INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANISATION

REPORT ON THE OUTCOME OF THE SIXTH SESSION OF THE IMO SUB-COMMITTEE ON NAVIGATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND SEARCH AND RESCUE (NCSR 7)

Report from the International Regulations Commission Chairman

Action Required: IR Commission members are invited to note the relevant outcomes of NCSR 7.

The Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR) held its seventh session from 15 to 24 January 2020 chaired by Mr. R. Lakeman (Netherlands). The Vice-Chair, Mr. N. Clifford (New Zealand), was also present.

The Secretary-General welcomed participants and delivered his opening address, the full text of which can be downloaded from the IMO website at the following link: http://www.imo.org/en/MediaCentre/SecretaryGeneral/Secretary-GeneralsSpeechesToMeetings

The agenda items of interest from the meeting are summarised below. The full report is available on the IMO DOCS website.

DECISIONS OF OTHER IMO BODIES

Lost containers at sea

NCSR7 noted that MEPC 74, given the relevance of actions 10 and 11 of the Action plan to address marine plastic litter from ships (resolution MEPC.310 (73)), had invited it to note the importance of the issue of lost containers at sea, as their expertise on the matter could be sought in the future (MEPC 74/18, paragraphs 8.39 and 18.2.7).

NCSR7 also noted that MSC 101, following a brief discussion, had noted the general support to tackle the problem of containers lost at sea, which presented a real danger for international shipping, as recognized by MEPC 73 and MEPC 74, and invited Member States and international organizations to submit proposals for a relevant new output to MSC 102, in accordance with MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.1 on Organization and method of work of the Maritime Safety Committee and the Marine Environment Protection Committee and their subsidiary bodies (MSC 101/24, paragraphs 2.5 and 2.6).

ROUTEING MEASURES AND MANDATORY SHIP REPORTING SYSTEMS

New routeing measures

NCSR considered proposals to amend:

- The existing two-way route in the Great Barrier Reef and Torres Strait
- The existing traffic separation schemes and associated routeing measures "Off the western coast of Norway", "Off the coast of southern Norway" and "Off the coast of Norway from Vardø to Røst"
- The existing traffic separation scheme and associated measures "Slupska Bank"
- The traffic separation scheme "Off Ushant"

Following consideration by an expert group NCSR7 approved the proposals. A summary is available in Annex 1 of NCSR7 report to MSC

Interaction between offshore wind farms and maritime navigation

NCSR7 noted information provided by France and the Netherlands (NCSR 7/3/4) on the interaction between offshore wind farms (OWF) and maritime navigation, based on recommendations contained in a report from the World Association for Waterborne Transport Infrastructure (PIANC), made available in document NCSR 7/INF.15.

NCSR7 recalled that relevant guidance for the planning and establishment of multiple structures at sea, including but not limited to wind turbines, was included in the General provisions on ships' routeing (resolution A.572 (14), as amended).

APPLICATION OF THE "INDIAN REGIONAL NAVIGATION SATELLITE SYSTEM (IRNSS)" IN THE MARITIME FIELD AND DEVELOPMENT OF PERFORMANCE STANDARDS FOR SHIPBORNE IRNSS RECEIVER EQUIPMENT

India advised that, based on further consultations, it had decided to seek recognition of IRNSS for "ocean waters" only and that, in the future, it would seek recognition for navigation in "harbour entrances, harbour approaches and coastal waters", once further test data was obtained. After consideration, NCSR7 agreed that IRNSS should be recognized as a component of the worldwide radio navigation system suitable for use in ocean waters in the geographical area specified.

NCSR7 agreed to a draft SN circular on Recognition of IRNSS as a component of the Worldwide radio navigation system, as set out in annex 3 of its report to MSC.

UPDATING OF THE GMDSS MASTER PLAN AND GUIDELINES ON MARITIME SAFETY INFORMATION (MSI)

Report of the IMO NAVTEX Coordinating Panel

Mr. N. Salter (United Kingdom), summarizing the issues addressed by the Panel and its actions and activities since NCSR 6 and advising, in particular, on the new email address of the IMO NAVTEX Coordinating Panel: navtexpanel@ukho.gov.uk

NCSR7 invited Member States to:

- Provide status reports to the IMO NAVTEX Coordinating Panel of NAVTEX stations which had or would become non-operational (temporary or permanent) together with anticipated return to service dates, if known;
- Check that their NAVTEX transmissions did not overrun the assigned 10-minute time slot as this might cause interference and disruption to the next scheduled transmission; and
- Abide by the relevant guidance and refrain from using NAVTEX as a tool to disseminate inappropriate messages.

World-Wide Navigational Warning Service (WWNWS) and Worldwide Met-Ocean Information and Warning Service (WWMIWS)

NCSR7 encouraged:

- The use of the joint IMO/IHO/WMO Manual on MSI and the WMO Manual on Marine Meteorological Services (No.558) to ensure correct use of terminology and formats in MSI messages;
- Closer engagement of the national MSI Coordinators of Member States with the relevant NAVAREA and METAREA Coordinators;

- Member States to provide feedback on met-ocean services through the relevant METAREA Coordinators; and
- The attendance of Member States and observers at IHO WWNWS Sub-Committee and WMO-IOC JCOMM WWMIWS Committee meetings.

