

NATIONAL GMDSS IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE

Newsletter and Summary Record of 6 January 2011 Meeting

The Summary Record. This summary record is provided for information and will be posted on the Task Force portion of the Coast Guard web site **Note the new address:** www.navcen.uscg.gov/?pageName=MaritimeTelecomms (click GMDSS, then GMDSS Task Force). The summary record is also distributed to all Task Force members to serve as a Newsletter summarizing GMDSS developments and other issues in marine telecommunications. The GMDSS Task Force met on 6 January 2011 at the RTCM Headquarters in Arlington, Virginia. The documents listed below were distributed and are available on request:

Draft Task Force Letter to Coast Guard on extended EPIRB Regulation
Coast Guard Safety Alert 8-10 on Ship Security Alert System (SSAS)
Extract from Digital Ship Magazine on Globe Wireless iFusion System
USCG Policy Guidance on Electronic Navigation Publications on U.S. Vessels
Coast Guard Marine Safety Advisory 01-10 on Distracted Operations

1. **Summary Record of 5 August 2010 Meeting:** The Summary Record of the 29 September 2010 meeting which had been distributed earlier and posted on our website, was noted without change.

2. **Reports and Issues: The Recreational Vessel Group Report.** Jack Fuechsel reported for the Recreation Vessel Group on a major new pending issue and other unfinished business as follows:

a. **Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2010 Enables Mandate of EPIRBs for Recreational Vessels Offshore.** The recently adopted Authorization Act contains authority for the Coast Guard to require “emergency locating beacons” on recreational vessels operating more than 3 nautical miles offshore. In May 2006, the Task Force recommended that the Coast Guard adopt as a national requirement, the Hawaiian Law requiring all vessels more than 1 mile offshore to have EPIRBs or VHF radios. This effort was frustrated by the Coast Guard determination that it lacked legislative authority for such action.

A new draft letter to the Coast Guard was presented to the Task Force for consideration reinstating the earlier proposal with the distance criteria amended to 3 miles and suggesting that the Coast Guard consider accepting a VHF-DSC radio with embedded or connected GPS as the equivalent of an EPIRB or PLB for vessels remaining within 20 miles of the coast. The draft letter was adopted with some amendments and was sent to the Commandant on 11 January 2011. A copy has been posted on the website.

b. **Coast Guard Chief of Search & Rescue’s Briefing on Benefits of Adopting Regulations Implementing the new Authority.** Captain David McBride noted that the new authority, if adopted, would provide obvious benefits in lives saved, but there would

also be significant advantages to the Coast Guard in prompt notification of a distress and reduction of search time on scene since most alerts involving recreational vessels have only a vague location to work with. In addition to the known distress cases, some 500-600 persons disappear offshore and are unaccounted for each year. While the benefits to the boating public and to the Coast Guard's Search and Rescue operations are obvious, he noted that the Office of Boating Safety would take the lead in any move to implement the new authority.

c. Coast Guard Office of Boating Safety's Initial Planning on the New Authority. Mr. Joseph Carro responded that they would definitely review the new authority and that there were many factors to be considered such as cost to the boating public, experience with the Hawaiian Law, problems with loss of EPIRBs when capsized, and dead batteries. As a start, the issue is on the agenda for consideration by the National Boating Safety Advisory Committee (NBSAC) meeting in Orlando 14-16 January 2011. The Task Force was invited to be represented at the NBSAC meeting.

d. New Concern that Recreational Vessels are Failing to Connect GPS to DSC Radios. Mr. Joe Hersey of the Coast Guard raised a concern that is hampering Search & Rescue response to distress alerts. A recent review of cases involving DSC radios reveals that 90% of the cases lack the accurate position that could be provided automatically if GPS were embedded or connected to the radio. The Task Force has long advocated such action but this is the first time that we had been provided with such a shocking statistical analysis. There are many related concerns including the failure of a significant number of operators with DSC capable radios, to register for an MMSI number needed to implement the automated distress functions of DSC. The lack of a standard interface for connecting GPS receivers to DSC radios made by various manufacturers is another concern.

It was decided to convene an ad hoc group to develop an action plan with initial membership by BOATUS, Coast Guard, Coast Guard Auxiliary, FCC, National Boating Federation, NMEA, and Sea Tow. Additional volunteers should contact Jack Fuechsel at gmdss@comcast.net. It is envisioned that most of the work will be conducted by email.

