

EUROPEAN COMMON PROPOSALS

PART 9

Agenda Item 1.9 - Maritime Distress and Safety

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SECTION 1

Appendix 13 - Distress and safety communications (non-GMDSS)

Introduction

It is expected that some non-SOLAS vessels will not have been fitted for GMDSS on MF by 2003 and will therefore still rely on use of the old distress and safety system on 2182 kHz for a few more years. Similarly it is expected that a number of smaller non-SOLAS vessels including pleasure crafts carrying maritime VHF equipment only will not yet have been fitted with VHF DSC and therefore continue to rely on the use of the old distress and safety system on VHF channel 16 for some years ahead.

Many of the provisions of Appendix 13 will therefore still be in use in 2003 and some years thereafter.

These ships should not be left without regulatory control. The provisions for use of 2182 kHz and VHF channel 16 in the old distress and safety system should therefore be retained in Appendix 13 until they can be abrogated.

Besides being used for distress, urgency and safety calling VHF channel 16 is currently also used for general calling. This use has some operational advantages and should be allowed to continue, subject to the limitations given in §18 2) of part A2 in Appendix 13. Conditions for use of VHF channel 16 for general calling are contained in Article S52.

The international requirements for use of Morse telegraphy for distress and safety communications ceased on 1.2.1999.

The provisions on distress and safety communications on 500 kHz are therefore no longer needed and could be suppressed from Appendix 13.

Suppression of these provisions would, however, require many changes of an editorial nature to the relevant parts of Appendix 13. It is considered unnecessary to make these changes at this time.

Proposals

APPENDIX 13 (WRC-2000)*

Distress and safety communications (non-GMDSS)

Part A1 - General provisions

NOC **EUR/1.9/1**

§ 1 to § 10

***Reason:** To retain these general provisions until they can be abrogated.*

Part A2 - Frequencies for distress and safety

Section I - Availability of frequencies

NOC **EUR/1.9/2**

§ 1 to § 12

***Reason:** To maintain the availability of the frequencies for the old distress and safety system until the provisions are no longer needed.*

Section II - Protection of Distress and Safety Frequencies

NOC **EUR/1.9/3**

§13 to § 18

***Reason:** To maintain the protection of the frequencies for the old distress and safety system until the provisions are no longer needed.*

Section III - Watch on distress frequencies

A - 500 kHz

NOC **EUR/1.9/4**

§ 19 to § 20A

Reason: *The provisions for watch on 500 kHz are no longer needed and could be suppressed from Appendix 13. However, it is considered unnecessary to make these changes at this time.*

B - 2182 kHz

NOC **EUR/1.9/5**

§ 21 to § 23B

Reason: *To retain the provisions for watch on frequencies for the old distress and safety system until they can be abrogated.*

C - 4125 kHz, 6215 kHz, 8291 kHz, 12 290 kHz and 16 420 kHz

NOC **EUR/1.9/6**

§ 24

Reason: To retain the provisions on watch on these frequencies for stations keeping aural watch on one or more of these frequencies on a voluntary basis.

D - 156.800 MHz

NOC **EUR/1.9/7**

§ 25

Part A3 - Distress communications

NOC **EUR/1.9/8**

§ 1 to § 36

Reason: *To retain the provisions on distress communications in the old distress and safety system until they can be abrogated.*

Part A4 - Urgency and safety transmissions, and medical transports

NOC **EUR/1.9/9**

§ 1 to § 16

***Reason:** To retain the provisions for urgency and safety communications and medical transport in the old distress and safety system until they can be abrogated.*

Part A5 - Alarm and warning signals

NOC **EUR/1.9/10**

§ 1 to § 12

***Reason:** To retain for the time being the provisions for use of the two-tone alarm signal and the navigational warning signal in the old distress and safety system.*

Part A6 - Special services related to safety

NOC **EUR/1.9/11**

§ 1 to § 13

***Reason:** To retain the provisions for meteorological messages, notice to mariners, medical advice and Navtex in the old distress and safety system until they can be abrogated.*

SECTION 2

Amendments to Resolution 331 (Rev. WRC-97)

Introduction

Resolution 331 (Rev. WRC-97) provides guidance to administrations on the full and final transition to GMDSS. The resolution makes it possible for IMO and administrations to release ship and coast stations from keeping listening watch on 2182 kHz and VHF channel 16 frequency by frequency and area by area, when the transition to GMDSS and the prevailing conditions in the area concerned makes it reasonable to do so.

It is therefore proposed to retain Resolution 331, updated to reflect the developments since WRC-97, as guidance for the final transition to GMDSS.

