

Maritime Knowledge Centre

INFORMATION RESOURCES ON THE GLOBAL MARITIME DISTRESS AND SAFETY SYSTEM (GMDSS)

(Last update: 18 March 2010)

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See also :

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IMO MATERIAL ON THE WEBSITE

SeaLibrary Online. Maritime Knowledge Centre Catalogues online.

http://www.imo.org/InfoResource/mainframe.asp?topic_id=827

GMDSS. http://www.imo.org/Safety/mainframe.asp?topic_id=389

The GMDSS is fully implemented : Maritime distress and safety communications enter new era. *IMO News, No. 1/1999, pp 9-16* http://www.imo.org/includes/blastDataOnly.asp/data_id%3D696/NEWS199.PDF

GMDSS – Frequently asked questions. *IMO News, No. 1/1999, pp 18-20*

http://www.imo.org/includes/blastDataOnly.asp/data_id%3D696/NEWS199.PDF

Shipping emergencies : Search and rescue and the GMDSS. *Focus on IMO, March 1999.*

http://www.imo.org/includes/blastDataOnly.asp/data_id=1478/GMDSS%20and%20SAR%201999.pdf

IMO publishes new GMDSS Manual (4th edition). Complete revision of comprehensive GMDSS handbook. IMO Briefing 34/2007, 8 October 2007.

http://www.imo.org/Newsroom/mainframe.asp?topic_id=1472&doc_id=8557

IMO DOCUMENTS

Notices:

1. Please note that only Resolutions, Circulars, Circular Letters, Conferences and Final Reports of the meeting sessions are listed below. For a list of IMO Documents on this subject, please contact pbarreto@imo.org
2. The IRDs changed the contents in 2008 therefore if you wish to receive an archive copy where you can find a full list of IMO Documents on the subject, please contact pbarreto@imo.org (Please note that the IRDs were last updated in November/December 2007)

RESOLUTIONS

Assembly resolutions are available in English, French, Spanish, Chinese, Arabic and Russian

- A.568 (14) Use of the COSPAS-SARSAT low polar orbiting satellite EPIRB system
- A.570 (14) Type approval of ship earth stations
- A.606 (15) Review and evaluation of the global maritime distress and safety system (GMDSS)
- A.614(15) Carriage of radar operating in the frequency band 9300-9500 MHz
- A.616 (15) Search and rescue homing capability
- A.617 (15) Implementation of the NAVTEX system as a component of the World-Wide Navigational Warning Service
- A.660 (16) Carriage of satellite emergency position-indicating radio beacons (EPIRBs)
- A.694 (17) General requirements for shipborne radio equipment forming part of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System and for electronic navigational aids

- A.696 (17) Type of approval of satellite EPIRBs operating in the COSPAS-SARSAT system
- A.701 (17) Carriage of Inmarsat Enhanced Group Call SafetyNET receivers under the GMDSS
- A.702 (17) Radio maintenance guidelines for the GMDSS related to sea areas A3 and A4
- A.703 (17) Training of radio personnel in the GMDSS
- A.705 (17) Promulgation of Maritime Safety Information
- A.706 (17) World-Wide Navigational Warning Service. Amended by MSC/Circ. 750 & MSC/Circ.957
- A 707 (17) Charges for distress, urgency and safety messages through the Inmarsat system
- A.764 (18) Establishment, updating and retrieval of the information contained in the registration databases of satellite EPIRBs
- A. 769 (18) Procedures and arrangements for issuing GMDSS certificates to holders of non-GMDSS certificates
- A.801 (19) Provision of radio services for the global maritime distress and safety system (GMDSS)
 Annex 1 : Recommendation on provision of radio services for the GMDSS
 Annex 2 : Criteria for use when providing shore-based digital selective calling (DSC) facilities for use in the GMDSS
 Annex 3 : Criteria for establishing GMDSS sea areas
 Annex 4 : Criteria for use when providing a NAVTEX service
 Annex 5 : Criteria for use when providing Inmarsat shore-based facilities for use in the GMDSS
- A.814 (19) Guidelines for the avoidance of false distress alerts
 Annex : Guidelines for avoiding false distress alerts
 Appendix : Instructions for mariners and others on how to cancel a false distress alert
- A. 815 (19) World-wide radionavigation system
 Annex : report on the study of a world-wide radionavigation system
- A.860 (20) Maritime Policy for a future global navigation satellite system (GNSS)
- A.887 (21) Establishment, updating and retrieval of the information contained in the registration database for the Global Maritime Distress Signals and Safety System (GMDSS)
- A.888 (21) Criteria for the provision of mobile-satellite communication systems in the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS)
- A.915(22) Revised maritime policy and requirements for a future Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS)
- A.1001(25) Criteria for the provision of mobile satellite communication systems in the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS). Resolution A.1001(25 adopted on 29 November 2007