3. Briefing by National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB). Mike Rosecrans of the NTSB presented a briefing on their recent Fishing Vessel Safety Forum and other maritime telecommunications recommendations with the following highlights:

a. NTSB F/V Safety Forum. The Forum was held in October 2010 with invited presentations organized into six technical areas as follows: Safety, Maintenance, Fishermen's Perspective, Impact of Resource Management, Lifesaving Equipment, and Training. Designated Panel members for each technical area were to summarize their conclusions in each area for compilation into a report for presentation to the NTSB Board.

b. Coast Guard Authorization Act also Benefitted F/V Safety. The same Authorization Act referred to in paragraph 2.a. above also contributed to F/V Safety by

authorizing many new initiatives improving management and safety including the following:

- Uniform Federal and State requirements, especially beyond 3 mile limit
- Replacing “Boundary Line” with 3 mile limit
- Out-of-Water Survival Craft required vs Lifeboats or Buoyant Apparatus
- New Safety Logbook to record equipment maintenance and drills
- Dockside Safety Examinations every 2 years
- New training programs for operators covering certain competencies
- New Construction Standards for F/V under 50 feet
- New Provisions regarding Load Lines and Classing of Vessels

c. NTSB Recommendations on Maritime Telecommunications Issues. The NTSB has made several recommendations to the FCC and the Coast Guard which are still being studied by those agencies. These pending recommendations are as follows:

That the Coast Guard issue guidance to vessel owners and operators to implement effective policies to guard against distracted operations such as cell phone use. The Coast Guard issued such guidance in Marine Safety Advisory 01-10 of 29 October.

That the FCC and the Coast Guard require EPIRBs with integral GPS (often referred to as GPIRBs) on U.S. vessels mandatorily equipped with EPIRBs. This will likely be included in a forthcoming FCC NPRM. See also paragraph 7.a. below.

4. Inmarsat Briefing on New Capabilities. Frank August provided an update briefing on new capabilities with the following highlights:

a. Fleet Broadband (FBB) Service and the GMDSS. Inmarsat had noted earlier that the emergency calling service, 505 Emergency Calling, had been established as an emergency service for FleetBroadband and all three classes of FleetBroadband terminals. It is planned that FBB 500 can be upgraded to meet GMDSS standards at such time as back up satellites are in place to provide continuity of service as required by IMO. The target date for application to IMO for GMDSS certification of the FBB 500 is 2014. The only other action required to qualify FBB 500 for full GMDSS status is production of a ‘red button’ feature on FBB 500 shipboard terminals. Implementation of procedures to assure priority and preemption in the Inmarsat system will be completed by the end of 2011 – well in advance of anticipated GMDSS status

b. 505 Emergency Calling Service for non SOLAS vessels and Termination of Inmarsat B. Since the FBB 250 and FBB 150 services do not have adequate link budgets, it is unlikely that they will be recommended to the IMO for GMDSS certification. The 505 Emergency Calling service is free of charge and will remain available for all FleetBroadband terminals, and the FleetPhone as well (see below). 505 Emergency Calling should serve as an acceptable emergency service for non SOLAS

vessels. 505 Emergency Calling calls go direct to three RCCs in Australia, The Netherlands, and the U.S. RCC in Portsmouth, Virginia. As previously announced, the planned phase out date for the Inmarsat B service is 31 December 2014. This will leave the Inmarsat C, the Inmarsat F77, and the Inmarsat FBB 500 as the only GMDSS qualified services.

c. New Voice Services from Inmarsat. The new IsatPhone Pro handheld satellite phone service was launched in mid 2010 and is gaining customers. In addition to direct handheld service, Beam Communications offers a maritime docking station with an external antenna for improved shipboard connectivity options. SMS/text is available and email services will be available via a new data service at 2.4 kbps to be added by 31 March 2011. The IsatPhone Pro is not watertight but carries a high IP rating (IP54) and has a stand-by battery life of about 100 hours. Handsets cost about \$600.00 and calls are billed at 85-89 cents per minute with a variety of service plans available.

