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**AMENDMENTS TO RESOLUTION A.706(17) –
WORLD-WIDE NAVIGATIONAL WARNING SERVICE**

1 The Maritime Safety Committee, at its eighty-fifth session (26 November to 5 December 2008), adopted amendments to annex 1, annex 2 and appendix of resolution A.706(17) – World-Wide Navigational Warning Service. The revised text, set out in annexes 1 and 2 to this circular, replaces the existing text of annex 1, annex 2 and the appendix of resolution A.706(17).

2 The Committee decided that the amendments should enter into force on 1 January 2010.

3 This circular revokes MSC/Circ.685, MSC/Circ.750 and MSC/Circ.957.

ANNEX 1

IMO/IHO WORLD-WIDE NAVIGATIONAL WARNING SERVICE GUIDANCE DOCUMENT

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 The purpose of this document is to provide specific guidance for the promulgation of internationally coordinated NAVAREA and coastal warnings. Its guidance does not apply to purely national warning services which supplement these internationally coordinated services.

1.2 The original resolution of the tenth International Hydrographic Conference in 1972 recommended the formation of an *ad hoc* joint IMO/IHO Commission to study the “establishment of a coordinated, efficient global radio navigational warning service”. Subsequently, this became a purely IHO Commission known as the Commission on Promulgation of Radio Navigational Warnings, which nevertheless consulted continuously with IMO. In its report to the eleventh International Hydrographic Conference in 1977, the Commission submitted a Draft Plan for the Establishment of a World-Wide Navigational Warning System, also referred to as Plan for the Establishment of a coordinated Radio Navigational Warning Service. The title World-Wide Navigational Warning Service or WWNWS used for this revised edition of the document reflects the evolution of the system from a proposed action to an effective and fully operational coordinated service. This revised edition reflects the evolution of the WWNWS since the advent of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS), as adopted by the Conference of Contracting Governments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, on the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System in November 1988, effective on 1 February 1992.

1.3 Future amendments to this guidance document will be considered formally and approved by both IHO and IMO in accordance with the procedures set out in annex 2. Proposed amendments shall be evaluated by the IHO Commission on the Promulgation of Radio Navigational Warnings, which includes an *ex-officio* representative of the IMO Secretariat, prior to any extensive IHO or IMO consideration.

2 DEFINITIONS

2.1 For the purposes of the WWNWS, the following definitions apply:

- .1** *Coastal warning* means a navigational warning promulgated as part of a numbered series by a National coordinator. Broadcast shall be made by the International NAVTEX service to defined NAVTEX service areas and/or by the International SafetyNET service to coastal warning areas. (In addition, Administrations may issue coastal warnings by other means.)
- .2** *Coastal warning area* means a unique and precisely defined sea area within a NAVAREA or Sub-Area established by a coastal State for the purpose of coordinating the broadcast of coastal maritime safety information through the SafetyNET service.
- .3** *HF NBDP* means High Frequency narrow-band direct-printing, using radio telegraphy as defined in Recommendation ITU-R M.688.

