

NATIONAL GMDSS IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE

Newsletter and Summary Record of 31 January 2013 Meeting

1. **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: 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 31 January 2013 at the RTCM Headquarters in Arlington, Virginia. The documents listed below were distributed and are available on request:

NBSAC Resolution 2012-90-01 Recommending Emergency Beacons for R/Vs
Email from Chuck Hawley on Ways to Promote Proper Use of DSC Radios
FCC Public Notice DA 12-1989 of 10 Dec on Correct Use of MMSI Numbers
Status of Task Force Recommendations for Small Passenger Vessels
Flyer on new iPIRB Individual PLB by Marine MTS and Telemar UK
Summary of Issues Raised by GMDSS Training Group Members
Revised GMDSS Info. Bulletin for Recreational Vessels Using VHF Radio

2. **The Coast Guard Reports:** The following presentations were made by the persons indicated:

a. **Status Report on Emergency Beacons for R/Vs Offshore.** Jeff Hoedt reported on this project for the Coast Guard Office of Auxiliary and Boating Safety with the following highlights:

1). **Background:** The Task Force effort advocating emergency beacons on RVs offshore actually began in May of 2006 when we wrote the Commandant advocating a national rule patterned after the Hawaiian law requiring radios or EPIRBs on all craft offshore. The Coast Guard responded in July that more documentation and analysis would be needed but that in any event the Coast Guard lacked regulatory authority for such action. As Jeff Hoedt indicated, the Coast Guard Authorization Act of 2010 was pivotal since it enabled requiring emergency beacons on recreational vessels offshore. The GMDSS Task Force wrote the Commandant in January 2011 recommending that the new authority be pursued and in October 2011 the Coast Guard asked the National Boating Safety Advisory Council (NBSAC) to consider the issue and make a recommendation. NBSAC assigned the project to its Boats and Associated Equipment Subcommittee chaired by Dave Marlow which studied the issue extensively before making a positive report in November of 2012. At that meeting the Council approved the recommendation and issued Resolution No. 2012-90-01 which was distributed.

2). **Further Clearances Required:** Jeff indicated that the first step would be a presentation of the NBSAC Resolution to the Coast Guard's Marine Safety and Security Council, an in house group of flag officers and senior civilians. If that Council

approves, further clearance to proceed would be needed from the Department of Homeland Security and the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). If the federal regulation/requirement is promulgated, because of the heavy involvement of the States in management of Boating Safety, it will be appropriate to invite the National Association of State Boating Law Administrators (NASBLA) to get involved. NASBLA has already adopted a Model Act based on the Hawaii Law requiring beacons and radios on all craft offshore but so far no other states have adopted it.

3). The Long Range Outlook. Jeff indicated that a Rule Making of this scope could take 6-8 years depending on many factors which are difficult to predict. Prior to entering into a formal Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (NPRM), better studies will be needed estimating the number of RVs offshore, analyzing the projected benefits (lives saved, improved SAR operations etc.) and expected problems (enforcement, cost to RV operators, false alarms etc.).

4). The NBSAC Resolution. The NBSAC Resolution recommends that the Coast Guard require recreational vessels operating more than 3 miles offshore carry a properly registered emergency locator beacon. The Coast Guard would specify what constitutes an approved emergency locator beacon but it is assumed to include an EPIRB, a Personal Locator Beacon (PLB) or other device accepted by the Coast Guard. Interestingly, the Resolution also suggests that the requirement might be waived for vessels between 3 and 20 miles offshore (not including Alaska) if equipped with a properly registered VHF-DSC radio (fixed mount or portable) with integral GPS and a programmed Maritime Mobile Service Identity (MMSI) number. This provision recognizes the completion of the Coast Guard's Rescue 21 project and the ability of a VHF-DSC radio to provide reliable Distress Alerts with accurate positions.

b. Declaration of Sea Area A1. Joe Hersey reported that with the essential completion of the Rescue 21 Project, the Coast Guard plans to declare Sea Area A1 operational. Sea Area A1 is created when there is a continuous shore watch on the DSC Calling and Distress channel 70. Declaration of Sea Area A1 will not include Alaska but will include the Continental U.S. coasts, the Great Lakes, Guam, Hawaii, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. According to provisions of the FCC Rules, a declaration of Sea Area A1 will require that all vessels mandatorily equipped with VHF, upgrade to VHF-DSC within one year.