CIRCULARS

MSC

MSC/Circ. 423 18.02.86	Equivalent arrangements for survival craft emergency position indicating radio beacons
MSC/Circ.467 08.05.87	Radiocommunications. Volume of traffic for distress and safety communications
MSC/Circ. 469 08.05.87	Guidelines for the participation of non-Convention ships in the GMDSS
MSC/Circ. 470 08.05.87	Procedures for routing distress information derived from the COSPAS-SARSAT system
MSC/Circ. 516 13.04.89	Recommendations on the early development and introduction of the Inmarsat enhanced group call SafetyNET broadcast service
MSC/Circ.560 25.06.91	Meteorological wind profiler radars and their effect on the COSPAS-SARSAT system
MSC/Circ. 610 07.07.93	Use and application of computers
MSC/Circ. 640 27.05.94	International SafetyNET Service
MSC/Circ. 660 12.01.95	Proper use of lanyards attached to satellite EPIRBs
MSC/ Circ. 682 22.05.95	Implementation of the GMDSS on board all ships
MSC/ Circ .683 22.05.95	Present homing capability of satellite EPIRBs
MSC/Circ.684 22.05.95	Questionnaire on shore-based facilities for the global maritime distress and safety system (GMDSS)
MSC/Circ.685 22.05.95	Amendments to resolution A.706(17)- World-Wide Navigational Warning service
MSC/Circ.748 13.06.96	Implementation of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS)
MSC/Circ.749 13.06.96	Guidance of Administrations on Improving the Capability of Shore Authorities to Contact Ships During Situations Involving Distress or SAR Operations
MSC/Circ.750 13.06.96	Amendments to Resolution A.706(17) - World-Wide Navigational Warning Service
MSC/Circ.803 09.07.97	Participation of non-SOLAS Ships in the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS)
MSC/Circ.804 09 .07.97	Impact of the Year 2000 on Software Systems

MSC/Circ.805 06.07.97	Guidance for the use of Radio Signals by Ships under Attack or threat of attack from pirates or armed robbers
MSC/Circ.822 29 .08.97	Amendments to the MERSAR Manual
MSC/Circ.855 12.06.98	International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, as amended
MSC/Circ.858 22 .05.98	Document of Compliance with SOLAS Regulations II-2/54
MSC/Circ.861 22 .05.98	Measures to Reduce the Number of false distress alerts
MSC/Circ.862 22.05.98	Clarifications of Certain Requirements in IMO performance Standards for GMDSS Equipment
MSC/Circ.863 22 .05.98	Recommendation on Prevention of Harmful Interference to 406 Mhz EPIRBS operating with the COSPAS-SARSAT System
MSC/Circ.864 22.05.98	Guidelines for preparing Plans for co-operation between search and rescue services and passenger ships on fixed routes (in accordance with SOLAS regulation V/15(C))
MSC/Circ.882 14.12.98	Guidelines on annual testing of 406 MHz satellite EPIRBS http://www.imo.org/imo/circs/msc/70/list.htm
MSC/Circ.883 14.12.98	Maritime safety and INMARSAT ship earth station barring procedures http://www.imo.org/imo/circs/msc/70/list.htm
MSC/Circ.957 25.05.2000	Amendments to Resolution A.706(17) on the World-Wide Navigational Warning Service http://www.imo.org/imo/circs/msc/72/list.htm
MSC/Circ.958 26.05.2000	Amendments to NAVTEX Manual http://www.imo.org/imo/circs/msc/72/list.htm
MSC/Circ.959 20.05.2000	Interim procedures for MRCCS on receipt of distress alerts http://www.imo.org/imo/circs/msc/72/list.htm
MSC/Circ.999 11.06.2001	Adoption of amendments to the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue (IAMSAR) Manual http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=1168/999.pdf
MSC/Circ.1041 28.05.2002	Guidelines for ship operators and Search and Rescue (SAR) services on minimum requirements for SAR data providers holding SAR co-operation plans in accordance with Solas Regulation V/7.3 and MSC/Circ.1000 and the provision of up-to-date plans at all Times. http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=2382/1041.pdf
MSC/Circ.1044 05.06.2002	Adoption of Amendments to the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue (IAMSAR) Manual. http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=2383/1044.pdf
MSC/Circ. 1064 06.06.2003	Amendment to the International SafetyNET Manual http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=2987/1064a1.pdf