- .4 *In-force bulletin* means a list of serial numbers of those NAVAREA, Sub-Area or coastal warnings in force issued and broadcast by the NAVAREA coordinator, Sub-Area coordinator or National coordinator during at least the previous six weeks.
- .5 *International NAVTEX service* means the coordinated broadcast and automatic reception on 518 kHz of maritime safety information by means of narrow-band direct-printing telegraphy using the English language¹.
- .6 *International SafetyNET service* means the coordinated broadcasting and automated reception of maritime safety information via the Inmarsat Enhanced Group Call (EGC) system, using the English language, in accordance with the provisions of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, as amended.
- .7 *Local warning* means a navigational warning which covers inshore waters, often within the limits of jurisdiction of a harbour or port authority.
- .8 *Maritime safety information (MSI)*² means navigational and meteorological warnings, meteorological forecasts and other urgent safety-related messages broadcast to ships.
- .9 *METAREA* means a geographical sea area³ established for the purpose of coordinating the broadcast of marine meteorological information. The term METAREA followed by a roman numeral may be used to identify a particular sea area. The delimitation of such areas is not related to and should not prejudice the delimitation of any boundaries between States.
- .10 *National coordinator* means the national authority charged with collating and issuing coastal warnings within a national area of responsibility.
- .11 *National NAVTEX service* means the broadcast and automatic reception of maritime safety information by means of narrow-band direct-printing telegraphy using frequencies other than 518 kHz and languages as decided by the Administration concerned.
- .12 *National SafetyNET service* means the broadcasting and automated reception of maritime safety information via the Inmarsat EGC system, using languages as decided by the Administration concerned.
- .13 *NAVAREA* means a geographical sea area³ established for the purpose of coordinating the broadcast of navigational warnings. The term NAVAREA followed by a roman numeral may be used to identify a particular sea area. The delimitation of such areas is not related to and should not prejudice the delimitation of any boundaries between States.
- .14 *NAVAREA coordinator* means the authority charged with coordinating, collating and issuing NAVAREA warnings for a designated NAVAREA.
- .15 *NAVAREA warning* means a navigational warning or in-force bulletin promulgated as part of a numbered series by a NAVAREA coordinator.

¹ As set out in the IMO NAVTEX Manual.

² As defined in regulation IV/2 of the 1974 SOLAS Convention, as amended.

³ Which may include inland seas, lakes and waterways navigable by sea-going ships.

- .16 *Navigational warning* means a message containing urgent information relevant to safe navigation broadcast to ships in accordance with the provisions of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, as amended.
- .17 *NAVTEX coordinator* means the authority charged with operating and managing one or more NAVTEX stations broadcasting maritime safety information as part of the International NAVTEX service.
- .18 *Sub-Area* means a sub-division of a NAVAREA in which a number of countries have established a coordinated system for the promulgation of navigational warnings. The delimitation of such areas is not related to and shall not prejudice the delimitation of any boundaries between States.
- .19 *Sub-Area coordinator* means the authority charged with coordinating, collating and issuing Sub-Area warnings for a designated Sub-Area.
- .20 *Sub-Area warning* means a navigational warning promulgated as part of a numbered series by a Sub-Area coordinator. Broadcast shall be made by the International NAVTEX service to defined NAVTEX service areas or by the International SafetyNET service (through the appropriate NAVAREA coordinator).
- .21 In the operating procedures *coordination* means that the allocation of the time for data broadcast is centralized, the format and criteria of data transmissions are compliant as described in the Joint IMO/IHO/WMO Manual on Maritime Safety Information and that all services are managed as set out in resolutions A.705(17), as amended and A.706(17), as amended.

3 NAVIGATIONAL WARNING BROADCASTS

3.1 Methods

3.1.1 Two principal methods are used for broadcasting navigational warnings as part of MSI in accordance with the provisions of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, as amended, in the areas covered by these methods, as follows:

- .1 NAVTEX: broadcasts to coastal waters; and
- .2 SafetyNET: broadcasts which cover all the waters of the globe except for sea area A4, as defined by resolution A.801(19), Annex 3, paragraph 4, as amended.

3.1.2 Information shall be provided for unique and precisely defined sea areas, each being served only by the most appropriate of the above systems. Although there will be some duplication to allow a ship to change from one system to another, the majority of messages will only be broadcast on one system.

3.1.3 NAVTEX broadcasts shall be made in accordance with the standards and procedures set out in the NAVTEX Manual.

3.1.4 SafetyNET broadcasts shall be made in accordance with the standards and procedures set out in the International SafetyNET Manual.

3.1.5 HF NBDP may be used to promulgate maritime safety information in areas outside Inmarsat coverage (SOLAS regulation IV/7.1.5).

