" of each other.
Yes, I use HF Radiofax at least two times a week. If storms are approaching my fishing area, as often as the fax is transmitted. (At least twice a day).
Yes, I use SITOR. When storms are approaching, To get a "printed" forecast of the "track".
We have "Boatracs" on board, a text only sat service. We "pay" a fee for every character sent or recieved. I have to request every report from someone on land. Sometimes that someone is not avaliable.
The loss of the Coast Guard HF broadcast here on the East Coast, Mid-Atlantic - New England area, takes the "security" of being able to "Track Storms", especially during the Hurrican Season, and Winter Storms
We work 70 - 80 miles off the Mid-Atlantic. When we work "Georges Banks", we are 180 miles.

Lars Axelsson,
Commercial Fisherman
705 Hughes Avenue
North Cape May NJ 08204
Captain of a 140' freezer trawler.
USCG HF radio broadcasts, VHF radio, NOAA Weather Radio
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Michael Richings
30 Montgomery Court
Port Ludlow WA 98365
41' Pleasure sailboat, Captain/Owner
Southern Caribbean, Trinidad to Virgin Islands; 4-6 months each year during Dec-May

Curt Slater
Slater Yacht Delivery
3443 Albert Street
San Diego CA 92103
I am in the yacht delivery business and use several forms of weather information gathering to plan and complete my trips.
If internet weather is available using Iridium phone service, then this is the first choice. But the investment is several thousand dollars for the laptop, phone, modem, etc. One of the few inexpensive weather resources available to most mariners is HF fax transmissions throughout the U.S. With the Iridium phone you are limited by file size to certain weather forecasts. I cannot download charts via this means. But with my old, trusty Furuno 206 WFX I can receive HIGH QUALITY faxes from KVM70 and NMC Pt. Reyes throughout the voyage. The weather fax system the USCG and NWS provide is the best and cheapest way to ensure a safe trip wherever you go. In the Caribbean I use the internet to receive realtime weather from the main airports in the basin via NWS Puerto Rico. Believe me there are not many resources in the islands for accurate tropical weather.

Michael Richings
30 Montgomery Court
Port Ludlow WA 98365
41' Pleasure sailboat, Captain/Owner
Southern Caribbean, Trinidad to Virgin Islands; 4-6 months each year during Dec-May

Follow-Up Comment

Michael W. Egan
1218 Drake Street
Madison WI 53715
I heard recently on USCG NMSN short wave weather broadcast that the voice and WEFAx weather information broadcast service is to be discontinued. As a regular user of the service, I sail offshore frequently in my sailboat Shooting Star, and a taxpayer, I ask that the service be continued.

I am presently involved in a delivery from Hawaii to the U.S. mainland.
My family has operated boats in Prince William Sound - both recreationally and commercially over the last 50 years. We use CGHF radio to receive weather broadcasts. We check broadcasts hourly when on the water. While we mostly utilize the voice broadcasts to receive our weather information.

We do not currently make use of either SITOR or Radiofax. As discussed before in this comment, we have NO OTHER ALTERNATIVE sources for weather if the CGHF broadcasts are no longer available. The availability of good weather forecasts via high frequency broadcast is the key resource available to boaters to make decisions about the wisdom and viability of traveling in the Sound. The loss of CGHF marine weather forecasts would have a significant negative impact on me, as it would greatly reduce access to information that I can use to keep myself and my family safe on the water. It would impact the coast guard by causing an increase in rescue missions for situations that could have been avoided with good information, and it may ultimately affect the economies of small coastal Alaskan communities if boat operators don't feel safe to operate their vessels.

We have a boat in Prince William Sound Alaska which is used for recreational as well as fishing purposes. Our vessel operates predominantly within the confines of Prince William Sound.

In Alaska, fishing plays a major role in providing a food source for families. Fish caught in the summer is stored and eaten all year long. Due to this, the level of boat traffic in Prince William Sound is increasing tremendously. Many of the new boaters have small boats (20-24 feet) and limited boating experience, which can be challenging in a place like Prince William Sound where the distances are great, waters are deep, opportunities to hide from weather are few, and the temperature of water deadly. They are exceedingly critical to our safety on the water. Weather in Prince William Sound can change drastically within the space of 1 hour. Earlier this year we saw conditions go from flat calm to 6-10 foot rollers in the space of 1-2 hours. We have a high tidal variance, difficult localized wind and water conditions, and many opportunities for danger on the water. Our only protection is our own vigilance and the availability of high quality, detailed weather data. As stated before, CGHF weather broadcasts are our only alternative when on the water.