Proposal

MOD EUR/1.9/12

RESOLUTION 331 (Rev.WRC- 2003)

Transition to the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) and phasing-out the distress and safety system described in Appendix 13

The World Radiocommunication Conference (Geneva, 2003),

noting

that all ships subject to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS), 1974, as amended, were required to be fitted for the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) by 1 February 1999,

noting further

a) that many administrations have taken steps to implement the GMDSS also for classes of vessels not subject to SOLAS, 1974, as amended;

b) that an increasing number of vessels not subject to SOLAS, 1974, as amended, are making use of the techniques and frequencies of the GMDSS prescribed in Chapter VII;

c) that some administrations and vessels, not subject to SOLAS, 1974, as amended, may wish to continue to use provisions of Appendix 13 for distress and safety communications for yet a few years;

d) that it would be costly for administrations to maintain in parallel for an excessive period of time shore-based facilities necessary to support both the old and new distress and safety systems;

- e)* that there may be a need to maintain existing shore-based distress and safety services described in Appendix 13 for some years after this Conference so that vessels not subject to SOLAS, 1974, as amended and not yet using the techniques and frequencies of the GMDSS will be able to obtain assistance from these services until such time as they are able to participate in the GMDSS;
- f)* that the International Maritime Organization (IMO) has decided that:
- listening watches on 2 182 kHz are no longer mandatory onboard SOLAS ships after 1 February 1999;
 - listening watches on VHF channel 16 shall continue; a final date for the cessation of mandatory watchkeeping on channel 16 is yet to be determined;
 - at the earliest opportunity, digital selective calling on VHF channel 70 will be used universally for initial distress, urgency and safety alerting, using VHF channel 16 as the radiotelephony channel following the initial alert.
- g)* that **WRC 97** decided that listening watch on 2 182 kHz is no longer obligatory after 1 February 1999;
- h)* that the Radio Regulations require GMDSS vessels to keep watch on the appropriate digital selective calling (DSC) distress frequencies;
- i)* that IMO has identified a need for a VHF channel for immediate voice intership calling so that all SOLAS ships can establish and conduct communications with each other for distress, safety and general communications purposes until DSC on channel 70 becomes a capability commonly used by both SOLAS ships and non-SOLAS vessels;
- j)* that separate provisions in the existing Radio Regulations designate VHF channel 16 and the frequency 2 182 kHz as the international channels for general calling by radiotelephony;
- k)* that the Radio Regulations establish that ship stations should, when practicable, keep watch on VHF channel 13;
- l)* that several administrations have established Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) systems and require their vessels to keep watch on local VTS channels;
- m)* that ships that are required by SOLAS to carry a radio station have been equipped with DSC, and many vessels subject to national carriage requirements are also being equipped with DSC, but the majority of vessels that carry a radio station on a voluntary basis might not yet have DSC equipment;
- n)* that similarly, many administrations have established distress and safety services based on DSC watchkeeping, but the majority of port stations, pilot stations and other operational coast stations might not yet have been equipped with DSC facilities;

o) that for the reasons listed in *m)* and *n)* above, it will be necessary for some stations in the maritime mobile service to continue for some years to call each other by radiotelephony in certain situations;

p) that IMO has urged administrations to require all seagoing vessels under national legislation, and encourage all vessels voluntarily carrying VHF radio equipment to be fitted with facilities for transmitting and receiving distress alerts by DSC on VHF channel 70 no later than 1 February 2005,

considering

a) that the operation of the GMDSS described in Chapter **VII** and the distress and safety system described in Appendix **13** differ in many crucial aspects, such as means and methods of alerting, communication facilities available, announcement and transmission of maritime safety information, etc.;

b) that operation of the two systems in parallel for a long period would cause ever-increasing difficulties and incompatibilities between vessels operating in the two different systems and may thus seriously degrade safety at sea in general;

c) that the GMDSS overcomes the deficiencies of the aural watch-keeping on maritime distress and calling frequencies on which the distress and safety system described in Appendix **13** relies, by replacing these watches by automatic watch, i.e. digital selective calling and satellite communication systems;

d) that the listening watch on 2 182 kHz onboard SOLAS ships and at some coast stations has ceased in accordance with the decisions of IMO mentioned in *noting further f)* and *g)* above,

resolves

1 to retain, as an interim measure, the provisions permitting use of VHF channel 16 and the frequency 2 182 kHz for general voice-calling;

2 to urge all administrations to assist in enhancing safety at sea by:

- encouraging all vessels to make use of the GMDSS as soon as possible;
- requiring all seagoing vessels required to carry and encouraging all ships voluntarily carrying VHF radio equipment to be fitted with facilities for transmitting and receiving distress alerts by DSC on VHF channel 70 no later than 1 February 2005;
- encouraging, where appropriate, establishment of suitable shore-based facilities for GMDSS, either on an individual basis or in cooperation with other relevant parties in the area;
- encouraging vessels to limit their use of VHF channel 16 and the frequency 2 182 kHz for calling to the minimum necessary, noting the provisions of article **52.239** of the Radio Regulations;