3.1.6 In addition, Administrations may also provide navigational warnings by other means.

3.2 Scheduling

3.2.1 Automated methods (NAVTEX /SafetyNET)

3.2.1.1 Navigational warnings shall be broadcast as soon as possible or as dictated by the nature and timing of the event. Normally, the initial broadcast should be made as follows:

- .1** for NAVTEX, at the next scheduled broadcast, unless circumstances indicate the use of procedures for VITAL or IMPORTANT warnings; and
- .2** for SafetyNET, within 30 min of receipt of original information, or at the next scheduled broadcast.

3.2.1.2 Navigational warnings shall be repeated in scheduled broadcasts in accordance with the guidelines promulgated in the NAVTEX Manual and International SafetyNET Manual as appropriate.

3.2.1.3 At least two scheduled daily broadcast times are necessary to provide adequate promulgation of NAVAREA warnings. When NAVAREAs extend across more than six time zones, more than two broadcasts should be considered to ensure that warnings can be received. When using SafetyNET in lieu of NAVTEX for coastal warnings, Administrations may need to consider an increase in the number of scheduled daily broadcasts compared with the requirement for NAVAREA warnings.

3.2.2 Schedule changes

3.2.2.1 Broadcast times for NAVTEX are defined by the B1 character of the station, allocated by the coordinating Panel on NAVTEX Services of the Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications and Search and Rescue.

3.2.2.2 Times of scheduled broadcasts under the international SafetyNET service are coordinated through the International SafetyNET coordinating Panel.

4 NAVIGATIONAL WARNINGS

4.1 General

4.1.1 There are four types of navigational warnings: NAVAREA warnings, Sub-Area warnings, coastal warnings and local warnings. The WWNWS guidance and coordination are involved with only three of them:

- .1** NAVAREA warnings;
- .2** Sub-Area warnings; and
- .3** coastal warnings.

4.1.2 Navigational warnings shall remain in force until cancelled by the originating coordinator. Navigational warnings should be broadcast for as long as the information is valid; however, if they are readily available to mariners by other official means, for example in Notices to Mariners, then after a period of six weeks they may no longer be broadcast.

4.1.3 The minimum information in a navigational warning which a mariner requires is “hazard” and “position”. It is usual, however, to include sufficient extra detail to allow some freedom of action in the vicinity of the hazard. This means that the message should give enough extra data for the mariner to be able to recognize the hazard and assess its effect upon his navigation.

4.1.4 If known, the duration of the event causing a navigational warning should be given in the text.

4.1.5 Some of the subjects for navigational warnings listed in paragraph 4.2.1.3 (e.g., drifting ice, tsunami warnings, negative tidal surges) may also be suitable for promulgation as METAREA forecasts or warnings. In this event, appropriate coordination between the relevant NAVAREA coordinator and METAREA issuing Service must occur.

4.2 The four types of navigational warnings are:

4.2.1 NAVAREA warnings

4.2.1.1 NAVAREA warnings are concerned with the information detailed below which ocean-going mariners require for their safe navigation. This includes, in particular, new navigational hazards and failures of important aids to navigation as well as information which may require changes to planned navigational routes.

4.2.1.2 Coastal warnings are broadcast by the International NAVTEX service, or by the International SafetyNET service when implemented in lieu of NAVTEX. They are not normally rebroadcast as NAVAREA warnings unless deemed of such significance that the mariner should be aware of them before entering a NAVTEX service area. The National coordinator will evaluate the significance of the information for consideration as a NAVAREA warning while the NAVAREA coordinator will make the final determination.

4.2.1.3 The following subjects are considered suitable for broadcast as NAVAREA warnings. This list is not exhaustive and should be regarded only as a guideline. Furthermore, it pre-supposes that sufficiently precise information about the item has not previously been disseminated in a Notice to Mariners:

- .1** casualties to lights, fog signals, buoys and other aids to navigation affecting main shipping lanes;
- .2** the presence of dangerous wrecks in or near main shipping lanes and, if relevant, their marking;
- .3** establishment of major new aids to navigation or significant changes to existing ones when such establishment or change, might be misleading to shipping;
- .4** the presence of large unwieldy tows in congested waters;
- .5** drifting hazards (including derelict ships, ice, mines, containers, other large items, etc.);