Larger vessels transiting the sound and heading toward or across the gulf of Alaska does make use of Radiofax and SITOR. That said, having experienced the challenges of crossing the Gulf of Alaska in a commercial vessel during a severe change in weather pattern, I can attest to the criticality of detailed weather information as tool for good decision-making. I fervently request that these programs be continued with whatever funding is necessary to upgrade equipment. The continuance of high frequency weather forecast broadcasting is critical to supporting boaters, and indeed is critical to sustaining the lifestyle and economy of many coastal communities. Thank you for your consideration.

MWP are obtained through HF radio either USCG, NOAA or subscribed transmissions. YES! We always use USCG HF voice broadcasts for MWF. If we are cruising or planning a voyage we use them daily. Otherwise we use them regularly as needed.

Bony Weather is a paid service that we would use. Additionally we would rely on NOAA broadcasts and weather info from the HAM networks. We would also rely on "local" forecasts which are usually given by amature weather forecasters. Yes as we are currently in the middle of an extended sailing trip throughout the Caribbean and eventually hope to transit the globe in our 41' sailboat. As a pleasure craft we rely heavily on all forms of weather information. Our boat and crew are dependent on CGHF MWF.

Follow-Up Comment
1032  
J. N. 
Wasilla AK

I love weather band radio, but I could listen too it on a "regular" frequency, rather than the actual weather band. It helps me every day in the winter time to know the weather conditions. I know I can get the same info at NOAA weather.gov online, but I don't have a computer and the radio is better and more accessible.

1033  
Justin F. McJones
3 Tangerine Road
Rancho Palos Verdes CA 90275

We use the Pt. Reyes broadcasts every year when we race from California to Hawaii, or down the Baja Mexican coast. The weather faxes are vital to safe sail or power boat trips offshore. Being able to receive them via HF radio is often the only real option on board a private vessel.

1034  
William Brady
411 Walnut Street
Green Cove Springs FL 32043

Our primary source of weather information and forecasts in the eastern Caribbean are two of the six nets run on the HF/MF frequencies. These are not always available due to poor propagation, so important second sources are the HF Coast Guard voice and radiofax broadcasts, as well as Navtex text and VHF voice broadcasts (when available). All these sources are also important for interim updates when hazardous weather is forecast.

1035  
Kristi K.
3500 Pierce Circle
Wasilla AK 99654

We use the Pt. Reyes broadcasts every year when we race from California to Hawaii, or down the Baja Mexican coast. We use the Pt. Reyes broadcasts every year when we race from California to Hawaii, or down the Baja Mexican coast.

1036  
William A. Campbell
96 South Sheldrs Road
Charleston SC 29223-5155

Live aboard Owner and Master of a 44 foot sailing yacht

USCG HF radio broadcasts for weather forecasts and weather forecasts such as

F2ZT23 KNHC, AMZ086.TXT, PWE111.tif

Yes. We probably average once every two days. In periods of high risk weather we probably use this twice per day. These are critical to us since these are really the only forecasts we use since they are the original source of the data that others use.

1037  
J. N. 
Wasilla AK

I heard on the weatherband that you all wanted to know who used the feature & how often. I greatly appreciate that option! I can get the weather any time of the day. Not having to wait for the news is very convenient with my hectic schedule. I hope I helped with your study. May God Bless you in every way possible!
Melissa A. Jenks
614 Front Street
Marion MA 02738

I am currently the navigator on a crew of two of a 33-foot sailboat.

NOAA’s broadcast of weather via high-frequency radio waves is our only method of obtaining marine weather forecasts.

Both voice and weatherfax transmissions are essential.

Boat Owners Association of the United States (BoatU.S.) thanks you for the continued need to provide HF radio broadcasts as the essential source for marine weather while offshore passage-making. Please reconsider canceling this essential maritime service that has been provided to mariners for generations. Even in sailing narratives from the fifteenth and sixties, captains depended on shortwave broadcasts of weather for their safety.