MSC/Circ.1064/Add.1 06.06.2003	Amendments to the International SafetyNET Manual http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=2987/1064a1.pdf
MSC/Circ.1077 06.06.2003	Procedure for evaluation and possible recognition of mobile-satellite systems notified for use in the GMDSS http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=3010/1077.pdf
MSC/Circ.1078 06.06.2003	Guidelines to Administrations on reporting false alerts http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=2977/1078.pdf
MSC/Circ.1079 10.07.2003	Guidelines for preparing plans for co-operation between search and rescue services and (in accordance with Solas regulation V/7.3). http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=3075/1079.pdf
MSC/Circ.1080 06.06.2003	Adoption of amendments to the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue (IAMSAR) Manual. http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=3052/1080.pdf
MSC/Circ.1122 24.05.2004	Adoption of the revised NAVTEX Manual http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=3770/1122.pdf

GMDSS

GMDSS.1/Circ.8/Corr.13 21/04/2006	Master plan of shore based facilities for the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS Master Plan) http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=6392/8c13.pdf
GMDSS.1/Circ.8/Corr.12 31/10/2005	Master plan of shore based facilities for the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS Master Plan) http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=5486/8c12.pdf
GMDSS.1/Circ.8/Corr.11 31/03/2005	Master plan of shore-based facilities for the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS Master Plan) http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=5112/8c11.pdf
Annex 1	Status of shore-based facilities for the GMDSS http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=3216/Annex%201.pdf
Annex 2	List of VHF DSC coast stations for sea areas A1 http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=4782/Annex%202.pdf
Annex 3	List of MF DSC coast stations for sea areas A2 http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=4783/Annex%203.pdf
Annex 4	List of HF DSC coast stations for sea areas A3 and A4 http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=4784/Annex%204.pdf
Annex 5	List of Inmarsat coast earth stations http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=4785/Annex%205.pdf
Annex 6	List of rescue co-ordination centres using ship earth stations http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=4786/Annex%206.pdf
Annex 7	Navtex service : International 518kHz Navtex http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=4787/Annex%207.pdf
Annex 8	International SafetyNET service http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=4788/Annex%208.pdf

Annex 8 Appendice	Table of international co-ordinated broadcast schedules http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=4789/Annex%208-Appendices.pdf
Annex 9	HF NBBDP Maritime safety information broadcast services http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=4790/Annex%209.pdf
Annex 10	List of COSPAS_SARSAT MCCs (Mission Control Centres) and LEOLUTs (Local user terminals in Leosar system) http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=4977/Annex%2010.pdf
Annex 12	Satellite EPIRB registration information http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=4979/Annex%2012.pdf
Annex 13	List of 24 hours points of contact for MMSI ship's identification http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=4980/Annex%2013.pdf
GMDSS.1/Circ.9 23/04/2007	Master plan of shore-based facilities for the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS Master Plan)

COM & COMSAR

N.B. The Committee on Radiocommunications (COM) has been renamed as Sub-Committee on Radiocommunication and Search and rescue (COMSAR)

COM/Circ.70 Rev1 31.05.90	Questionnaire on the maritime distress system
COM/Circ.100 16.05.88	Use of frequency 4,209.5Khz for promulgation of maritime safety information (MSI)
COM/Circ.103 31.03.90	Design and installation guidelines for Inmarsat standard-C ship earth stations and enhanced group call (EGC) receivers
COM/Circ.104 26.06.91	Coding of 406 MHz satellite EPIRBs's
COM/Circ.105 16.07.91	Clarification of certain provisions of the 1988 SOLAS amendments for the GMDSS
COM/Circ.106 06.08.91	Testing of MF digital selective calling equipment installed for distress and safety by ships and coast stations
COM/Circ.107 05.08.91	Shortage of supply of 406 MHz EPIRBs
COM/Circ 109 23.04.92	Use of frequency 8364 kHz for survival craft
COM/Circ.110 08.02.93	Clarification of Solas regulations IV/6.1, IV/6.2.2 and IV/10.1.1.3
COM/Circ.112 10.02.93	Implementation of maritime safety information (MSI) broadcasts via SafetyNET in areas not covered by NAVTEX