c. Sea Area A2 (MF Coverage). Joe Hersey also announced a new decision that the coastal Medium Frequency safety watch on 2182 kHz and its DSC counterpart 2187.5 kHz will no longer be watched at most Sector commands because funding is not available to upgrade the system which suffers from deteriorated antennas and ground planes. Watches on 2182 kHz and 2187.5 kHz will continue at the Communications Stations and selected Sectors which support the fishing fleet. Sector weather Broadcasts on 2670 kHz will also cease except for those Sectors retaining the 2 MHz watch to support the fishing fleet. In addition, the traditional watch on 4125 kHz throughout Alaska will continue. As a practical matter the MF equipment is the same as that used for Sea Area A3 (High Seas or Inmarsat coverage) since almost all MF equipment is packaged as a combined MF/HF

Radio. A Notice to Mariners announcing the change in 2 MHz watches is pending release. There is no plan to declare Sea Area A2 operational which means that SOLAS vessels sailing beyond Sea Area A1 (about 20 miles) will have to outfit for Sea Area A3.

d. Coast Guard Proposal for Changes to the FCC Rules. Joe Hersey reviewed this project which was discussed at the previous Task Force meeting but is still being finalized. This is a very comprehensive document with over 300 pages of track changes and probably the most effective way to bring the FCC Rules up to date. The FCC is expected to move promptly to put the document out for public comment when received. Copies of full document are available from Jack Fuechsel (gmdss@comcast.net).

e. Report on IMO Comsar 17 Meeting January 2013. RADM Ed Gilbert reported on the Comsar 17 meeting held in London 21-25 January 2013 with the following highlights:

1.) Proposal to combine Comsar with Safety of Navigation

Subcommittee. This proposal from the parent Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) is based on the number of issues shared by the two subcommittees and an effort to reduce the overall number of separate meetings to reduce cost but presents many difficulties. Comsar made a strong recommendation that Search and Rescue remain part of any combined Comsar/Nav subcommittee. The work of Comsar 17 was curtailed at the session because of the heavy workload and the arbitrary limit of 3 Working Groups (see item 8.b. below on GMDSS Modernization). The general feeling is that the combined Subcommittee would be unable to complete its work during a standard week and that 8 to 10 working days would be required. Until the MSC resolves this issue, forward planning is on hold. It is assumed that, if approved, the first combined meeting would be held at some date in 2014.

2.) Comsar Review of the IMO Polar Code for Vessels Operating at

Extremely High Latitudes. The IMO Polar Code is the responsibility of the Design and Equipment Subcommittee but it had been referred to the Comsar Subcommittee for review and comment. It should be noted that Iridium is the only satellite system with full polar coverage but it is not presently a recognized GMDSS system because IMO requires new GMDSS satellite systems to make a heavy contribution to the operating expenses of its International Maritime Satellite Organization (IMSO) which is unattractive to system operators in view of the limited high latitude traffic. Comsar accordingly noted that the presently recognized HF radio systems offered coverage in Sea Area A4 despite the limited number of participating Coast Radio Stations. In reviewing the other aspects of the Polar Code, Comsar commented that individual survival craft should have locating systems but should not be required to carry long range communications systems.

3.) Long Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT).

There was extended discussion of ways to adjust the oversight of LRIT at less cost to participating data centers. The high cost of the audits by IMSO has caused several data centers to avoid compliance with the oversight procedure. Purchase of data by coastal administrations has fallen short of projections with the result that LRIT has not brought in enough revenue to

cover expenses of operation. The International Data Exchange (IDE) operated by the European Union had achieved an availability of 99.9% in 2012.

4.) Restrictions on Vessel Use of Broadband Satellite Systems in C and Ku Bands Near Coastal Shorelines. Comsar 17 noted that the restrictions on shipboard use of the C Band (within 300 km of shore) and Ku Band (within 125 km of shore) services to protect Fixed service users, was creating uncertainty on the part of both using vessels and service providers. It can also be anticipated that the emerging use of Ka Band may be similarly restricted. The CIRM and the ITU, in the Liaison Statement, were asked to revisit the need for these standoff distances and to clarify the requirements for service providers to suspend service and notify users when doing so.