- .6 areas where search and rescue (SAR) and anti-pollution operations are being carried out (for avoidance of such areas);
- .7 the presence of newly discovered rocks, shoals, reefs and wrecks likely to constitute a danger to shipping, and, if relevant, their marking;
- .8 unexpected alteration or suspension of established routes;
- .9 cable or pipe-laying activities, the towing of large submerged objects for research or exploration purposes, the employment of manned or unmanned submersibles, or other underwater operations constituting potential dangers in or near shipping lanes;
- .10 the establishment of research or scientific instruments in or near shipping lanes;
- .11 the establishment of offshore structures in or near shipping lanes;
- .12 significant malfunctioning of radio-navigation services and shore-based maritime safety information radio or satellite services;
- .13 information concerning special operations which might affect the safety of shipping, sometimes over wide areas, e.g., naval exercises, missile firings, space missions, nuclear tests, ordnance dumping zones, etc. It is important that where the degree of hazard is known, this information is included in the relevant warning. Whenever possible such warnings should be originated not less than five days in advance of the scheduled event and reference may be made to relevant national publications in the warning;
- .14 acts of piracy and armed robbery against ships;
- .15 tsunamis and other natural phenomena, such as abnormal changes to sea level;
- .16 World Health Organization (WHO) health advisory information; and
- .17 security related requirements⁴.

4.2.2 *Sub-Area warnings*

4.2.2.1 Sub-Area warnings broadcast information which is necessary for safe navigation within a Sub-Area. They will normally include all subjects listed in 4.2.1.3 above, but will usually affect only the Sub-Area.

4.2.3 *Coastal warnings*

4.2.3.1 Coastal warnings broadcast information which is necessary for safe navigation within areas seaward of the fairway buoy or pilot station, and should not be restricted to main shipping lanes. Where the area is served by NAVTEX, it should provide navigational warnings for the entire NAVTEX service area. Where the area is not served by NAVTEX, it is necessary to include all warnings relevant to the coastal waters up to 250 miles from the coast in the International SafetyNET service broadcast.

⁴ In accordance with the requirements of the International Ship and Port Facility Security Code.

4.2.3.2 Coastal warnings should include at least the subjects in 4.2.1.3.

4.2.4 *Local warnings*

4.2.4.1 Local warnings broadcast information which cover inshore waters, often within the limits of jurisdiction of a harbour or port authority. They are broadcast by means other than NAVTEX or SafetyNET, and supplement coastal warnings by giving detailed information within inshore waters.

5 MESSAGE REQUIREMENTS

5.1 Guidance

5.1.1 Operational guidance for handling and formatting navigational warnings is given in the Joint IMO/IHO/WMO Manual on Maritime Safety Information, the NAVTEX Manual and the International SafetyNET Manual.

5.2 Numbering

5.2.1 Navigational warnings in each series shall be consecutively numbered throughout the calendar year, commencing with 0001 at 0000 UTC on 1 January.

5.2.2 Navigational warnings should, as a general rule, be transmitted in reverse numerical order on scheduled broadcasts.

5.3 Language

5.3.1 All NAVAREA, Sub-Area and coastal warnings shall be broadcast only in English in the International NAVTEX and SafetyNET services.

5.3.2 In addition to the required broadcasts in English, NAVAREA, Sub-Area and coastal warnings may be broadcast in a national language using national NAVTEX and SafetyNET services and/or other means.

5.3.3 Local warnings may be issued in the national language and/or in English.

5.4 “No warnings” message

5.4.1 When there are no navigational warnings to be disseminated at a scheduled broadcast time, a brief message shall be transmitted to identify the broadcast and advise the mariner that there is no navigational warning message traffic on hand.

