



IHB File No. S3/3075

CIRCULAR LETTER 13/2016
10 March 2016

**REPORT ON THE THIRD SESSION OF THE IMO SUB-COMMITTEE
ON NAVIGATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND SEARCH AND RESCUE (NCSR3)**

References:

- A. IHO CL 24/2015 dated 16 March - *Report on the 2nd Session of the IMO Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications, and Search and Rescue*;
- B. IHO CL 78/2015 dated 12 November - *Outcome of the 7th Meeting of the Sub-Committee on the World-Wide Navigational Warnings Service (WWNWS-SC)*.

Dear Hydrographer,

1. As announced in Reference A, the third session of the Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR 3) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) was held at the IMO Headquarters in London, United Kingdom, from 29 February to 4 March 2016. The IHO was represented by Director Gilles Bessero, Assistant Director David Wyatt, Mr Peter Doherty, the Chair of the World-Wide Navigational Warning Service Sub-Committee (WWNWS-SC) and Mr Christopher Janus, Branch Chief, NGA Maritime Watch - NAVAREA IV/XII. National Hydrographic Offices were also represented in the delegations of several countries, including China, Denmark, France, Germany, Greece, Iceland, Ireland, The Netherlands, Poland, Singapore and UK.

2. The Agenda for NCSR3 included the following items of interest to IHO Member States:

- Agenda Item 3: Routing measures and mandatory ship reporting systems;
- Agenda Item 4: Amendment to the General Provisions on Ships' Routing (IMO Resolution A.572(14)) on establishing multiple structures at sea;
- Agenda Item 5: Recognition of Galileo as a component of the IMO World-Wide Radio Navigation System (WWRNS);
- Agenda Item 6: Additional modules to the revised Performance Standards for Integrated Navigation Systems (INS) relating to the harmonization of bridge design and display information;
- Agenda Item 9: Guidelines for the harmonized display of navigation information received via communications equipment;
- Agenda Item 11: Analysis of developments in maritime radiocommunication systems and technology;
- Agenda Item 12: Performance Standards for shipborne GMDSS equipment to accommodate additional providers of GMDSS satellite services;

- Agenda Item 13: Interconnection of NAVTEX and Inmarsat SafetyNET receivers and their display on integrated navigation display systems;
- Agenda Item 14: Completion of the detailed review of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS);
- Agenda Item 15: Updating of the GMDSS Master Plan and guidelines on Maritime Safety Information (MSI) provisions;
- Agenda Item 28: Any other business.

3. The relevant discussions are summarized in Annex A. The full report of NCSR 3 (NCSR 3/29) will be available on the IMODOCS website (<https://webaccounts.imo.org/>) when issued.

Dates for NCSR 4

4. The fourth session of the NCSR (NCSR 4) is currently scheduled to be held at the IMO Headquarters from 6 to 10 March 2017.

Actions required from the IHO and its Member States

5. The Directing Committee will ensure that the relevant subsidiary organs and subordinate bodies of the IHO are informed of the outcome of NCSR 3 and invite them to consider how it affects their activities and work plan. In particular, the Hydrographic Services and Standards Committee (HSSC) and its working groups are expected to monitor and contribute to the activities related to the harmonized display of navigation information. Besides the on-going maintenance of the documentation of the WWNWS (see Reference B), the WWNWS-SC is expected to monitor, and contribute to, the development of the GMDSS Modernization Plan.

6. The Directing Committee will liaise in due course with the ENC Standards Maintenance Working Group and the Worldwide ENC Database Working Group in order to identify any issue related to the operation of ECDIS and to the coverage of ENCs which may require reporting to the fourth session of the NCSR in 2017.

7. Meanwhile, national Hydrographic Offices are encouraged to liaise with their national Maritime Administration to ensure that their views and interests are acknowledged in their country's views on, and contribution to, the progress of outputs affecting the provision of hydrographic services and maritime safety information.