5.) Use of AIS in Man Overboard Devices. Comsar approved the evolving use of AIS in Man Overboard devices as a desirable public safety service, noting that many of the new applications involved divers and their support craft.

6.) The IMSO Report on Inmarsat System Performance. The International Mobile Satellite Organization (IMSO) in its report of Inmarsat's performance for the previous year noted that distress and safety communications were available nearly 100% of the time.

7.) The Inmarsat Report on New and Continuing Services. Inmarsat's representative stated that Inmarsat C- services will continue at least through this decade. A chat capability will be added to the FB500 system that will allow RCCs, a vessel in distress and appropriately equipped vessels in the area to be connected via a chat capability; this service is expected by 2015.

f. Coast Guard management of Small Passenger Vessel Safety. LCDR John Taylor outlined the functions of his Office in assuring best safety oriented requirements for small passenger vessels. He has been invited to participate with the Task Force ad hoc group considering recommended upgrades of safety radio equipment for these vessels (see also item 6. below). John noted that most of the ad hoc group's items selected for upgrade were part of the FCC Rules and not subject to Coast Guard jurisdiction. The exceptions are navigation items such as AIS and radar which are subject to Coast Guard regulation.

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

a. FCC Report & Order FCC 13-4 (WT Docket No. 10-177) of 8 Jan 2013 on Commercial Radio Operators. This Report and Order implemented the proposed changes to Part 13 of the Rules on Commercial Radio Operator Licensing along with related Rules in Parts 0, 1, 80, and 87. The Order also dealt with Colem issues including Maintenance of Question Pools and Equipment Testing and Logging Requirements.

b. FCC Public Notice DA 12-1989 of 10 December 2012 Reminding Mariners of the Correct Use of Maritime Mobile Service Identity (MMSI) Numbers. This is a general administrative Notice reminding mariners of the appropriate procedures for obtaining and using MMSI numbers. The Notice cites frequently noticed errors such as using false MMSI Numbers and failure to update the registration when a previously registered vessel changes hands. The Task Force welcomes this further step toward improved MMSI management by the Commission.

c. FCC Public Notice 2956 on Rulemaking RM-11540 Takes Action on Certain RTCM and Task Force Petitions. This Notice announces action on pending Petitions from the RTCM and the GMDSS Task Force which have already received favorable public comment. Although it had been planned to consolidate these actions with a larger petition from the Coast Guard, the delays in receiving the Coast Guard proposal have prompted earlier action to finalize these pending issues. The finalized Petitions include the RTCM Petitions for Small Data Messaging on VHF Channels and FCC Part 95 SEND Devices and the Task Force Petition for Use of VHF Handhelds Ashore. The pending Petitions for requiring upgrade to GPIRBs for vessels mandatorily equipped with EPIRBs will be deferred for public comment with the larger Coast Guard proposal.

d. Updated Question Pools from the Task Force Training Group. Ghassan thanked the Task Force and especially Owen Anderson, Head of the Training Group, for his dedicated leadership in maintaining the question pools over the years. He also welcomed Kurt Anderson who has taken over as Head of the Training Group. In response to a question about the status of FCC approval of the revised Question Pool for GMDSS Maintainer, Ghassan noted that he would advise the Coast Guard and the Task Force when this has been completed so that appropriate notice could be given to the Coast Guard's National Maritime Center (NMC).

4. Reports and Issues: The Recreational Vessel Group Report. David Kennedy of Boat U.S. reported for his group with the following highlights:

a. ad hoc Group to Promote Proper Use of VHF-DSC Radios Including Registration for MMSI and Connection to GPS Receiver. The following are highlights of reported activity:

1.) Improved Guidance Promoting Proper Use of VHF-DSC Radios. An excellent email from Chuck Hawley of West Marine was distributed. Highlights of Chuck's recommendation include:

- Promotion of VHF-DSC with GPS as a special "coastal" EPIRB
- Promotion of DSC Handhelds with GPS (no hookup, survives capsizing)
- Improve Official Websites (the data is there but poorly organized)
- Invite major boating safety organizations to promote proper use
- Publicize SAR operations where VHF-DSC aided a successful rescue
- Promote training & courtesy inspections by Power Squadrons and CG Auxiliary

2.) Revised GMDSS Information Bulletin for RVs Using VHF Radio.