In addition to their supply of docking stations for the IsatPhone Pro, Beam Communications is also producing a bulkhead mountable terminal which Inmarsat has classified as 'FleetPhone'. It will provide all of the services of IsatPhone Pro but will be fixed instead of handheld and therefore Inmarsat is able to provide 505 Emergency Calling for FleetPhone users. Terminal prices are expected to be approximately the same as an IsatPhone Pro plus a maritime docking station. So for mariners, the key advantages of FleetPhone are 505 Emergency Calling and better hardware security since the bulkhead mounted FleetPhone is less likely to go missing compared with the handheld IsatPhone Pro.

d. New Inmarsat Global Xpress Ka Band Service. This new service is expected to be launched in 2014 when the new Inmarsat 5 constellation is in place. Each of the three Ka Band satellites will have global beams and 89 fixed spot beams covering the high traffic areas. There will also be steerable beams to cover special events such as round the world yacht races. Global Xpress terminals will use 60 cm stabilized antennas and have a throughput of 50 mbps. The principal advantages of Ka Band over Ku Band are higher throughput, smaller, better and cheaper terminals, and lower user cost. There are no current plans to seek GMDSS status for Global Xpress or enhance it with any of the current safety services.

5. Briefing by Globe Wireless on New iFusion Service. Shane Rossbacher provided a briefing on the new iFusion service being offered by Globe Wireless. Globe Wireless is a well known provider of High Frequency (HF) services but iFusion has begun as an integration of various satellite communication services. The principal characteristics are as follows:

a. Technical Capabilities. iFusion was launched in September of 2010 primarily as a management tool to integrate the Inmarsat FBB 250 with any other satellite systems on board, typically Iridium or a VSAT system on Ku or Ka Band. The iFusion router can be programmed to route traffic by the least cost of the satellite systems available. Cost of

the basic iFusion router with an FBB 250 Inmarsat terminal is about \$12,000.00. The iFusion integrator will accept other Inmarsat terminals but not Inmarsat C at present.

b. Management Philosophy. iFusion enables management at a shore designated location or iPortal, to constrain costs but permits shipboard operators to utilize as much satellite time as delegated by shore control. Satellite connectivity is connected by the iFusion router to the shipboard network to enable access for crew calling services as well as official access.

c. GSM Base Station to Facilitate Crew Calling. iFusion terminals can provide a GSM base station for access by onboard GSM mobile units which enables users to make voice calls for about 55 cents per minute and email at \$5.50 per Megabyte (which is the same rate that is provided to the ship for business voice and email calling). The system will soon be able to accommodate crew Internet browsing utilizing prepaid browsing cards.

d. Integration of HF services into iFusion. It is planned to integrate traditional Globe Wireless HF services to the iFusion router in the future. Globe's "Globe Alert" keypad would enable any access point on the ship to declare an alert via both satellite and HF. When asked about the prospects of making the Globe HF system GMDSS compliant, Mr. Roszbacher indicated that they were reluctant to take on a watchstanding role on the designated HF Distress channels but in view of the fact that the Coast Guard HF stations already maintained that watch some accommodation might be arranged.

6. Reports and Issues: Service Agents and Manufacturers Task Group. Ralph Sponar reported for his Group with the following highlights:

a. Better Definition of "Qualified" Technical Support. The FCC Rules relating to Class B AIS call for installation by a qualified technician and NMEA has formed an ad hoc group to better define 'qualified'. Recent progress indicates that the NMEA's CMET certification will likely be recommended to the FCC as qualifying for the AIS installation and perhaps other requirements such as conducting GMDSS inspections and the newly required AIS inspections. A Petition to the FCC is still pending.

b. Standard Color Coding for GPS/Radio hookups. The NMEA ad hoc group recommendation for a standard color coding has been approved for inclusion in the NMEA 0183 standard. The NMEA will then recommend this revised standard to manufacturers of both GPS receivers and the various marine equipments to which the navigation receivers should be connected. The revised five page standard has been posted on the Task Force website along with a two page discussion document on wiring and installation using the NMEA 0183 guidelines.

c. Standardized Inspection Check Lists. The Group has worked with the Coast Guard, the FCC, and Classification Society inspectors to update check lists for mandatory inspections of selected vessel types. A draft of a new check list for vessels on the Great