Joseph A. Cloutier
341 Terre haute InN 47808

I am the owner/operator of a Kadey-Krogen 58’ long-range trawler. My wife and I currently live aboard and cruise continuously.

My primary source of weather information while cruising in coastal waters is VHF radio and NWS forecasts and weather charts obtained via the Internet (the same charts provided by radio facsimile).

Yes. Twice a day while cruising. Very critical as my secondary source is sporadic due to propagation issues and their single frequency on 20 meters.

Yes. Very critical. I have no other source of radio facsimile weather charts when cruising offshore.

The only other source I know of for NWS forecasts and charts is satellite delivery, but the last time I looked into it was very expensive for the equipment and usage time and therefore used primarily by commercial shipping. Satellite equipment is costly to install because of its placement requirements on the vessel (clear line of sight around and above or below radar beams). I do not trust the so-called forecasts generated by such providers as XM Satellite Radio because to my knowledge they do not provide forecasts or charts that have been generated by an experienced, human forecaster. They send GRIB charts which are generated solely by computer modeling and while such modeling is getting better errors do occur.

I have a large vessel compared to many who cruise long distances in sailboats less than 40 feet long. I know there are many such boats whose owners have not heard and are unable to respond to this Request for Comments because they are cruising well offshore. These smaller boats do not have the deck space for satellite antennas nor the electrical power required to operate it, but they do have their backstay antenna and trusty, low-tech, SCOM radio.

Boat Owners Association of the United States
Ashley L. Reed
147 Old Solomons Island Road
Suite 508

This response is submitted on behalf of the members of BoatU.S., many of whom travel on waters beyond the reception range of the VHF.

These citizen mariners largely rely upon short wave radio reception of HF-SSB weather information and warnings broadcast by the U.S. Coast Guard’s HF weather

Discontinuing the present HF weather broadcast service would deprive these boaters of a useful and occasionally critical source of current and continuous weather information.

On behalf of our 650,000 members, the Boat Owners Association of the United States (BoatU.S.) thanks you for the opportunity to comment on the continued need to provide HF radio broadcasts of weather forecasts and warnings.
I am an owner/operator of a 38-foot cruising sailboat. Primary source of obtaining marine weather is the HF Coast Guard Broadcast of NWS Offshore marine forecast at 0530 EDT. My secondary source of weather is the VHF broadcast (if it is range) or the Bahamas weather forecast on 4003 kHz at 0700 Nassau time.

Yes, I use the CG HF radio voice broadcast. Daily, I get up for the 0530 EDT broadcast. Occasionally I use the other broadcast times. This is for the six months I cruise in the Bahamas. Florida coastss (gulf side and Atlantic). The broadcast is important as I use the forecast to determine whether to sail or anchor for the day. I use the data from the Mid Atlantic, Southwest Atlantic and Caribbean Offshore forecasts to decide the safety in sailing or "holling up". I use this broadcast to track the tropical disturbances as well. My view is there is no substitute for the offshore broadcast and the other forecasts I listen to are not adequate.

No, I do not use the HF radio fax.

No, I do not use the SITOR forecasts. In addition to the secondary sources listed in #2, I am not sure. I do not listen to the Chris Parker weather and I would try that. Who else provides the NWS Offshore broadcast? I do not know. Bahamas HF does not. The VHF and Bahamas broadcast do not compare to the Offshore forecast.

The loss of Coast Guard HF broadcast will affect me is the sailing decisions to cross the Gulf Stream, to sail between the island groups of the Bahamas and Northern Caribbean. I use the forecast to decide how close to the boat I must stay. Should a frontal passage be forecasted, I would not leave the boat until it was over.