Jack Fuechsel distributed a updated copy of the Information Bulletin which will be placed on the Task Force website. Among other updates the Bulletin emphasizes that registration for an MMSI number is **mandatory** under FCC Rules for DSC radios.

3.) New Individual Position Indicating Radio Beacon (iPIRB). A flyer was distributed announcing a new PLB with improved locating accuracy and designed to self activate in water. The new device is being marketed by MarineMTS and Telemar UK.

b. New Issue: Should PLB Standards be Revised to Include Integral GNSS?

The Task Force has already recommended that the standard for EPIRBs should include integral GMSS positioning capability. A question has been raised as to whether the PLB Standard should also be amended to require a GNSS positioning capability. It is reported that virtually all PLBs on the market already have such capability in response to consumer demand. The members present agreed that the Task Force should advocate such action. An appropriate letter will be sent to the RTCM recommending that the PLB standard be amended accordingly in the interest of improved public safety.

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

a. 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. The three Inspection Check Lists on the FCC website are linked to the Task Force website. Further review is being conducted on Check Lists for Bridge-to-Bridge Radiotelephone and AIS Class A and B. The Fishing Vessel Check List published in 2003 is being reviewed prior to posting on the web sites along with the other check lists. The check list issue is complicated by the fact that neither the Coast Guard nor the FCC want copies of completed inspection reports. This leaves the only option as retention of the latest inspection report on board with an entry in the log. In at least some cases, the interval between inspections needs to be reduced to provide realistic oversight of EPIRB battery replacement.

b. Continuing Issue – Should “3 Strikes Rule be Rescinded?” Some Task Force members raised the issue that the rule limiting to three the number of ‘tries’ to enter MMSI numbers in VHF-DSC radios was proving counter productive. Discussion at the last meeting suggested that a passcode which could be furnished to dealers and service agents by manufacturers might be a more convenient arrangement. The Coast Guard and FCC were requested to discuss the issue further at their monthly meeting and advise the Task Force whether there was any government problem with making changes of MMSI numbers more user friendly. There was no feedback from the government at this meeting.

6. **Reports and Issues, Commercial Vessel Task Group.** Jack Fuechsel reported for the Commercial Vessel Group with the following highlights:

a. Review of the Standards for Safety Radio Equipment on Small Passenger Vessels. One of the handouts at this meeting was an updated draft outline of principles to consider in recommending updated radio carriage requirements for small passenger vessels. The only remaining work on this effort is to identify which classes of small passenger vessels are applicable for each recommendation and to separate the recommendations applicable to the Coast Guard and the FCC.

b. Continuing Issue – Alerts Causing Auto Shift to Channel 16 on C/V with Multiple VHF-DSC Radios. There were no new recommendations to deal with this issue.

c. New Issue: Should Bridge to Bridge Rules be Reviewed? The Task Force was asked if there was interest in reviewing the Bridge to Bridge Radio Rules? There was no conclusion at this time except that more information was desired and a background briefing would be scheduled for the next meeting. Possible reasons for such a review include the following:

- 1.) The channel 13 watch is analog but VHF radios have gone digital
- 2.) Is the 65 foot length still proper criteria for Bridge to Bridge radio?
- 3.) Should channel 13 watch be accompanied by mandatory AIS carriage?
- 4.) Should navigational display requirements be added?
- 5.) Record and retention of Bridge to Bridge inspections needs development
- 6.) Great Lakes Bridge to Bridge criteria is different

7. **Reports and Issues: Training Task Group.** Kurt Anderson, new Head of the Training Group made a report summarizing the recommendations of his Group for improvement of GMDSS Training. A few of the more significant recommendations are summarized below:

a. Make Changes to the Question Pool Format? There had been various suggestions that the ROC Question Pool be combined with the GOC Question Pool to constitute the first half of the combined Pool. The Training Group was split on this suggestion and it appears that most of the effort would be in combining the Pools. A further change to the Question Pools will be needed by the end of 2014 to account for the termination of support for Inmarsat B service.