Lakes was made available at the Task Force meeting. When complete the Check Lists will be linked to the Task Force website.

d. New Standard Horizon HX851 VHF/DSC/GPS Handheld Radio. After the meeting Ralph provided information on a new Handheld VHF Radio which should prove popular for use on smaller boats and help relieve the problem with bad positions mentioned in paragraph 2.d. above. The HX851 is waterproof, float free with a 12 channel GPS receiver, standard VHF channels, and NOAA weather channels with Weather Alert. The unit has a strobe light and output power is available at 1, 2, and 6 watts. A fixed mount cradle is available with an optional external antenna. Input from and output to other devices is available via NMEA 0183/RS232. The Radio is priced at about \$260.00 at most marine stores.

7. Reports and Issues: Commercial Vessel Task Group. Nino Martini reported for his Group with the following highlights:

a. Task Force Recommends GPIRBs for U.S. Vessels Mandatorily Equipped with EPIRBs. During the discussion of the NTSB recommendation for GPIRBs on U.S. vessels, it was suggested that the Task Force go on record as supporting that proposal. It was a timely proposal since the RTCM Special Committee on EPIRB Standards is currently revising its standards and the Task Force will want to respond to the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking when issued. Discussion on the issue noted that while the new Cospas-Sarsat scheduled upgrade to the MEOSAR satellite constellation would improve position accuracy, an EPIRB with embedded GPS would be even more accurate and deemed affordable with the reduced cost of GPS chips in mass production. The Task Force concurred and a letter was addressed to the President of RTCM with copies to the FCC and the Coast Guard recommending that an embedded Global Navigational Satellite System (GNSS) chip be a required in EPIRBs built to the RTCM standard

b. Coast Guard Policy Guidance on Carriage of Electronic Versions of Publications Required for Safe Navigation. At earlier sessions, the Task Force was advised that it was permissible to carry electronic versions of publications required for safety of navigation including Coast Guard Light Lists, Local Notices to Mariners, Tide-current or River-current tables, U.S. Coast Pilot, Light List, VTS Rules, and Regulations 33CFR164.33, 33CFR164.72, and 33CFR161.4. On 26 November 2010, the Coast Guard issued Policy Letter 10-5 to Coast Guard examiners confirming that electronic copies met the requirements if they were readily accessible to the crew. The policy guidance further notes that a back up copy is required in the event that the primary electronic format becomes inaccessible. This back up may be a second computer, CD, portable mass storage device, or paper copies. If the back up copy is in digital format, there must be a means of displaying it on board. These regulations apply to commercial vessels including towing vessels.

c. Coast Guard Marine Safety Alert No. 8-10 on Ship Security Alert System (SSAS). The Safety Alert was issued as a result of a Breach of Security (BOS) on a vessel operating overseas which revealed that the primary activation button failed to send

the BOS message and that the secondary activation button failed to send all of the critical data. The investigation revealed that the SSAS had been serviced two days previously as part of the annual Safety Radio Survey but that the servicing technician lacked the proper test equipment for the system on board and performed only an internal self test. A complete SSAS Survey with an external test would have identified the problem. The Coast Guard strongly recommends that owners and operators ensure that the SSAS Survey completed on board include these checks:

- That the SSAS installation is in compliance with IMO Performance Standards
- That a minimum of two activation points are provided
- That transmission of the security alert is possible without adjustment of the radio
- That transmission initiated by SSAS activation points includes a unique identifier
- That transmission includes the ship identity, and current position, date, and time
- That when activated, SSAS transmission continues the alert until deactivated
- That the SSAS is capable of being tested
- That the SSAS is powered from the main power source and an alternate source

d. IMO Resolution on Bridge Watch Alarm Systems (BNWAS). This new IMO requirement relates to alarms on the bridge for engineering equipment and does not involve bridge alarms concerning GMDSS radio equipment or GMDSS alerts received by radio from other sources.

8. Reports and Issues: Training Task Group. Jack Fuechsel reported for Owen Anderson with on the following issues in progress:

a. Task Force Comments on FCC NPRM Regarding Question Pools. The Task Force commented to the FCC on Docket 10-77 regarding GMDSS Question Pools and Colem Responsibility. The Task Force then made a Reply Comment slightly modifying the proposed schedule on Question Pool updates for consistency with other proposals. Both comments are posted on the Task Force website

b. Update the Question Pool for GMDSS Maintainer License. Some of the questions on the Test for the GMDSS Maintainer License are out of date. Andy's ad hoc group is currently working on updates and anyone desiring to help should contact Andy at owen_anderson@comcast.net.