I operate my sailboat coastal and offshore in the Southwest Atlantic, Gulf of Mexico, Bahamas and Northern Caribbean.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Art Sansoucy</td>
<td>P.O. Box 2587 Key West FL 33045</td>
<td>I regularly use the SSB WeatherFAX transmissions. The cheapest satellite systems are a couple of thousand dollars. Are systems like Iridium or Global Star going to be able to handle the increased load if all of the boats that operate beyond line of sight range from the shore shift from HF broadcast to on demand satellite communications for weather information? What competitive or regulatory mechanisms exist to keep the satellite service providers from using monopolistic practices? For example, what would keep them from increasing the price to receive NHC Discussions when a hurricane heads for a busy shipping lane? What boat owner wouldn't pay what they asked?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coleman Blake</td>
<td></td>
<td>Request that you continue broadcasts for the next several years. Please do not discontinue the HF weather broadcasts until there are alternatives available in the same size and price range. A shortwave receiver and some PC software will provide voice and fax coverage for a couple of hundred dollars.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anonymous</td>
<td>My name is Kristi Newth owner of a dive shop and we use this many times daily as a tool in our business. My name is Kristi Newth owner of a dive shop and we use this many times daily as a tool in our business.</td>
<td>Please continue the broadcasts. Thank YOU!!!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hunnell Foundation Inc.</td>
<td>Richard A. Hunnell 3033 North West North River Drive Miami FL 33142</td>
<td>As a marine contractor ... I have occasion to use the radio weather transmission frequently; it is an important tool in assessing risk associated with certain projects. I also think the absence of the free broadcast will have a negative impact on recreational boaters who may not invest in the technology to gain this information through some other source, perhaps placing them in harms' way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frances M. Bohnsack</td>
<td>3033 North West North River Drive Miami River Marine Group Miami FL 33142</td>
<td>I have a concern for the cargo vessels that operate from the Miami River. Many of these smaller scale, degraded European vessels rely on the Coast Guard broadcast to make safety judgements in transit. If the service is to be replaced eventually by a private provider for cost, short cuts will be taken. To me, this seems counter intuitive to the reasons the Coast Guard was created. If costs for the agency must be cut, I would hope they wouldn't jeopardize safety in any way.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Joseph A. Kovacs</td>
<td>179-4025 Dorchester Road Niagara Falls Ontario Canada N1G 1A2</td>
<td>Owner/operator of a 32' cruising sailboat. Yes. On ocean passages I listen carefully once a day. They are my primary and, currently, pretty well only real source of weather forecasts on this side of the Atlantic Ocean. No. I will soon, because I'm set up a receiving system. No. Perhaps I will soon. Barometer, cloud chart. Cost? They cost the same, I guess. Of course they're pretty useless compared to the CG weather forecasts. Yes, ocean cruising will be much more dangerous and insecure. I will probably end up unprepared for a squall or something and sunk. High seas, &gt;200 nm offshore, North Atlantic. As the British Admiralty List of Radio Services says, the USCG high seas weather forecasts are an integral part of the extensive worldwide high seas weather forecasting system. The US Coast Guard radio broadcasts of marine weather forecasts are indispensable. Their omission would kill many people. It is dismaying that the USCG would seemingly consider their termination, and even so much as require outspoken support for their continuance.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
My role in the maritime community is both a long-time recreation sailor, and also as a provider of maritime communications services. I have been doing long-distance sailing in the gulf of 70’s sailboats for the last 25 years or so, including a circumnavigation over a 9-year period in our 50’ sloop. In 1998 I was a co-founder of the Saltmail Association (www.sailmail.com), which currently provides low-cost email service via the internet for more than 3000 recreational sailors. I also founded Saildocs (www.saildocs.com) which provides internet-based weather information at no cost via email. Our primary sources for obtaining weather information are USCG Marine Radio broadcasts, primarily radio-weatherfax. We also make use of HF SITOR (text) broadcasts, Inmarsat-C (text) broadcasts, various text and coded (e.g. grib format) forecasts via email from Saildocs (via Saltmail.com) which provides Service such as Saildocs and Sailmail are attractive, but the internet is not considered operational by NWS and internet-based delivery methods are not to be relied on as a sole source for weather data. The reason is the nature of the internet itself— an extensive, distributed network not under central control, and subject to a variety of failure modes including malicious retraction of service from NMN, the CG HF transmitter in Norfolk VA. In line with this, I have been bothered by so much as the unjustifiable extraction of service from NMN, the CG HF transmitter in Norfolk VA. Incidentally, we should note that many, many people who have a serious interest in this matter have limited ability to know about it or respond, being cruising sailors in far parts of the world or people whose native language is not English. For example, European cruisers within range of the USCG high seas forecasts depend heavily on them the same as anyone else.