b. Offer Joint ROC/GOC Classes with the ROC being the first part of the combined class? The Group's opinion was against offering a combined class at this time. A Task Force comment was that this might not be attractive to students unless the Declaration of Sea Area A1 generated a big increase in applicants for the ROC Course.

c. Require Recertification of GMDSS License Holders? Five year GOC recertification is now recommended by the 2010 Manila STCW Convention to assure better qualified operators. There is already precedent for recertification in the U.S. which has long required recertification for Radar/ARPA. Most of the Training Group also disapproves of recertification based on sea time alone. Recent action by the FCC to issue GOC Licenses for life has further clouded the recertification issue. This issue is difficult because it changes what has been the U.S. approach for 15 years but one the Training Group believes is necessary to improve operator qualification and enhance marine safety. The Task Force wants to study this issue further and consult with Coast Guard officials who represent the U.S. at STCW meetings and manage U.S. Training Policy at the National Maritime Center (NMC).

d. Should the U.S. Have a Certified Path to Qualification as a GMDSS Maintainer? Although the STCW Convention deals extensively with GMDSS Maintainers, there is no course offered in the U.S. leading to such certification. The Task Force Service has long advocated a meaningful certification of technicians capable of maintaining GMDSS equipment and felt that holding the FCC Maintainer License was not sufficient evidence of competence. With IMO Rules calling for a “qualified” technician in many cases, this remains an open issue. After the meeting, we were informed that the California Maritime Academy is considering developing a GMDSS Maintainer’s course as part of their Extended Learning program.

e. Reinstate Training in the IAMSAR Manual? SAR training was dropped by NMC as a requirement for all Deck Officers despite the STCW requirement that all Deck Watch Officers on ships over 500 tons have a working knowledge of the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue (IAMSAR) Manual. The 70 hour GMDSS Course is too crowded to work in IAMSAR training but it is a needed competence. The Task Force wants to refer this issue to U.S. SAR authorities for comment.

8. Reports and Issues: GMDSS Modernization Group. Ed Gilbert, head of the Task Force’s GMDSS Modernization Group, reported with the following highlights:

a. GMDSS Modernization Review by the IMO/ITU Experts Group in October 2012. In addition to considering a wide range of issues of interest to both organizations, the Experts Group was tasked to review the initial report of the GMDSS Modernization Correspondence Group. The Experts Group Report commented on all recommendations of the Correspondence Group and in the absence of a definitive overview by Comsar 17, is considered the latest guidance for further work by the Correspondence Group. The Experts Group will meet again in London in October 2013 and will again review a new report from the Correspondence Group.

b. GMDSS Modernization Review by Comsar 17, January 2013. There was general disappointment that the Comsar 17 review was severely limited by the workload of the Technical Working Group. The new modernization papers from Japan and the U.S. were introduced but not discussed, so there is no official Comsar 17 position on the

progress of GMDSS Modernization to date. Comsar 17 did, however, review the report of the IMO/ITU Experts Group and did not take exception to any of the latter's comments on GMDSS Modernization. This is considered a de facto approval of the initial report of the GMDSS Correspondence Group as endorsed by the Experts Group.

c. Informal Meeting of the GMDSS Modernization Correspondence Group.

After completion of the Technical Working Group Meeting, an informal meeting of the GMDSS Modernization Correspondence Group chaired by Bob Markle was convened. The U. S. input paper recommending fundamental principles for the modernization work was discussed informally by the Correspondence Group and acknowledged as useful. The paper was based on inputs received by the Task Force and discussed many times by us. The principles included in the paper are listed here:

Principle 1. GMDSS equipment should meet one or more of the agreed functional requirements specified in SOLAS regulation IV/4, as proposed by the Joint IMO/ITU Experts Group. GMDSS systems carried aboard ships must meet all of these requirements.

Principle 2. Any modernized GMDSS should avoid new costs to shipowners to the extent possible, avoiding their need to purchase new or upgraded equipment.