9. The Coast Guard Reports: Most of the Coast Guard reports were made during the discussion on other issues with the exception of the following:

a. Status of the Rescue 21 VHF-DSC Coastal Network. Mr. Gene Lockhart gave a progress report on the Rescue 21 program to complete the shore network of VHF-DSC stations with the following highlights:

1.) The new 525 foot tower at Cape Hatteras nearly completes the North Carolina Sector. The only remaining tower needed is at Stacy.

- 2.) The First District headquartered in Boston will be completed this year.
- 3.) Two gap fillers are still in use in Delaware Bay. When permanently replaced along with the foregoing, the east coast will have been completed.
- 4.) The Gulf of Mexico coast is also nearly complete with the only remaining gap on South Padre Island near the Mexican border.
- 5.) The California coast is also nearing completion with 4 towers remaining to be activated in the Los Angeles, Long Beach Sector and unresolved site issues at Lake Tahoe. A new monopole tower will complete the coast near Big Sur.
- 6.) The Pacific Northwest is well covered but some work remains as a result of reorganization of the Sectors in that region.
- 7.) The Great Lakes are progressing with work on 11 new towers for Sector Detroit and work in 5 other Sectors planned for the summer.
- 8.) Puerto Rico and Hawaii are making progress and Guam is scheduled for early calendar year 2012.
- 9.) Unresolved budget issues render progress in Alaska and the western rivers problematic.

10. The FCC Reports: Ghassan Khalek reported for the FCC, the following are highlights of his report:

a. Further Part 80 Rule Making. Further Part 80 Rule Making. A new FCC Report and Order was released in June, The rules have not yet been published in the Federal Register, and until they are, no effective date is established. The new rules will do the following:

- 1.) Prohibit the certification, manufacture, importation, sale, installation, or continued use of INMARSAT-E Emergency Position Indicating Radiobeacons (EPIRBs).
- 2.) Conclude that VHF-DSC handheld radiotelephones should include integrated Global Positioning System (GPS) capability, but defer adopting such a requirement until RTCM completes work on GPS performance standards for handheld radios
- 3.) Require that any small passenger vessel that does not have a reserve power supply carry at least one VHF handheld marine radio transceiver
- 4.) The Commission declined at this time to provide additional spectrum

for ship station facsimile communications or to permit the transmission of data on maritime voice channels. Footnote 46 indicates that the commission will consider RTCM's petition to permit VHF-FM Digital Small Message Services in accordance with RTCM 12301.1 in a separate proceeding.

5.) Eliminate the limits on the number of frequencies that can be assigned to a private coast station or marine utility station.

6.) Revise the Part 80 rules to incorporate by reference the latest IEC standards for radar and other equipment. Note that this revision removes the RTCM radar standards from FCC regulations. The RTCM radar standards remain for now in U.S. Coast Guard regulations affecting towing vessels.

7.) Clarify that vessels subject to Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) requirements are required to test their radiotelephone equipment on a daily basis.

b. Task Force Petition to Authorize Use of Marine Handheld Radios ashore in Maritime Areas. In June 2009, the FCC published the Task Force Petition requesting authority to use VHF handheld radios ashore in maritime areas allowing 30 days for comment. The public comment period ended with no responses either pro or con. This item was not included in the new Part 80 Rulemaking but will be part of a new Rulemaking to include additionally the following two items.

c. RTCM Petition to Authorize Small Message Data Services on VHF Frequencies. The RTCM petitioned the FCC to accept its recommendations for a small message service on VHF frequencies using data techniques. The Petition was published by the FCC and Public Comment closed 15 October 2009. There were 28 comments, all favorable. This item was also not included in the new Part 80 rulemaking (Para 5.a.) but will be part of the new Rulemaking mentioned in b. above.