We rarely use USCG voice broadcasts, and prefer the "hard-copy" (i.e. computer capture) of the text forecasts (Sitor or via email). We use USCG radio fax broadcasts extensively, and as our first priority. When sailing offshore we will typically copy 5-10 charts daily, including surface analysis and forecast charts, upper-level and sea-state charts. The ability to see the "big picture" in graphical form is critical, even when other more-detailed forecasts are available. While graphics images (e.g. fax charts) can be sent via some email services, it is not practical for the number of charts needed because of low speed and/or high cost. Alternative sources are available for the text bulletins (e.g. from Saildocs via email), but not on a regular basis. 

We do copy USCG SITOR broadcasts as a backup to other sources (e.g. email), but not on a regular basis. The loss of USCG radio weather broadcasts would have a severe impact on us, and would mean the complete loss of the analysis/forecast charts. We would be dependent on non-operational services (e.g. Saildocs) for text bulletins, and supplemental data such as grib-tiles. Currently we operate our sailing vessel in coastal waters in the Pacific Northwest, during the last 15 years we have operated this vessel around the world. We have spent more time in the Eastern Pacific than elsewhere, but our travels also carried us across the South Pacific Ocean, Indian Oceans, Red Sea, Mediterranean, North Atlantic and Caribbean Seas. Most of our time has been on high seas waters, >200 miles offshore. Some comments on alternative sources. As I mentioned above, I am the founder, developer and operator of Saltmail, which is one alternative weather service. I am also a co-founder, developer and system operator for the Saltmail Association, which provides radio-email service to recreational vessels via 18 stations worldwide. As such I intimately understand the issues involved with making critical weather data available to offshore vessels. The notion of using internet-based alternative services for delivery of weather information seems initially attractive, but the internet is not considered operational by NWS and internet-based delivery methods are not to be relied on as a sole source for weather data. The reason is the nature of the internet itself— an extensive, distributed network not under central control, and subject to a variety of failure modes include malicious attack and simple breakdowns. Servers fail, routers go down, and hackers bring down entire networks— it happens every day, somewhere. So I agree completely with the NWS assessment that the internet cannot be considered part of the operational distribution system for weather information, but without USCG radio broadcasts that is all there is. Services such as Saltmail and Sailmail fill an important role by providing supplemental weather information (such as grib-tiles), but they should not be considered a replacement for operational systems. And yes, even operational systems can sometimes fail— but if that ever does happen then the folks who are responsible know exactly what needs fixing and how to do it— as opposed to a failure an internet link.

In conclusion, speaking both as an offshore sailor and provide a service that some might consider an alternative, I strongly endorse replacement of the USCG radio equipment. The cost is tiny compared to the value of the service and the need.
I have no idea what I would do, or if there are any alternatives while offshore! And it concerns me to sail "weather blind" and put my family's safety at risk. I can see no alternative to the excellent information available on the HF broadcasts, and the cost and maintenance that I have done to maintain my SSB radio.

Yes. As an offshore sailor and as I mentioned in all of the questions above, I would be sailing "weather blind".

While sailing SEBASTIAN, an offshore blue water sailboat, I will have operated seaward in all of the above, and primarily in the SW and Tropical N Atlantic, Caribbean Sea, and East Pacific Oceans. Please keep this valuable resource!

It saved me my family and my boat. The local Martinique warning and tracking of hurricane Dean was pretty useless with poor update. Without your information (which is frequently updated and accurate), I would not be here to congratulate you. I was told today was the last day that people could voice their opinion whether to keep or not the HF. Please, carry on!

It is incomprehensible to me that you are considering discontinuation of this valuable service. To place us at the mercy of whatever service replaces it would be disastrous. For those unable to afford the satellite conveniences, or those who can't afford anything beyond the SSB they've invested in, there is likely to be an astronomical increase in the number of MAYDAY calls the Coast Guard will have to field. This will result in increased expenditures and undue risk to lives. Please retain this service at all costs, including upgrading the equipment as necessary, for this ounce of prevention will surely save the proverbial "pound of cure", and certainly keep us all safer for your efforts.