Development of a technical solution for the reception and dissemination of MSI and SAR-related information over different recognized mobile satellite services

NCSR7 noted the views expressed on the development of a technical solution for the reception and dissemination of MSI and SAR-related information over different recognized mobile satellite services (NCSR 7/WP.5, paragraphs 4 to 8) and, in particular, that the delegation of Australia had indicated that it would take the comments into account during the ongoing process and keep the Organization informed of its progress in implementing a standardized API protocol for machine-to-machine transfer of information between MSI providers and recognized mobile satellite services.

Monitoring of MSI broadcasts in a multi-provider environment

NCSR7 noted the views expressed on the monitoring of MSI broadcasts, including SAR-related information, in a multi-provider environment (NCSR 7/WP.5, paragraphs 9 to 14) and, in particular, that the parties involved (i.e. IMO, IHO, WMO, IMSO and service providers) were already cooperating to address this matter.

SAFETY MEASURES FOR NON-SOLAS SHIPS OPERATING IN POLAR WATERS

NCSR7 noted that MSC 101 had approved a draft Assembly resolution on Interim safety measures for ships not certified under the SOLAS Convention operating in polar waters, which was subsequently adopted by A 31 as resolution A.1137 (31).

NCSR7 noted also that MSC 101 had agreed to include in the provisional agenda for NCSR 7 existing output OW 40 on "Safety measures for non-SOLAS ships operating in polar waters" and referred documents MSC 101/7 and MSC 101/7/2 to the Sub-Committee for further consideration and instructed NCSR 7 to consider:

- The consequences and feasibility of applying chapters 9 and 11 of the Polar Code to non-SOLAS ships; and
- How best to enhance the safety of non-SOLAS ships, including possible development of amendments to SOLAS and/or the Polar Code, and to advise the Committee accordingly;

During the ensuing discussion, general support was expressed for the proposal to initiate the consideration of technical issues around the feasibility and consequences of applying chapters 9 and 11 of the Polar Code to non-SOLAS ships, as contained in document NCSR 7/10, on the understanding that further intersessional work would be required, including underlying principles to guide further work of the Sub-Committee on this matter. Views were further expressed that:

- Careful consideration should be given to any potential new requirements for non-SOLAS ships, in particular, those that might require retrospective application or substantial refitting;
- Any potential new requirements should be pragmatic, proportionate and based on a compelling need;
- Differences between types of non-SOLAS ships and between Arctic and Antarctic waters should be taken into account;
- Recommendatory guidance for non-SOLAS ships operating in polar waters should be developed before considering mandatory requirements, taking also into account the flexibility

provided in SOLAS for the application of chapter V to certain categories of ships (regulation V/1.4); and

- Any further developments when considering safety measures for fishing vessels operating in polar waters should be consistent with the provisions in the 2012 Cape Town Agreement.

After consideration, NCSR7 referred the matter to the Navigation Working Group for further consideration and advice and it and established a Correspondence Group on Safety measures for non-SOLAS ships operating in polar waters, under the coordination of New Zealand instructing it to:

- Undertake a detailed technical analysis of the feasibility and consequences of applying chapters 9 and 11 of the Polar Code to non-SOLAS ships, taking into account differences between types of non-SOLAS ships and between Arctic and Antarctic waters, based initially on the table contained in the annex of document NCSR 7/10;
- Consider, as part of this technical analysis, whether goals, functional requirements and regulations, including related guidance of chapters 9 and 11 of the Polar Code:
  - 1 should be applied to non-SOLAS ships entirely;
  - 2 should be modified in order to improve safety in a practical way and make it proportionate to the risk posed by non-SOLAS ships operating in polar waters, and develop options, as appropriate; or
  - 3 might not be necessary or could not be modified to make it practical for non-SOLAS ships operating in polar waters;
- Consider possible mechanisms for implementing applicable provisions in chapter 9 and 11 of the Polar Code to non-SOLAS ships, including the possible development of amendments to the SOLAS Convention and/or the Polar Code; and
- Submit a report for consideration at NCSR 8.

RESPONSE TO MATTERS RELATED TO THE RADIOCOMMUNICATION ITU-R STUDY GROUP AND ITU WORLD RADIOCOMMUNICATION CONFERENCE

EMI effects of LED lighting systems and their impact on maritime safety

NCSR7 considered a liaison statement from ITU-R WP 5B (NCSR 7/12/1) regarding electromagnetic interference (EMI) effects of light-emitting diode (LED) lighting systems and their impact on maritime safety, advising, in particular, that the matter would be further considered by ITU-R WPs 1A and 5B and the International Special Committee on Radio Interference (CISPR). In doing so, NCSR7 took into account the preliminary discussions at EG 15 on this liaison statement (NCSR 7/12, paragraph 2.2 and annex, paragraphs 6.1 to 6.5).