6 COORDINATOR RESOURCES AND RESPONSIBILITIES

6.1 NAVAREA coordinator resources

6.1.1 The NAVAREA coordinator must have:

- .1 the expertise and information sources of a well-established national hydrographic service;

- .2 effective communications, e.g., telephone, e-mail, facsimile, internet, telex, etc., with Sub-Area and National coordinators in the NAVAREA, with other NAVAREA coordinators, and with other data providers; and
- .3 access to broadcast systems for transmission to the navigable waters of the NAVAREA. As a minimum, this shall include those described in paragraph 3.1.1. Reception should normally be possible at least 700 nautical miles beyond the limit of the NAVAREA (24 hours' sailing by a fast ship).

6.2 NAVAREA coordinator responsibilities

6.2.1 The NAVAREA coordinator must:

- .1 endeavour to be informed of all events that could significantly affect the safety of navigation within the NAVAREA;
- .2 assess all information immediately upon receipt in the light of expert knowledge for relevance to navigation in the NAVAREA;
- .3 select information for broadcast in accordance with the guidance given in paragraph 4.2.1 above;
- .4 draft NAVAREA warning messages in accordance with the Joint IMO/IHO/WMO Manual on Maritime Safety Information;
- .5 direct and control the broadcast of NAVAREA warning messages, in accordance with the provisions of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, as amended;
- .6 forward NAVAREA warnings and relevant associated information which may require wider promulgation directly to adjacent NAVAREA coordinators and/or others as appropriate, using the quickest possible means;
- .7 ensure that NAVAREA warnings which remain in force for more than six weeks are made available immediately to NAVAREA coordinators, other authorities and mariners in general, as appropriate;
- .8 ensure that information concerning all navigational warning subject areas listed in paragraph 4.2.1.3 that may not require a NAVAREA warning within their own NAVAREA is forwarded immediately to the appropriate National and NAVAREA coordinators affected by the event;
- .9 broadcast in-force bulletins not less than once per week at a regularly scheduled time;
- .10 promulgate the cancellation of NAVAREA warnings which are no longer valid;
- .11 act as the central point of contact on matters relating to navigational warnings within the NAVAREA;
- .12 promote and oversee the use of established international standards and practices in the promulgation of navigational warnings throughout the NAVAREA;

- .13 when notified by the authority designated to act on reports of piracy and armed robbery against ships, arrange for the broadcast of a suitable NAVAREA warning. Additionally, keep the national or regional piracy control centre informed of long-term broadcast action(s);
- .14 when notified by the appropriate authorities, arrange for the broadcast of suitable NAVAREA warnings to promulgate World Health Organization (WHO) health advisory information; and tsunami-related information;
- .15 monitor the broadcasts which they originate to ensure that the messages have been correctly broadcast;
- .16 maintain records of source data relating to NAVAREA messages in accordance with the requirement of the National Administration of the NAVAREA coordinator;
- .17 coordinate preliminary discussions between neighbouring Member States, seeking to establish NAVTEX services and with other adjacent Administrations, prior to formal application;
- .18 contribute to the development of international standards and practices through attendance and participation in the IHO Commission on the Promulgation of Radio Navigational Warnings (CPRNW) meetings, and also participate in relevant IMO, IHO and WMO fora as appropriate, e.g., Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications and Search and Rescue, Expert Team On Maritime Safety Services and other regional conferences, etc., as required; and
- .19 take into account the need for contingency planning.

6.3 Sub-Area coordinator resources

6.3.1 The Sub-Area coordinator must have, or have access to:

- .1 the expertise and information sources of a well established national hydrographic service;
- .2 effective communications, e.g., telephone, e-mail, facsimile, internet, telex, etc., with National coordinators in the Sub-Area, with the NAVAREA coordinator, and with other data providers; and
- .3 access to broadcast systems for transmission to the entire Sub-Area.