I really like your HF Weather fax et voice service.

...we make numerous offshore passages each year and are completely dependent on our SSB forecasts and charts for our very lives.

Simon Delode
Bateau Nathanael
Marina du Marin
Martinique 97290

1062  John H. Parker
14641 Huston Street
Sherman Oaks CA 91403-1642
Owner/Operator of a 35' Cruising Sailboat located in the South Caribbean.

USCG HF radio broadcasts, USCG medium frequency (MF) Radio Broadcasts, shore side Internet

Yes. Very critical during times of storms. I use them to update the information I receive from the HF Radio Fax Transmissions.

Yes, and very critical. I was swept onto a beach in the Berry Islands, Bahamas because I was too far from Florida to receive NOAA Weather Radio. A hurricane that was in the Gulf of Mexico came across South Florida and swept into the Bahamas. The boat was eventually washed off the beach and I was able to avoid major damage. I vowed not to be in that situation again. I invested in a SSB radio and Weather Fax Software. I use it every day during the hurricane season and for planning long passages. Because of the HF weather Fax Transmissions I have had at least 3 days prior warning of pending storms, and have actually taken refuge in the mangroves in southern Puerto Rico to escape a forming hurricane! It is the only way to receive weather information while offshore. And there are no other alternatives...

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Yes. As an offshore sailor and as I mentioned in all of the questions above, I would be sailing "weather blind".

While sailing SEBASTIAN, an offshore blue water sailboat, I will have operated seaward in all of the above, and primarily in the SW and Tropical N Atlantic, Caribbean Sea, and East Pacific Oceans. Please keep this valuable resource!

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Simon Delode
Bateau Nathanael
Marina du Marin
Martinique 97290

1064  Sean D. Saslo
418 Martini Road
Lake Ariel PA 18436
As the owner and operator of the 51’ Sailboat “Intrepid” USA 51785...

We make numerous offshore passages each year and are completely dependent on our SSB forecasts and charts for our very lives.

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1065  Sean D. Saslo
418 Martini Road
Lake Ariel PA 18436
As the owner and operator of the 51’ Sailboat “Intrepid” USA 51785...

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Yes. As an offshore sailor and as I mentioned in all of the questions above, I would be sailing "weather blind".

While sailing SEBASTIAN, an offshore blue water sailboat, I will have operated seaward in all of the above, and primarily in the SW and Tropical N Atlantic, Caribbean Sea, and East Pacific Oceans. Please keep this valuable resource!
I recently bought an HF radio for this sole purpose, when I am at sea and away from internet access, so that I may download 24, 48 and 96-hour national marine prediction center weather maps. Other than Coastal Bandam, I don't know anybody with an HF radio on their boat. The last HF radio I used was as a Marine Corps aviator flying the OV-10A in the 1970's. I think the USCG can go to VHF transmissions on any one of the reserved frequencies. It would certainly be more helpful to private boaters in coastal waters. I would ask that you continue to broadcast HF weather faxes. Thanks for taking my input.
Primary sources of obtaining marine weather forecasts are: a) USCG HF radio forecasts; b) Navtex when within range; c) HF radiofax when reception is acceptable.

Yes, we use Coast Guard HF voice broadcasts at least twice a day. When at sea they are our primary source of marine weather information for the safe conduct of ocean passages.

Yes, we use Coast Guard HF Weatherfax broadcasts to receive further marine weather information. We try to get 2 charts per day. They are an extremely important backup to the HF voice forecasts and are critical for the long term forecasting of safe ocean passages.

No. We would be forced to pursue the Inmarsat C route. A) We believe the user cost would be higher. b) Provided the Navtex contained most of the information currently broadcast by HF voice transmissions, it would be most acceptable. But the lack of equivalent weatherfax imagery via SatC is a serious hangup.

Yes. The loss of Coast Guard HF maritime weather forecasts and weather faxes would make it far more hazardous to operate, and make safe offshore passages within the territorial waters of the United States.

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No. We use Coast Guard HF voice broadcasts at least twice a day. When at sea they are our primary source of marine weather information for the safe conduct of ocean passages.