Principle 3. Any modernized GMDSS should avoid new costs to Administrations to the extent possible, avoiding their need to purchase and maintain new shore-based infrastructures.

Principle 4. Any modernized GMDSS should be adaptable to equipment and systems actually used by the mariner rather than relying on mandated equipment used only during a distress or other emergency. Furthermore, GMDSS should be adaptable to rapidly changing technology, avoiding the obsolescence that occurred when (for example) VHF, MF and many HF maritime public coast stations closed and telex (and most radiotelex) services terminated. A modernized GMDSS should not be defined by specific technologies which may become outdated and of limited use, but instead be adaptable to new technology as it becomes available, needed and used by the ship owner and operator.

Principle 5. GMDSS operation should not depend upon skilled, trained and licensed operators using detailed published procedures and knowledgeable of a variety of different manufacturer's GMDSS operator interfaces. GMDSS operation instead should depend upon consistent, standardized common system function and interfaces. While ITU's detailed distress, urgency and safety procedures are necessary, they should be incorporated into an automated process to simplify operation rather than be the responsibility of the operator to know and have memorized. Similarly, a standardized human interface common among various manufacturers' models should simplify use of the system by an operator unfamiliar with a given ship's GMDSS equipment.

Principle 6. Automated distress alerting should require the use of accurate

position and registered identification information; should only be routed to those in a position to provide assistance; and should include means for suppressing duplicated or repeated alerting. While it is impractical to totally avoid false alerts, alerts would be reduced if the one transmitting the false alert were clearly identified with location provided to all receiving the alert. Also, ship operators would be less likely to turn off their GMDSS radio equipment if individual alerts and their relays and acknowledgements were not repeatedly alarmed, and if the alarmed alerts were limited to vessels within reasonable proximity.

Principle 7. Means for distress alerting and disseminating maritime safety information should be standardized to not burden the responsible RCC and MSI provider agencies.

Principle 8. GMDSS systems should be based upon technology and use spectrum that ensure a reliable and internationally interoperable availability of service.

Principle 9. GMDSS systems should not rely upon proprietary equipment using proprietary network interfaces, but instead should be based upon common, open standards.

d. Further Work of the GMDSS Modernization Correspondence Group. The International Correspondence Group is headed by Bob Markle of RTCM who was unable to attend the Task Force meeting but after the meeting advised that the Correspondence Group will build upon the discussions of the IMO/ITU Experts Group and the abbreviated discussions at COMSAR 17 to produce a final draft of the High Level Review. The High Level Review is expected to confirm the continued need for the four Sea Areas, and the four Priority Levels. The High Level Review is also expected to embrace the principle of adopting new and more efficient communications technologies while gradually phasing out older systems.

9. The RTCM Report: RTCM President Bob Markle was unable to attend the Task Force meeting due to an out of town commitment but submitted the following status reports afterward for inclusion in the record:

a. RTCM SC 101 on GPS in VHF-DSC Handhelds. The Committee has completed an edition of its standard on GPS in VHF-DSC handhelds. Prompt approval by the FCC is expected.

b. RTCM SC 104 on Global Navigation Satellite Systems (GNSS). This Committee is working on incorporating Galileo, GLONASS, and the Japanese QZSS regional system into the standards which were originally developed for GPS. The next meeting was being held during the Institute of Navigation International Technical Meeting in San Diego concurrently with the Task Force meeting.

c. RTCM SC 109 on Electronic Charting. The Committee is working on a new version of the standard and plans to include provisions for Voyage Data Recorder (VDR) functionality in Electronic Charting Systems.

d. RTCM SC 110 on Emergency Beacons. The Committee has completed a revised EPIRB standard with accompanying test standards for EPIRBs with GPS. They are also working on standards for a new generation of EPIRBs that will take advantage of certain characteristics of the next generation of Search and Rescue satellites. Existing EPIRBs will be compatible with the new satellite system.

e. RTCM SC-112 on Marine Radar Standards. This Committee is completing a standard on ship radar which is intended to replace the two 1990's era RTCM radar standards for vessels in domestic services. Publication should come sometime in 2013.