6.4 Sub-Area coordinator responsibilities

6.4.1 The Sub-Area coordinator must:

- .1 endeavour to be informed of all events that could significantly affect the safety of navigation within the Sub-Area;
- .2 assess all information immediately upon receipt in the light of expert knowledge for relevance to navigation in the Sub-Area;

- .3 select information for broadcast in accordance with the guidance given in paragraph 4.2.1 above;
- .4 draft Sub-Area warning messages in accordance with the Joint IMO/IHO/WMO Manual on Maritime Safety Information;
- .5 direct and control the broadcast of Sub-Area warning messages, in accordance with the provisions of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, as amended;
- .6 forward Sub-Area warnings and relevant associated information which may require wider promulgation directly to their own NAVAREA coordinator using the quickest possible means;
- .7 broadcast in-force bulletins not less than once per week at a regularly scheduled time;
- .8 promulgate the cancellation of Sub-Area warnings which are no longer valid;
- .9 act as the central point of contact on matters relating to navigational warnings within the Sub-Area;
- .10 promote the use of established international standards and practices in the promulgation of navigational warnings within the Sub-Area;
- .11 monitor the broadcasts which they originate to ensure that the messages have been correctly broadcast;
- .12 maintain records of source data relating to NAVAREA messages in accordance with the requirement of the National Administration of the NAVAREA coordinator;
- .13 contribute to the development of international standards and practices through attendance and participation in relevant IMO, IHO and WMO fora, e.g., Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications and Search and Rescue (COMSAR), CPRNW, Expert Team On Maritime Safety Services, appropriate regional conferences, etc.; and
- .14 take into account the need for contingency planning.

6.5 National coordinator resources

6.5.1 The national coordinator must have:

- .1 established sources of information relevant to the safety of navigation within national waters;
- .2 effective communications, e.g., telephone, e-mail, facsimile, internet, telex, etc., with the NAVAREA/Sub-Area coordinator and adjacent National coordinators; and
- .3 access to broadcast systems for transmission to their area of national responsibility.

