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Agenda item 15

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NAVIGATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND SEARCH AND RESCUE

Proposal to revise MSC.1/Circ.1460/Rev.3

Submitted by ICS

SUMMARY

Executive summary: This document proposes revisions to the *Guidance on the validity of radiocommunications equipment installed and used on ships* (MSC.1/Circ.1460/Rev.3) to ensure GMDSS communication capability and the availability of appropriate GMDSS radiocommunication equipment.

*Strategic direction,
if applicable:* 1

Output: Not applicable

Action to be taken: Paragraph 9

Related documents: Resolution MSC.511(105) and MSC.1/Circ.1460/Rev.3

Introduction

1 This document proposes revisions to the *Guidance on the validity of radiocommunications equipment installed and used on ships* (MSC.1/Circ.1460/Rev.3) to ensure GMDSS communication capability and the availability of appropriate GMDSS radiocommunication equipment.

Background

2 The Maritime Safety Committee, at its 104th session (4 to 8 October 2021), approved MSC.1/Circ.1460/Rev.3, taking into account the recommendations of the Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue at its eighth session (19 to 23 April 2021). The guidance in the circular recognizes that incompatibility may exist between VHF radiocommunication equipment installed on ships and on shore, and the revised frequencies and channelling arrangements for the maritime VHF bands in the future.

3 MSC.1/Circ.1460/Rev.3 requires VHF radiocommunication equipment to be updated following the first radio survey after 1 January 2024, at the earliest, so that it can meet ITU's new channel arrangements.

Developments

4 The updating of VHF radiocommunication equipment in accordance with MSC.1/Circ.1460/Rev.3 will, in some cases, necessitate hardware modifications or replacement.

5 ICS has received numerous reports from within its membership of the unavailability of the required VHF radiocommunication equipment to meet the new requirements at the first radio survey after 1 January 2024.

6 The concerns relate to the fact that there may not be enough new equipment ready by the deadline for the number of ships that require them. The reasons include long delivery times caused by supply chain factors including component shortages.

Urgency

7 This proposal is considered urgent owing to the forthcoming implementation date of 1 January 2024 and the close proximity between NCSR 10 and MSC 107.

Proposal

8 ICS proposes that MSC.1/Circ.1460/Rev.3 be revised to take into account the issue raised regarding availability of the VHF radiocommunication equipment meeting the revised frequencies and channelling arrangements contained in Appendix 18 to the ITU Radio Regulations. ICS believes an extension to the deadline for implementation would be the best way forward to overcome this issue. A revised circular, comprising also draft improvements in general, is set out in the annex for consideration of the Committee.

Action requested of the Committee

9 The Committee is invited to note the information provided and consider the proposal in paragraph 8, including the draft circular in the annex, and take action, as appropriate.

ANNEX*

DRAFT MSC.1/CIRC.1460/REV.34

**GUIDANCE ON THE VALIDITY OF RADIOCOMMUNICATIONS EQUIPMENT
INSTALLED AND USED ON SHIPS**

1 The Maritime Safety Committee, at its ~~104th session (4 to 8 October 2021)~~ 107th session (31 May to 9 June 2023), approved this circular, taking into account the concerns over the availability of VHF radiocommunication equipment compatible with the frequencies and channelling arrangements set out in Appendix 18 of the ITU Radio Regulations (RR) – Edition 2020 ~~recommendation of the Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue at its eighth session (19 to 23 April 2021)~~. The guidance in this circular recognizes that incompatibility may exist between VHF radiocommunication equipment installed on ships and on shore, and the revised frequencies and channelling arrangements ~~for the maritime VHF bands as contained in a~~ Appendix 18 ~~to of the ITU Radio Regulations (RR) – Edition 2020~~.

2 This circular replaces ~~MSC.1/Circ.1460/Rev.23~~, which ~~addressed both MF/HF radiocommunication equipment that is capable of operating narrow band direct-printing (NBDP) and~~ indicated the need for updating existing VHF radiocommunication equipment following the first radio survey after 1 January 2024. ~~Since NBDP radiocommunication equipment will no longer be required under forthcoming amendments to SOLAS chapter IV, that equipment is not addressed in this circular.~~

3 The ITU World Radiocommunication Conferences in 2012, 2015 and 2019 made extensive changes to Appendix 18 of the RR. While these changes do not affect the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS), they do affect the use of other frequencies used for VHF meteorological, navigational and urgent marine information broadcasts, port operations and Vessel Traffic Service (VTS). According to the *Performance standards for shipborne VHF radio installations capable of voice communication and digital selective calling* (resolution ~~A.803(19)~~, as amended MSC.511(105)), VHF radiocommunication equipment should comply with the RR.

4 The *Guidance on procedures for updating shipborne navigation and communication equipment* (MSC.1/Circ.1389) notes that updates to application software and firmware to meet changes in IMO and ITU regulatory requirements are needed.

5 To ensure GMDSS communication capability and the availability of appropriate GMDSS radiocommunication equipment, and without prejudice to the arrangements contained in Appendix 18 of the RR, VHF radiocommunication equipment should be updated following the first radio survey after ~~1 January 2024~~ [1 January 2026], at the earliest, so that it meets the arrangements which will be in force by then.

6 Member States are invited to bring this information to the attention of the appropriate national authorities and all other parties concerned.

* Tracked changes are indicated using "strikeout" for deleted text and "grey shading" to highlight all modifications and new insertions, including deleted text.