NCSR7 considered also information provided by the Netherlands (NCSR 7/12/9), commenting on documents NCSR 7/12 and NCSR 7/12/1, and proposing an alternative approach for solving the issue of EMI effects of LED lighting systems when co-located on board maritime vessels, and the EMI effects of LED on aeronautical systems.

During the ensuing discussion, the delegations that took the floor recognized the importance of addressing the issue of EMI effects of LED lighting systems. Views were expressed recommending a risk-based approach; the need to find a solution for all cases of interference, not only for LED; and the development of suitable standards.

After consideration, the Sub-Committee referred the matter to the Communications Working Group for further consideration and advice. In addition, NCSR7 invited interested Member States and

international organizations to make submissions on this issue to the next meeting of the Joint IMO/ITU Experts Group.

MOB-AIS devices

NCSR7 considered information provided by CIRM (NCSR 7/12/5) advising on issues related to Man overboard Automatic identification system (MOB-AIS) devices in new Recommendation ITU-R M.2135-0 on technical characteristics of autonomous maritime radio devices operating in the frequency band 156-162.05 MHz and proposing to advise ITU-R that MOB-AIS devices should not be considered as AMRD as this could result in these devices not being permitted to use the AIS1 and AIS2 channels and, therefore, they were beyond the scope of this Recommendation.

12.21 NCSR7 recalled that NCSR 6, after extensive consideration, had agreed that MOB Class M and Mobile AtoN should be considered as Group A AMRD and, in this regard, had sent a liaison statement to ITU-R WP 5B (NCSR 6/WP.5, annex 11). Consequently, it was agreed that no further action was required.

DEVELOPMENTS IN GMDSS SATELLITE SERVICES

Annual report on Inmarsat's public service obligations

NCSR7 noted IMSO's annual report on Inmarsat's public service obligations for the provision of recognized mobile satellite communication services in the GMDSS (NCSR 7/14/2), as overseen by IMSO, covering the period from 1 October 2018 to 30 September 2019, and, in particular that during the period covered by the report, Inmarsat Global Ltd. had continued to provide fully operational maritime mobile satellite distress and safety communication services for GMDSS and fulfilled the company's public service obligation as stated in the Public Services Agreement (PSA).

Status and plans of the BeiDou Message Service System (BDMSS) for recognition and use in GMDSS

NCSR7 noted general support for the proposal by China and invited IMSO to conduct the technical and operational assessment of BDMSS and provide a report for consideration. IMSO advised that they were ready to undertake the technical and operational assessment of BDMSS; that a group of experts would be established for this purpose; and that interested parties willing to participate in this work should contact IMSO.

Monitoring of GMDSS implementation of Iridium

NCSR7 noted information provided by IMSO (NCSR 7/INF.16) on the progress of the implementation of recognized maritime mobile satellite services by Iridium. IMSO advised that the Letter of Compliance, which marked the entry into force of the PSA and the commencement of Iridium's financial obligations to IMSO in respect of the oversight of GMDSS, had been issued on 19 December 2019.

Status of the Cospas-Sarsat Programme

NCSR7 noted information on the status of the Cospas-Sarsat Programme, in general, and encouraged Administrations to enter into agreements between SPOCs and their supporting MCCs, based on the model available on the Cospat-Sarsat website and invited Administrations with agreements not listed

in document NCSR 7/14/1 to consider providing a copy of their agreements to the Cospas-Sarsat Secretariat.

FURTHER DEVELOPMENT OF THE PROVISION OF GLOBAL MARITIME SAR SERVICES

Global SAR Plan

NCSR7 recalled that the status of the availability of SAR services changed day by day and, therefore, providing updated information directly into the Global SAR Plan in GISIS was of utmost importance, as this would enable those involved in SAR operations to find relevant information when dealing with a distress situation.

BIENNIAL STATUS REPORT AND PROVISIONAL AGENDA FOR NCSR 8

Workload of the Sub-Committee and arrangements for NCSR 8

NCSR7 noted that MSC 101 had agreed to (MSC 101/24, paragraphs 21.50 and 21.51) to continue with the current arrangement of an eight-day meeting for NCSR 8 and it would consider the workload of the NCSR Sub-Committee further at its next session (i.e. MSC 102).

After consideration and in order to enhance the efficiency of working arrangements for the eight-day meeting at NCSR 8, it was agreed that the session should start on a Tuesday and conclude on Thursday the week after, maintaining the current arrangements for plenary sessions and interpretation (i.e. Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday and last day of the meeting (Thursday)).

ELECTION OF CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR FOR 2021

In accordance with the Rules of Procedure of the Maritime Safety Committee, NCSR7 unanimously re-elected Mr. R. Lakeman (Netherlands) as Chair and Mr. N. Clifford (New Zealand) as Vice-Chair, both for 2021.