d. FCC Response to the NTSB Recommendation that FCC (and USCG) Require GPIRBs on Vessels Currently Required to Carry EPIRBs. The National Transportation Safety Board recently recommended that the FCC require GPS enhanced EPIRBs commonly known as GPIRBs on vessels required by regulation to carry EPIRBs. This recommendation also applies to the Coast Guard for vessels which they regulate. The recommendation was made since early alerting in Distress cases gives survivors a better chance of being rescued and GPIRBs provide a location immediately on reception without waiting for position to be determined by doppler techniques. The FCC plans to include this issue in the next Rulemaking along with items b and c above. See also the Task Force position supporting this issue reported in paragraph 7.a above.

e. Task Force Petition Urging Improved MMSI Management. The FCC denied the Task Force petition earlier but now hopes to implement many of the Task Force recommendations by creating a new database rather than attempting to upgrade the Universal Licensing System (ULS) as reported earlier. No date was suggested for the

new database but it is emphasized that the most important improvement needed is periodic revalidation of the MMSI database in a fashion similar to NOAA's revalidation of the EPIRB/PLB database.

f. FCC Decision of the Riverside, California Petition to Use Marine VHF Channels for Land Mobile Applications. The FCC has still not announced a decision in this case.

h. Certification of Qualified U.S. GMDSS Inspectors to IMO for Information of Foreign Port State Inspectors. Some U.S. vessels undergoing Port State Inspections in a foreign country have encountered difficulty because the U.S. does not furnish the IMO with a list of qualified GMDSS inspectors as required by the IMO. This is complicated by the fact that the FCC does not conduct the U.S. inspections by government inspectors but delegates the function to any or the 3286 holders of the GMDSS Maintainers License. Many of the U.S. flag inspections are done by qualified representatives of the Classification Societies. There has been some progress in resolving this issue but it is still pending at this time.

11. The RTCM Report: RTCM President Bob Markle reported on the status of Special Committees of interest to the Task Force are as follows:

a. RTCM SC-109 on Electronic Charts. This Committee is working on special U.S. requirements along with SC-112 (Ship Radar) and new SC-129 (Presentation of Navigational Information).

b. RTCM SC 101/110 on Incorporating GPS in VHF Handhelds. The combined Special Committee continues to work on recommended specifications for a VHF DSC handheld with integral GPS. The continuing work of SC 110 on EPIRB specifications will be to incorporate some of the same revisions for testing integral GPS processors as were adopted for Personal Locator Beacons (PLB). The Committee will also be taking into account the planned shift of the COSPAS-SARSAT satellite constellation from Low Earth Orbit (LEO) weather satellites to Medium Earth Orbit (MEO) navigation satellites. They will also consider whether the next generation of EPIRBs should have a return link to acknowledge receipt of the Alert which is tentatively planned in the Galileo system.

c. RTCM SC 110 on Emergency Beacons. The continuing work of SC 110 on EPIRB specifications will be to incorporate some of the same revisions for testing integral GPS processors as were adopted for Personal Locator Beacons (PLB). The Committee will also be taking into account the planned shift of the COSPAS-SARSAT satellite constellation from Low Earth Orbit (LEO) weather satellites to Medium Earth Orbit (MEO) navigation satellites. They will also consider whether the next generation of EPIRBs should have a return link to acknowledge receipt of the Alert which is tentatively planned in the Galileo system.

d. RTCM SC-119 on Maritime Survivor Locating Devices. This Committee was reactivated to consider man overboard AIS applications and other relevant technologies. The committee is considering whether these devices should continue to be required to operate in a closed loop with the parent ship or a group of ships, or be allowed to generate an all-ships distress call (open loop) under certain conditions.

e. RTCM SC-121 on Automatic Identification Systems (AIS). This Committee continues work on AIS messaging and has a Working Group addressing AIS Application Specific Messages.

f. RTCM SC-123 on Data over VHF Channels. RTCM has petitioned the FCC to adopt RTCM Standard 12301.1 for transmitting data on VHF channels. The comment period closed with all comments favorable to the proposal. Early approval action by the FCC was expected but is still pending. The Committee is expanding its work to include data messaging on MF and HF channels.

g. RTCM SC-127 on Enhanced Loran. This Committee continues to meet and work on specifications for a combined Loran/GPS receiver despite the recent termination of Loran service in the U.S. The U.K. organization Trinity House has taken over the chairmanship of the Committee and the lead in advocating Enhanced Loran. Russia is preparing to integrate its Chayka system into the European Loran System.