6.6 National coordinator responsibilities

6.6.1 The national coordinator must:

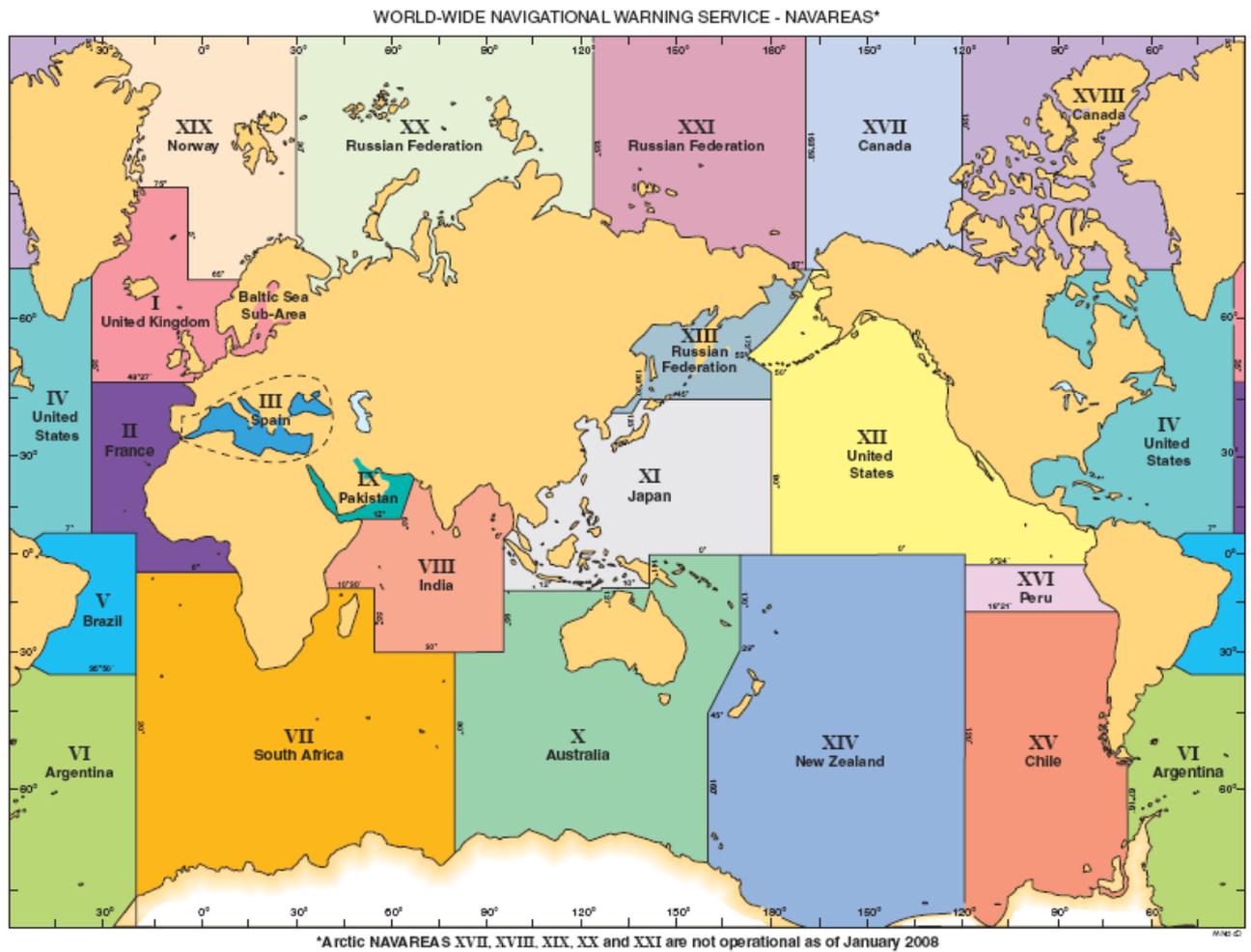
- .1** endeavour to be informed of all events that could significantly affect the safety of navigation within their area of national responsibility;
- .2** assess all information immediately upon receipt in the light of expert knowledge for relevance to navigation in their area of national responsibility;
- .3** select information for broadcast in accordance with the guidance given in paragraph 4.2.1 above;
- .4** draft coastal warning messages in accordance with the Joint IMO/IHO/WMO Manual on Maritime Safety Information;
- .5** direct and control the broadcast of coastal warning messages, in accordance with the provisions of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, as amended;
- .6** forward coastal warning messages and relevant associated information which may require wider promulgation directly to their NAVAREA coordinator and/or adjacent National coordinators as appropriate, using the quickest possible means;
- .7** broadcast in-force bulletins not less than once per week at a regularly scheduled time;
- .8** promulgate the cancellation of coastal warnings which are no longer valid;
- .9** act as the central point of contact on matters relating to navigational warnings within their area of national responsibility;
- .10** promote the use of established international standards and practices in the promulgation of navigational warnings within their area of national responsibility;
- .11** monitor the broadcasts which they originate to ensure that the messages have been correctly broadcast;
- .12** maintain records of source data relating to NAVAREA messages in accordance with the requirement of the National Administration of the NAVAREA coordinator; and
- .13** take into account the need for contingency planning.

ANNEX 2**IMO PROCEDURE FOR AMENDING THE WORLD-WIDE
NAVIGATION WARNING SERVICE**

- 1 Proposed amendments to the world-wide navigational warning service should be submitted to the Maritime Safety Committee for evaluation.
- 2 Amendments to the service should normally come into force at intervals of approximately two years or at such periods as determined by the Maritime Safety Committee at the time of adoption. Amendments adopted by the Maritime Safety Committee will be notified to all concerned, will provide at least 12 months notifications and will come into force on 1 January of the following year.
- 3 The agreement of the International Hydrographic Organization and the active participation of other bodies should be sought according to the nature of the proposed amendments.
- 4 When the proposals for amendment have been examined in substance, the Maritime Safety Committee will entrust the Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications and Search and Rescue with the ensuing editorial tasks.
- 5 The NAVAREA schedule of broadcast times and frequencies, not being an integral part of the service and being subject to frequent changes, will not be subject to the amendment procedures.

Appendix

GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS FOR COORDINATING AND PROMULGATING NAVAREA WARNINGS



The delimitation of these NAVAREAS is not related to and shall not prejudice the delimitations of any boundaries between States.