On behalf of the Directing Committee
Yours sincerely,



Gilles BESSERO
Director

Annex A: Summary of the discussions at NCSR3

Summary of the discussions at NCSR 3

References:

- A. IHO CL 43/2015 dated 18 June - *Report on the 95th Session of the IMO Maritime Safety Committee*;
- B. IHO CL 57/2012 dated 30 May - *90th Session of the Maritime Safety Committee of the International Maritime Organization*;
- C. IHO CL 78/2015 dated 12 November - *Outcome of the 7th Meeting of the Sub-Committee on the World-Wide Navigational Warnings Service (WWNWS-SC)*;
- D. IHO CL 65/2015 Rev.1 dated 31 August - *Status of IHO ECDIS and ENC Normative Reference*.

Agenda Item 3 - Routeing measures and mandatory ship reporting systems

1. The Sub-Committee approved corrections to traffic separation schemes in the existing routeing system *Off Friesland* and in the mandatory route for tankers from *North Hinder to the German Bight* and vice versa; as these corrections do not affect the visualization of the charts but only the description in the ENC, the Sub-Committee agreed these could be implemented with immediate effect after the approval of the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC).

2. In relation with ships' routeing measures off the coast of Belgium and The Netherlands between *West Hinder, North Hinder* and *Maas West* Traffic Separation Schemes (TSS), the NCSR approved:

- amendments to the existing TSS *In the Approaches to Hook of Holland and at North Hinder*,
- amendments to the TSS *At West Hinder* and adjacent routeing measures,
- amendments to the routeing measures related to the *Approaches to the Schelde estuary*, and
- the establishment of new routeing measures *In Windfarm Borssele*.

3. The Sub-Committee approved the establishment of two new TSS *Off Cape Leeuwin*, Australia and *In the Corsica Channel* in the Mediterranean as well as amendments to the inshore traffic zone for the TSS *In Bornholmssgat* in the Baltic Sea and to the existing area to be avoided *Off the coast of Ghana* in the Atlantic Ocean.

4. The provisions agreed by the Sub-Committee will now be submitted to the MSC for adoption at its 96th session in May 2016. Implementation of the provisions mentioned in paragraphs 2 and 3 will be not less than six months after adoption by the MSC.

Agenda Item 4 - Amendment to the General Provisions on Ships' Routeing (IMO Resolution A.572(14)) on establishing multiple structures at sea

5. The Sub-Committee approved amendments to the General provision on ships' routeing (IMO Resolution A.572(14)) in relation with the establishment of multiple structures at sea.

Agenda Item 5 - Recognition of Galileo as a component of the World-Wide Radio Navigation System

6. The NCSR agreed to advise the MSC that the Galileo system could be recognised as a future component of the World-Wide Radio Navigation System (WWRNS).

Agenda Item 6 - Additional modules to the revised Performance Standards for Integrated Navigation Systems relating to the harmonization of bridge design and display information

Agenda Item 9 - Guidelines for the harmonized displayed of navigation information received via communications equipment

Agenda Item 13 - Interconnection of NAVTEX and Inmarsat SafetyNET receivers and their display on Integrated Navigation Display Systems

Agenda Item 28 - Any other business - Development of guidance on the Standardized (or S) Mode of operation of navigation equipment

7. The NCSR considered under these Agenda Items several submissions related to the harmonized display of navigation information in relation to the outputs agreed by MSC at its 95th session (see Reference A). The IHB reported, on behalf of the IHO, on the contribution of the S-100 framework to the harmonized display of navigation information. The need for coordination between related activities conducted by the IHO and the IMO was highlighted, including the opportunity of activating the IMO/IHO Harmonization Group on Data Modelling, which had been previously authorized by MSC at its 90th session (see Reference B). Expectations that the output would provide a simplified and more user-friendly display of Marine Safety Information were expressed.

8. The following arrangements were agreed for progressing the relevant planned outputs:

Item 6: NCSR agreed to establish a Correspondence Group (CG) on the Development of additional modules to the INS Performance standards, under the coordination of China, to develop the new draft modules to the INS Performance standards.

Item 9: NCSR invited Norway to coordinate a joint proposal from interested Member States and international organizations to NCSR 4 containing draft Guidelines for the harmonized display of navigation information received via communications equipment.