f. RTCM SC-119 on Maritime Survivor Locating Devices. This Committee was reactivated to consider man overboard AIS applications and other relevant technologies. The new standard has been published and the FCC has been petitioned to adopt it.

g. 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 such as those used in harbors and at locks. A 2013 publication date is expected for the new standard.

h. 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 as well as Encrypted AIS (EAIS).

i. RTCM SC-128 on Satellite Emergency Notification Devices (SEND). This Committee was chartered at the request of the Coast Guard to develop performance standards for emergency notification systems using private satellite systems such as SPOT. The Committee has completed and approved its new standard. The FCC has been petitioned to include the new standard in its Rules.

j. RTCM SC 129 on Portrayal of Nav-Related Information on Shipboard Displays. This Committee is just beginning its work.

k. RTCM SC 130 on Electro-Optical Imaging Systems (EOIS). The work of this Committee deals primarily with night vision systems, but the Committee work has been suspended pending industry resources to support it.

l. RTCM SC 131 on Multi System Shipborne Navigation Receivers. This new Special Committee has been approved by the RTCM Board. It is to develop a standard incorporating space based and terrestrial navigation systems, and is to include inertial

systems as well. The standard will include provisions for resistance to interference, spoofing, and jamming.

m. Other RTCM Announcements of Interest. The 2013 RTCM Assembly including a Task Force meeting will be held concurrently with the NMEA International Marine Electronics Conference and Exposition at the Sheraton Hotel in San Diego, California the week of 22-28 September 2013. It is expected that this joint meeting including a combined exhibit will prove popular with members of both organizations.

10. Other Business and the Next Meeting of the GMDSS Task Force: The next Task Force meeting will be held at 9:30 a.m. on Thursday morning 9 May 2013 at the RTCM Headquarters in Arlington, Virginia. For more information see the RTCM website at www.rtc.org. The follow-on meeting will be held at 9:00 a.m. on Thursday morning 26 September 2013, at the Sheraton Hotel in San Diego, California during the combined annual meetings of the RTCM and the NMEA.

GMDSS TASK FORCE CONTINUING WORK LIST

31 January 2013

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. Advocate voluntary carriage of VHF or EPIRB/PLBs by all vessels offshore (TF)
9. Advocate overhaul of FCC policy and practice on MMSI assignments (TF)
10. Monitor non-GMDSS systems: AIS, LRIT, SSAS, VDR, VMS, & E-Navigation (TF)
11. Recommend updates for Coast Guard NVIC on GMDSS Requirements (TF)
12. Recommend means to facilitate Distress Alerts by Cell Phone & Internet (TF)
13. Advocate GPIRBs for U.S. Vessels Required to Carry EPIRBs (TF)
- 14. Advocate mandatory Distress Beacons on R/V more than 3 miles offshore (TF)**
- 15. Review GMDSS concepts and make modernization recommendations (MOD)**
16. Advocate intership calling on HF GMDSS channels (CV)
17. Recommend Safety Radio and VMS Requirements for Small Fishing Vessels (CV)
18. Recommend Safety Radio & Navigation Requirements for Towing Vessels (CV)
- 19. Recommend Safety Radio & Nav. Outfit for Small Passenger Vessels (CV)**
20. Recommend training programs for non-mandatory users of GMDSS systems (RV)
21. Encourage GMDSS handbooks and Internet and video training aids (RV)
- 22. Encourage users of VHF-DSC to Register for MMSI and connect GPS (RV)**
23. Advocate FCC let R/Vs keep existing MMSI when applying for Station Lic. (RV)
24. Recommend through NASBLA that State's boat Registrations include MMSIs (RV)
25. Encourage Mfgs. to upgrade GMDSS explanations in equipment manuals (SA)
26. Monitor guidelines for GMDSS equipment maintenance & maintainer standards (SA)

- 27. Recommend proper interconnection of GPS receivers with DSC Radios (SA)
- 28. Advocate better FCC & USCG management of annual GMDSS inspections (SA)
- 29. Monitor Inspection Guidelines and Check Lists for selected vessel types (SA)**
- 30. 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
 (MOD) Modernization Task Group

Attachment: Draft Agenda for Task Force Meeting 9 May 2013 at the RTCM Headquarters in Arlington, Virginia.

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

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