Yes. We use WeatherFax’s on a daily basis when propagation permits whether underway or not. Unfortunately, the reduction in transmitted power has had a significant negative affect on this charting. Unfortunately, they are not available in the Eastern Atlantic.

Yes. We use the WeaFax received on a daily basis when propagation permits whether underway or not. Unfortunately, the reduction in transmitted power has had a significant negative affect on this charting. Unfortunately, they are not available in the Eastern Atlantic.

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At least 70% of our sea mileage is logged in the high seas, more than 250nm offshore. Our operational areas include trans-Atlantic passages in the North Atlantic, and North Central Pacific, including Hawaii and Alaska.

Our operational areas include trans-Atlantic passages in the North Atlantic, and North Central Pacific, including Hawaii and Alaska.

Primary sources of obtaining marine weather forecasts are: a) USCG HF radio forecasts; b) Navtex when within range; c) HF radiofax when reception is acceptable.

Yes, we use Coast Guard HF voice broadcasts at least twice a day. When at sea they are our primary source of marine weather information for the safe conduct of ocean passages.

Yes, we use Coast Guard HF Weatherfax broadcasts to receive further marine weather information. We try to get 2 charts per day. They are an extremely important backup to the HF voice forecasts and are critical for the long term forecasting of safe ocean passages.

No. We would be forced to pursue the Inmarsat C route. A) We believe the user cost would be higher. b) Provided the Navtex contained most of the information currently broadcast by HF voice transmissions, it would be most acceptable. But the lack of equivalent weatherfax imagery via SatC is a serious hangup.

Yes. We use WeatherFax’s on a daily basis when propagation permits whether underway or not. Unfortunately, the reduction in transmitted power has had a significant negative affect on this charting.

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The American Sail Training Association ("ASTA") appreciates this opportunity to comment in response to the Federal Register notice on this subject. The proposed shutdown raises very serious safety and economic concerns for ASTA’s members. Briefly, ASTA urges that the high-frequency (HF) weather broadcasts not be discontinued, for reasons that will follow. In addition, ASTA submit that the proposed discontinuation ought to be scrutinized for its impact on small businesses, in a manner akin to what is done as regulatory changes announced.

The American Sail Training Association is the national sail training organization of the United States, and is a charter member of Sailing International, the corresponding worldwide organization. ASTA conducts active programs relating to maritime safety for its vessels-operating members, and holds its member vessels primarily use a combination of USCG very high frequency (VHF) radio broadcasts, NOAA weather radio, USCG HF radio broadcasts and USCG HF radiofax broadcasts. Yes. Members who use HF report that they are using the broadcasts every synoptic hour, especially when they are at sea. These same members report that HF Wx when out of VHF range represent a primary source of weather information in conjunction with the HF voice broadcasts and thus the overall safety of the vessels, trainers and crew. High seas between the US East coast and Caribbean Sea. Offshore from Florida to Maine.

The most likely alternative sources would be Inmarsat-C or other high-frequency maritime_detail. ender for weather services. Continuing this service will greatly benefit the safety and wellbeing for all of us who utilize it.

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HF weather services proposed for discontinuation. In the aggregate, these represent a very significant increase in operating costs for our members.

b) The usefulness of the substitute information would be comparable to the USCG HF information, but at obviously a much greater cost burden per vessel, multiplied over a large number of vessels.

the safety and operations of our member vessels. This is in addition to the substantial unbudgeted financial burden mentioned above. split between two demographics operating 0.25 nm offshore and 25-200 nm offshore. The remaining members (roughly 20%) operate more than 200 nm offshore.

In order to be most helpful in terms of the comment process, we set forth the key points in the question format set out at 72 F.R. 20863, pages 20864-65.

For the reasons set forth, ASTA respectfully calls upon the Coast Guard to continue HF broadcasts of voice and facsimile weather forecast products. In any event, there should be no discontinuation of these services without conducting an analysis of impact on small businesses, parallel to what is done in connection with a change in federal regulations.

There is a need to continue providing high frequency (HF) radio broadcasts and warnings. Any sailor who has an HF Marine or Amateur radio receiver or shortwave receiver can receive the voice broadcasts. The FAX and SITOR broadcasts can be received with an additional PC and appropriate software.