3 that administrations may, taking account of all aspects involved, such as:

- decisions by IMO and ITU on aural watch on 2 182 kHz and VHF channel 16;

- the GMDSS radio systems available in the area concerned;
- the compatibility problems mentioned in *considering a) and b)* above;
- the density and classes of vessels normally in the area;
- the geographical nature of the area and general navigational conditions within the area;
- other adequate measures taken to ensure safety communications for vessels sailing in the area,

, when the development on transition to the GMDSS and the prevailing conditions in the area makes it reasonable to do so, release their ship stations and coast stations within the area concerned from the obligations described in Appendix 13 on listening watch on VHF channel 16 or 2 182 kHz or both;

when doing so, administrations should:

- inform IMO of their decisions and submit to IMO details on the area concerned;
- inform the Secretary-General on the necessary details for inclusion in the List of Coast Stations,

resolves further

that the Secretary-General should ensure that such arrangements and details regarding the area concerned be indicated in relevant maritime publications,

invites the next world radiocommunication conference

~~to include the review of this Resolution, Appendix 13 and Chapter VII on the agenda of WRC-01^{*};~~

instructs the Secretary-General

to communicate this Resolution to IMO and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO),

SECTION 3

CHAPTER VII

Distress and safety communications (GMDSS)

Introduction

The operational procedures for distress, urgency and safety communications in the GMDSS was established by the MOB-87 Conference and were further developed at WRC-97.

*

The operational procedures for use of the GMDSS are basically complete, but clarifications to a few provisions in Chapter VII are needed.

Proposals

NOC **EUR/1.9/13**

33.31

ADD **EUR/1.9/14**

33.31A Safety messages transmitted by coast stations in accordance with a defined timetable should not be announced by digital selective calling techniques.

Reasons: *To clarify that safety messages transmitted by coast stations should only be announced by DSC if sent outside the scheduled broadcast timetable.*

SECTION 4

ARTICLES 47 AND 55

Introduction

The international use of Morse telegraphy for distress and safety communications at the frequency 500 kHz ceased on 1 February 1999. International provisions and requirements for operator certificates for Morse telegraphy are therefore no longer needed and should be deleted from Articles 47 and 55.

Proposals

ARTICLE 47

Operator's certificates

SUP **EUR/1.9/15**

47.1

Reason: Following the cessation of international use of Morse telegraphy for distress and safety communications by 1 February 1999 international provisions for operator certificates for Morse telegraphy are no longer needed and should therefore be deleted.

SUP **EUR/1.9/16**

47.3

MOD **EUR/1.9/17**

47.26 § 8 1) The holder of a radiocommunication general operator's certificate ~~or a first or second class radiotelegraph operator's certificate~~ is authorized to embark as chief operator of a ship station of the fourth category (see Recommendation ITU-R M.1169).

Reason: Provisions on radiotelegraph operator certificates are no longer needed and should be deleted

SUP **EUR/1.9/18**

47.27

Reason: Provisions on radiotelegraph operator certificates are no longer needed and should be deleted

MOD **EUR/1.9/19**

47.28 3) Before becoming chief operator of a ship station of the second or third category (see Recommendation ITU-R M.1169), the holder of a radiocommunication general operator's certificate shall have had, as operator on board ship or in a coast station, at least six months' experience of which at least three months shall have been on board ship.

Reason: Provisions on radiotelegraph operator certificates are no longer needed and should be deleted

MOD EUR/1.9/20

47.29 4) Before becoming chief operator of a ship station of the first category (see Recommendation ITU-R M.1169), the holder of a radiocommunication general operator's certificate shall have had, as operator on board ship or in a coast station, at least one year's experience of which at least six months shall have been on board ship.

Reason: Provisions on radiotelegraph operator certificates are no longer needed and should be deleted

ARTICLE 55

Morse radiotelegraphy

MOD EUR/1.9/21

55.1 The Radiotelegraph procedure may be conducted in accordance with the procedure detailed in Recommendation ITU-R M.1170.

Reason: To delete the reference to the use of Morse telegraphy for distress and safety communications whilst retaining the possibility of using Morse telegraphy for other purposes in accordance with Recommendation ITU-R M.1170.

SECTION 5

Consequential actions related to Article 52

Introduction

The current use of VHF channel 16 also for general calling has some operational advantages and should be allowed to continue, subject to the current limitations of not causing harmful interference to distress, urgency and safety communications and not exceeding 1 minute.

Proposals

ARTICLE 52

Special rules relating to the use of frequencies

NOC **EUR/1.9/22**

S52.231 to S52.241, especially:

NOC **EUR/1.9/23**

52.231

NOC **EUR/1.9/24**

52.239

NOC **EUR/1.9/25**

52.240

Reasons: To allow continuation of the current use of VHF channel 16 for general calling.