

NAVTEX Panel Report

Submitted by Chair, IMO International NAVTEX Co-ordinating Panel

SUMMARY

Executive Summary: This report provides a summary of the current issues being addressed by the IMO International NAVTEX Co-ordinating Panel and its actions and activities since WWNWS Meeting 5.

Action to be taken: Paragraphs 3 & 6

Related documents: None

INTRODUCTION

1. This report covers the period since WWNWS 5 and outlines:
 - .1 changes to the NAVTEX infrastructure during the period, and notification of planned changes;
 - .2 current operational issues associated with the NAVTEX service world-wide; and
 - .3 other wider issues associated with the promulgation of Maritime Safety Information (MSI) with which members of the Panel are involved.

NAVTEX INFRASTRUCTURE

2. Activities and developments during the period since the last report to WWNWS-SC are detailed below in respect to specific NAVAREAs (there has been no activity to report for NAVAREAs II, V, VI, VII, X, XIII, XIV, XV, XVI, XVII, XVIII, XIX, XX and XXI):

.1 NAVAREA I.

- .1.1 The **Netherlands** have been in discussion with neighbouring National NAVTEX Authorities concerning temporarily broadcasting of **Netherlands** NAVTEX messages, whilst their antenna relocation takes place. Germany has agreed to temporarily broadcast **Netherlands** MSI for them. The Panel is ready to assist as required.
- .1.2 During March 2014 **Spain** reported that La Coruna was receiving interference from **Faroe Islands** station Torshavn, particularly during the hours of darkness. After investigation by both parties, **Faroe Islands** confirmed that Torshavn power output from their transmitter, during hours of darkness, was not in compliance with the NAVTEX manual. Software amendments have now been made and a lower power setting is used during the hours of darkness. The situation continues to be monitored by the Panel.

.2 NAVAREA III.

- .2.1 **Georgia** has made an initial approach to the Panel with regard to installing their own NAVTEX station. Preliminary discussions are taking place with regard to the operational need for this additional NAVTEX station in the Black Sea region.
- .2.2 It was reported, via the WWNWS Survey Questionnaire of 2014, that NAVTEX transmissions from Varna station in **Bulgaria** were causing interference during hours of darkness to Gislovshammar station in **Sweden**. The Panel are in contact with the relevant authority in **Bulgaria** in order to verify compliance with the NAVTEX Manual. No further reports of interference have been received. The Panel will continue to monitor the situation.
- .2.3 It was also reported, via the WWNWS Survey Questionnaire of 2014, that NAVTEX transmissions from Izmir station in **Turkey** were causing interference during hours of darkness to Grimeton station in **Sweden**. The authorities in **Turkey** have confirmed compliance with the NAVTEX manual and no further reports of interference have been received. The Panel will continue to monitor the situation.
- .2.4 The Panel has received a report from leisure vessels that NAVTEX transmissions from Kerkyra station in **Greece** are not being received. No reports from SOLAS vessels have been received to indicate that there is a problem with Kerkyra. The authorities in Greece have been contacted and the Panel is currently awaiting a response to their investigations.

.3 NAVAREA IV.

- .3.1 The Panel has been informally approached by **Jamaica** with a view to planning and implementation of a NAVTEX station. The Panel were able to assist informally and will be ready to assist further when a more formal approach is made.

.4 NAVAREA VIII.

- .4.1 The Panel has been approached by **Seychelles** for assistance in planning and implementing a NAVTEX station. The Panel welcomes this news and fully supports the implementation of such a site, particularly in this area of the world where acts of piracy continue to be a major concern. Owing to the rapid progress being made by this station, the Panel has already provisionally allocated B1 transmission identification characters for use on 518 and 490 kHz. Test transmissions are currently being made with a full implementation date to be announced shortly.
- .4.2 The NAVTEX network in **India** is still inoperative pending the implementation of new equipment. No date for restoration of the network has been advised.

.5 NAVAREA IX.

- .5.1 **Oman** is planning a complete overhaul of their GMDSS radio communications infrastructure. It is likely that this will include a new NAVTEX station at Salalah, which is believed, will cover Gulf of Aden Eastern Approaches. The Panel welcomes their intention and is ready to assist where and when needed.

.6 NAVAREA XI.

- .6.1 **China** introduced NAVTEX stations at Tianjin and Zhanjiang during 2013, operating of the National frequency of 486 kHz in the Chinese language. Operational details for these two stations are in the latest update to the GMDSS Master Plan.

.7 NAVAREA XII.

- .7.1 For a number of years Ayora NAVTEX station in **Ecuador** has been inoperative, however, new equipment has been purchased and it is anticipated that during 2014 Ayora will be operational again. The Panel has contacted the **Ecuador** authorities for an update on this situation.

CURRENT OPERATIONAL ISSUES

NAVTEX Service Areas

3. The Panel have taken a study of NAVTEX service areas, as described in IMO NAVTEX Manual paragraph 2.2, which have been declared by Member States. It would appear that most Member States are operating in contravention of IMO Res A.801(19) Annex 4 and IMO Res A.706(17). It is very important that Member States conform to these resolutions and particularly where overlapping NAVTEX Coverage Areas exists. As a result it is essential that all NAVAREA Coordinators take a greater interest in resolving these issues and coordinating between neighbouring states to resolve issues of service areas. The Panel will assist where they can but the lead must come from NAVAREA Coordinators during the course of their NAVAREA meetings or communications with their relevant Member States. International shipping should be able to determine with ease which NAVTEX station they should select to receive Maritime Safety Information for a specific area.

WIDER ISSUES ASSOCIATED WITH THE PROMULGATION OF MARITIME SAFETY INFORMATION

4. The NAVTEX Panel continues to be active in a number of areas associated with improving standards and developing MSI services, including:
- i) The Secretary of the Panel has continued to act as Secretary of the IHO Working Group tasked with reviewing and updating all of the joint IMO/IHO/WMO maritime safety information documentation.
 - ii) Since WWNWS5, Panel members have contributed to the IHO Capacity Building Programme MSI training courses for the benefit of Southern Africa and Islands Hydrographic Commission, held in South Africa. The Panel remain ready to provide a trainer as required.

NEW CHAIRMAN AND SECRETARY

5. In February 2014, Mr Guy Beale stood down from the position of Chairman of the Panel, which he had held since 2011, pending his retirement. The members of the Panel have unanimously endorsed Mr William Van-Den-Bergh as its new Chairman and Mr Larry Bennett as Secretary of the Panel.

ACTION REQUESTED OF THE SUB-COMMITTEE

6. The Sub-Committee is invited to note the information provided.