Item 13: NCSR agreed to invite the MSC to extend the target completion year for this output to 2017 and invited the United States and interested Member States and/or organizations, if required, to submit revised proposals, as appropriate, to NCSR 4.

Item 28: NCSR noted that the output on S-mode is to be addressed in the post-biennial agenda (2018-2019).

Agenda Item 11 - Analysis of developments in maritime radiocommunication systems and technology

9. The NCSR endorsed a comprehensive list of conditions which would need to be fulfilled before the Iridium system could be recommended for recognition as a mobile satellite system service provider of the GMDSS. The Sub-Committee recognised that the process had identified a need to review the IMO Resolution A.1001(25), which details the criteria to be met for a provider seeking recognition as a service provider of the GMDSS.

Agenda Item 12 - Performance Standards for shipborne GMDSS equipment to accommodate additional providers of GMDSS satellite services

10. The Sub-Committee considered a proposal from the USA, which provided draft performance standards for shipborne GMDSS equipment to accommodate additional providers of GMDSS satellite services. Due to the complexity of the proposal and the time available, the NCSR agreed to invite MSC to extend the work for an additional year, until 2017, and invited the USA to coordinate this work and submit a revised draft proposal for consideration at NCSR 4 in 2017.

Agenda Item 14 - Completion of the detailed review of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS)

11. The Sub-Committee endorsed the draft outcome of the detailed review of the GMDSS and invited the MSC to approve the review and continue the project in developing the GMDSS Modernization Plan, for which a CG was formed, under the coordination of the USA, in anticipation of the Committee's approval.

Agenda Item 15 - Updating of the GMDSS master plan and guidelines on MSI provisions

12. The Sub-Committee received a report from the Chair of the IMO NAVTEX Panel providing an update on the status of NAVTEX stations. The Chair of the IHO WNWNS-SC reported on the activities of the Sub-Committee, highlighting the progress on the S-100 based Product Specification for Navigational Warnings - S-124, and the capacity building training provided to the East Asia Hydrographic Commission and Mediterranean and Black Seas Hydrographic Commission. The NCSR endorsed the proposed amendments to the International SafetyNET manual and the IMO NAVTEX Manual prepared by the WNWNS-SC (see Reference C), identifying only minor editorial amendments, and instructed the IMO Secretariat to draft the necessary MSC Circulars for consideration and approval by the MSC at its 96th session in May 2016.

13. The Sub-Committee noted that amendments to the GMDSS Master Plan had been distributed in GMDSS/Circ.18 and Administrations were encouraged to check their national data for accuracy.

Agenda Item 28 - Any other business - ECDIS issues

14. The IHO submitted a document reporting on the monitoring of ECDIS issues and chart coverage. The IHO reported the recent request of industry, endorsed by the ENC Standards Maintenance Working Group, to extend by one year, until 31 August 2017, the transition period for upgrading existing ECDIS systems to meet the revised set of IHO standards which came into force on 31 August 2015 for new ECDIS systems (see Reference D). The Sub-Committee agreed the one-year extension. Noting the indication in the IHO report of the apparent and inappropriate use of the ECDIS Data Presentation and Performance Check by port State control and vetting inspectors, the Sub-Committee agreed to invite the MSC to note the issue and refer it to the Sub-Committee on Implementation of IMO Instruments (III).

15. The discussion of ECDIS issues was also informed by an off-session presentation coordinated by INTERTANKO, the International Association of Independent Tanker Owners. The presentation reported the wide variations in the skills of "certified ECDIS users", a prevalent lack of awareness of software maintenance requirements and a lack of appropriate procedures aboard ships. The presentation questioned the relevance of some provisions of the IMO ECDIS Performance Standards related to display options. The presentation highlighted the lack of flexibility in setting the safety depth and the difficulty to optimize the anti-grounding function due to the insufficient density of contour lines in most Electronic Navigational Charts

Agenda Item 27 - Election of Chair and Vice-Chair for 2017

16. The Sub-Committee unanimously elected Mr Ringo Lakeman (Netherlands), as Chair, and Mr Nigel Clifford (New Zealand), as Vice-Chair, for 2017.