

**INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANISATION****Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR), 9th session, 21-30 June 2022**

Action Required: IR Commission members are invited to note the relevant outcomes of NCSR 9.

**Safety measures for non-SOLAS ships operating in polar waters**

The Sub-Committee finalized the first set of draft amendments to the Polar Code, together with associated amendments to the SOLAS Convention, to incorporate new requirements for non-SOLAS ships concerning the safety of navigation and voyage planning. The amendments will be applicable to some non-SOLAS ships, i.e. fishing vessels of 24 metres in length overall and above, pleasure yachts of 300 gross tonnage and upwards not engaged in trade and cargo ships of 300 gross tonnage and upwards but below 500 gross tonnage.

The amendments aim to enhance the safety of ships operating under the special conditions the polar areas present, as well as that of the persons on board.

The Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 106 in November 2022) is invited to approve the draft amendments to SOLAS chapter XIV and the Polar Code parts I-A and I-B, for subsequent adoption with a view to entry into force on 1 January 2026.

IMO's Polar Code sets out requirements to ensure the safety of ships operating under the harsh conditions of the Arctic and Antarctic areas, taking especially into account extremes of temperature, and that critical equipment remains operational under those conditions.

**New and amended ships routing measures and mandatory ship reporting systems**

The Sub-Committee approved, for adoption by MSC 106:

- amended traffic separation schemes and associated measures "Approaches to the Chornomorsk, Odesa and Pivdennyi ports" (Ukraine);
- recommended route "Off the coast of Shio-no-Misaki" (Japan);
- amendments to the existing traffic separation scheme in the Santa Barbara Channel; amendments to the existing areas to be avoided off the California coast; and establishment of a no anchoring area "In the southern portion of Pulley Ridge" off the coast of Florida (United States);

- recommendation on navigation for containerships in traffic separation schemes Off Vlieland, Terschelling-German Bight, Off Friesland and German Bight western approach, (Denmark, Germany and the Netherlands).

### **Revision of Guidelines on places of refuge for ships in need of assistance**

The Sub-Committee finalized a revision of the Guidelines on places of refuge for ships in need of assistance (resolution A.949(23)). The draft revised Assembly resolution will be submitted to the MSC, and subsequently to the Marine Environment Protection Committee (MEPC) and the Legal Committee (LEG), for approval, with a view to adoption by the IMO Assembly (A 33) in 2023.

The guidelines were first adopted in 2003 to provide guidance for cases where a ship is in need of assistance but safety of life is not involved (when safety of life is involved, SAR provisions should be followed).

The proposed revision recognizes that various organizational, operational and technological developments have taken place in a rapidly changing global maritime domain. Experience in handling situations of ships in need of assistance has increasingly been gained around the world and informed the revision of the guidelines.

The revised guidelines aim to provide the basis of an operational framework for coastal States, ships' masters, operators and/or salvors as well as other involved parties on how to handle and take a decision when a ship is in need of assistance and seeks a place of refuge.

Among other changes, a new section on media information and management is proposed, recommending that States include in their administrations the capacities (including training) for dealing with media and requests for information in connection with managing a ship in need of assistance seeking a place of refuge.

### **NAVTEX Manual revision completed**

The Sub-Committee finalized the revision of the NAVTEX Manual (MSC.1/Circ.1403/Rev.1), which will become effective on 1 January 2023, subject to approval by MSC 106.

### **Revised circulars following modernization of the GMDSS**

The Sub-Committee finalized a number of draft MSC and COMSAR circulars in connection with the modernization of the GMDSS.

This follows the adoption by MSC 105 of a set of amendments to update the GMDSS and to enable the future use of modern communication systems in the GMDSS while removing obsolete requirements.

**BeiDou Message Service System (BDMSS) recognition**

The Sub-Committee agreed to recommend to MSC 106 the recognition of the BeiDou Message Service System (BDMSS) as a new regional mobile satellite service for use in the GMDSS, subject to completion of a number of outstanding technical and operational issues. The International Maritime Satellite Organization (IMSO), which has the remit to assess the technical and operational aspects, was invited to submit a report to MSC 106 on the outcome of a planned site visit to the BDMSS facilities in China.

**Revision of ECDIS Guidance and performance standards**

The Sub-Committee finalized a revision of the ECDIS Guidance for good practice (MSC.1/Circ.1503/Rev.1) for submission to MSC for approval. The draft updated guidance includes, in particular, a new section on onboard ECDIS updates.

The Sub-Committee also finalized a draft revision of the Performance standards for electronic chart display and information systems (ECDIS) (resolution MSC.232(82)) for adoption by MSC 106.

The updates to the performance standards introduce, in particular, the application of new IHO Data Standards and product specifications (S-98, S-100 and S-101) with regard to ECDIS equipment installed on or after 1 January 2029 and, optionally, for equipment installed after 1 January 2026 and before 1 January 2029.

**LRIT updates**

The Sub-Committee finalized draft amendments to the LRIT Performance standards (resolution MSC.263(84), as amended) and related circulars, for submission to the MSC for approval/adoption.

**Draft IMO position for WRC 23**

The draft IMO position on relevant agenda items of ITU WRC-23 concerning matters relating to maritime services was finalized, for approval by MSC 106 and submission to the ITU's Conference Preparatory Meeting for WRC-23.

The next World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC-23) will be held in the United Arab Emirates from 20 November to 15 December 2023.

Draft liaison statements to ITU on maritime radiocommunication matters were also approved.

**SAR and COMSAR circulars approved**

The Sub-Committee approved a revised List of documents and publications which should be held by a Maritime or Joint Rescue Coordination Centre (to be disseminated as SAR.7/Circ.15) and a COMSAR circular on Procedure for routing distress alerts.

**Emergency personal radio devices**

The Sub-Committee finalized a draft MSC circular on Guidance on the training on and operation of emergency personal radio devices in multiple casualty situations, with a view to approval by MSC 106. The guidance should be included and addressed, pursuant to the International Safety Management (ISM) Code, in the safety management system of ships that could require a multiple casualty evacuation.

**There were no other issues of note for World Sailing arising from this session.**