h. RTCM SC-128 on Satellite Emergency Notification Devices. This Committee was chartered at the request of the Coast Guard to develop performance standards for new systems such as SPOT which are being advertised for emergency or life saving applications with the goal of enhancing reliability and consumer protection. A working group of the National Search and Rescue Committee has been working with this RTCM Special Committee.

i. RTCM Invited to Take Over Work of the “ProTECTS Alliance”. The ProTECTS Alliance (Promotion of Two way Emergency Communications and Tracking Systems) is a group started by the Iridium Satellite Corp. to promote the responsible use of satellite technology for emergency services. RTCM assumed sponsorship of the Group at the invitation of the Alliance.

j. Other RTCM Announcements of Interest. The 2011 RTCM Assembly including a Task Force meeting will be held at the Tradewinds Hotel in St. Pete Beach, Florida May 15-20, 2011.

11. Other Business and the Next Meeting of the GMDSS Task Force: The next Task Force meeting will be held at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday morning 19 May 2011 at the Tradewinds Hotel in St. Pete Beach, Florida during the RTCM Annual Assembly. The follow-on meeting will be held on Thursday 4 August 2011 at the RTCM Headquarters in Arlington, Virginia.

GMDSS TASK FORCE CONTINUING WORK LIST

6 January 2011

1. Monitor FCC continuing action to update GMDSS Rules (TF)
2. Recommend actions to reduce false alerts in GMDSS systems (TF)
3. Monitor Coast Guard Port State GMDSS inspection program (TF)
4. Monitor MSI broadcasting programs for compliance with GMDSS Standards (TF)
5. Review GMDSS Internet Web Sites and update Task Force portion of USCG site (TF)
6. Support SOLAS Working Group planning for IMO COMSAR meetings (TF)
7. Advocate Canadian coordination to extend GMDSS services to the Great Lakes (TF)
8. Review GMDSS concepts and make modernization recommendations (TF)
9. Advocate voluntary carriage of VHF or EPIRB/PLBs by all vessels offshore (TF)
10. Advocate overhaul of FCC policy and practice on MMSI assignments (TF)
11. Monitor non-GMDSS systems: AIS, LRIT, SSAS, VDR, VMS, & E-Navigation (TF)
12. Recommend updates for Coast Guard NVIC on GMDSS Requirements (TF)
13. Recommend means to facilitate Distress Alerts by Cell Phone & Internet (TF)
- 14. Advocate GPIRBs for U.S. Vessels Required to Carry EPIRBs (TF)**
15. Advocate intership calling on HF GMDSS channels (CV)
16. Review Safety Radio and VMS Requirements for Small Fishing Vessels (CV)
17. Recommend training programs for non-mandatory users of GMDSS systems (RV)
18. Encourage GMDSS handbooks and Internet and video training aids (RV)
19. Encourage voluntary users of VHF-DSC Register for MMSI and connect GPS (RV)
20. Advocate FCC let R/Vs keep existing MMSI when applying for Station Lic. (RV)
- 21. Advocate mandatory Distress Beacons on R/V more than 3 miles offshore (RV)**
22. Encourage Mfrs. to upgrade GMDSS explanations in equipment manuals (SA)
23. Monitor guidelines for GMDSS equipment maintenance & maintainer standards (SA)
24. Recommend proper interconnection of GPS receivers with DSC Radios (SA)
25. Advocate better FCC & USCG management of annual GMDSS inspections (SA)
26. Maintain GMDSS Question Pools for FCC and Coast Guard Examinations (TR)

Key to cognizant groups: (TF) Task Force
 (CV) Commercial Vessel Task Group
 (RV) Recreational Vessel Task Group
 (SA) Service Agents and Manufacturers Task Group
 (TR) Training Task Group

Attachment: Draft Agenda for Task Force Meeting 19 May 2011 at the Tradewinds Hotel
 in St. Pete Beach, Florida during the RTCM Annual Assembly.

Please refer questions and proposals to Captain Jack Fuechsel at 703-527-0484 or gmdss@comcast.net. If you have an Internet server with spam filters, please authorize receipt of messages from gmdss@comcast.net

(File: TFSR-66.doc)