I strongly encourage the enhancement of HF safety broadcasts, using updated modulation methods, instead of elimination. You can produce a greater data throughput with less power.

I am a recreational boat owner who cruises offshore out of range of VHF stations. HF radio is an economical and effective mode of communication and this is the alternative to long distance broadcasts, satellite radio, costs the user much more. In addition, HF broadcasts offer an alternative method of receiving broadcasts in the event of a failure of the satellite receiver.

The alternate to long distance broadcasts, satellite radio, costs the user much more. In addition, HF broadcasts offer an alternative method of receiving broadcasts in the event of a failure of the satellite receiver.
The American Waterways Operators (AWO) is the national trade association representing the owners and operators of tugboats, towboats and barges serving the inland and coastal commerce of the United States. Our mission is to promote the long-term economic soundness of the industry, and to enhance its ability to provide safe, efficient and environmentally responsible transportation through advocacy, public information and the establishment of safety standards.

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AWO member companies primarily use Coast Guard HF radio voice and fax broadcasts, VHF weather broadcasts, National Weather Service Internet capabilities, the radiofax is the only method available to receive satellite photos. The safety of vessels at sea would be adversely impacted and the alternatives leave gaps in information as possible to transit safely. These protections of human life on the water. More important than ever. As the ever increasing fishing and boating public, especially along our Gulf Coast, the continued broadcast of NOAA weather reports is a must for all users of the seas. Due to the extreme winter environment during the extreme winter months on both coasts. In response to the growing population along our Gulf Coast, the continued broadcast of NOAA weather forecasts is a must for all users of the seas. Due to the ever increasing fishing and boating public, especially along our coastal areas, these broadcasts are more important than ever. As the marine participants are highly mobile and wide-ranging, the ability to receive boating, fishing, and weather information in real time is critical to protection of human life on the water. Even with the improved technology such as personal GPS systems and cellular/satellite communications, the immediate warning to boaters and fishermen in the event of squalls and deteriorating weather conditions is still noticeably absent. Until such time that an affordable alternative to the NOAA Weather Radio system is implemented, the current system is essential for safety on the water. We are formally requesting the USGEC, NOAA, and the FCC to continue the broadcasting of the NOAA Weather Reports and the replacement and expansion of the existing VHF radio broadcasting system.

Therefore, on behalf of the Gulf States Marine Fisheries Commission and its agency partners, we are formally requesting the USGEC, NOAA, and the FCC to continue the broadcasting of the NOAA Weather Reports and the replacement and expansion of the existing VHF radio broadcasting system.

In response to the growing population along our Gulf Coast, the continued broadcast of NOAA weather forecasts is a must for all users of the seas. Due to the ever increasing fishing and boating public, especially along our coastal areas, these broadcasts are more important than ever. As the marine participants are highly mobile and wide-ranging, the ability to receive boating, fishing, and weather information in real time is critical to protection of human life on the water. Even with the improved technology such as personal GPS systems and cellular/satellite communications, the immediate warning to boaters and fishermen in the event of squalls and deteriorating weather conditions is still noticeably absent. Until such time that an affordable alternative to the NOAA Weather Radio system is implemented, the current system is essential for safety on the water. We are formally requesting the USGEC, NOAA, and the FCC to continue the broadcasting of the NOAA Weather Reports and the replacement and expansion of the existing VHF radio broadcasting system.
entire area of operations, the broadcasts are extremely beneficial when returning to the United States. They need. The termination of the Coast Guard HF radio broadcasts will have a substantial impact on vessel operators who may not have access to high-speed Internet. The cost of high-speed connectivity, for both the hardware and service fees, is out of reach for many small operators. Because of this, Coast Guard broadcast services must be maintained.

With these overarching comments as a backdrop, we offer the following responses to the specific questions posed by the Coast Guard in the April 26 Notice and Request for Public Comment.

As emphasized throughout these comments, AWO has serious concerns about the proposal to discontinue the Coast Guard HF voice and fax weather broadcasts. We strongly urge the Coast Guard to continue to provide these services until a more efficient and cost-effective method can be developed.