COM/Circ.115 10.02.93	Discontinuation of morse code services in the MF radiotelegraphy band
COM/Circ.116 11.01.94	Provision of GMDSS radio installations with position-updating facility
COM/Circ.117 10.01.94	Clarification of the application of certain provisions of chapter IV of the Solas convention- Solas regulations IV/15.5, IV.15.6 and IV/15.7
COM/Circ.120 31.01.94	Notification of maritime mobile service identities (MMIS) assigned to ships
COM/Circ.121 14.02.95	Implementation of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System
COM/Circ.122 14.02.95	Selection of more than one fixed area in the Inmarsat-C system
COM/Circ.125 20.02.95	Recommendations on the use of batteries for two-way VHF radiotelephone apparatus
COM/Circ.128 22.05.95	Guidelines for use in evaluating regional mobile satellite systems.
COMSAR/Circ.2 11.04.96	Procedure for responding to an MF (2187.5 kHz) DSC distress alert in sea areas A2
COMSAR/Circ.3 19.04.96	Relations between NAVAREA co-ordinators and rescue co-ordination centers
COMSAR/Circ.6 19.04.96	Recommendation on prevention of harmful interference on the 8,12 and 16 Mhz GMDSS distress and safety simplex frequencies
COMSAR/Circ.7 07.10.96	Importance of correct formatting of transmissions on Navtex system
COMSAR/Circ.9 12.03.97	Requirements for notification to the International Telecommunications Union (ITU) of GMDSS Ships Identities, for inclusion in the maritime mobile access and retrieval system (MARS)
COMSAR/Circ.10 18.02.97	Possible temporary loss of Inmarsat services to part of the north Atlantic ocean
COMSAR/Circ.11 04.03.97	List of coast earth stations (CES) operation co-ordinators in Inmarsat system
COMSAR/Circ.12 06.06.97	Relays of distress alerts by digital selective calling
COMSAR/Circ.13 06/03/98	Shore to ship communications during a distress
COMSAR/Circ.15 09.03.98	Joint IMO/IHO/WMO Manual on Maritime Safety Information (MOI)
COMSAR/Circ.16 04.03.98	Guidelines on the configuration of the reserve source or sources of energy used to supply radio installations on GMDSS ships

COMSAR/Circ.17 09/03/98	Recommendations on use of GMDSS equipment for non-safety Communications
COMSAR/Circ.18 11.03.98	Guidance on minimum communication needs of maritime rescue co-ordination centres (MRCC)
COMSAR/Circ.19 11/05/99	Distress priority communications for RCC from shore-to-ship Via Inmarsat
COMSAR/Circ.20 21.08.99	List of NAVERA co-ordinators (Superseded by Circ.24)
COMSAR/Circ.21 25.01.2000	Procedure for responding to DSC distress alerts by ships
COMSAR/Circ.22 20.05.2000	Guidance on data fields for SAR databases http://www.imo.org/imo/circs/msc/72/list.htm
COMSAR/Circ.23 20.05.2000	Guidance on Central Alerting Posts (CAPs) http://www.imo.org/imo/circs/msc/72/list.htm
COMSAR/Circ.24 10.01.2001	List of NAVAREA Co-ordinators
COMSAR/Circ.25 15.03.2001	Procedures for responding to DSC distress alerts by ships http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=4690/25.pdf
COMSAR/Circ.25 FLOW Diagram 1	Procedure for responding to DSC distress alerts by ships flow chart 1 actions by ships upon reception of VHF/MF distress alert http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=4691/25-flow%201.pdf
COMSAR/Circ.25 FLOW Diagram 2	Procedure for responding to DSC distress alerts by ships flow chart 2 actions by ships upon reception of HF DSC distress alert http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=4692/25-flow%202.pdf
COMSAR/Circ.26 10.05.2001	Operational and service implications for numbering plan formats for mobile-satellite communication systems participating in the GMDSS
COMSAR/Circ.27 12.10.2001	Data format for a new combined SAR.2 and SAR.3 Circular concerning information on the current availability of SAR services http://www.imo.org/includes/blastDataOnly.asp/data_id=3791/27.pdf
COMSAR/Circ.28 12.06.2001	International Navtex Service
COMSAR/Circ.29 27/05/02	Guidance for the voluntary use of the standardized questionnaires and formats for reporting false 27/05/02 alerts in collecting data on false alerts. http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=2421/29.pdf
COMSAR/Circ.30 20.01.2003	List of NAVAREA Co-ordinators http://www.imo.org/Circulars/mainframe.asp?topic_id=726&doc_id=2776
COMSAR/Circ.31 06.02.2003	Guidance for mass rescue operations http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=2832/31.pdf
COMSAR/Circ.32 16.08.2004	Harmonization of GMDSS requirements for radio installations on board Solas ships http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=4511/32.pdf

COMSAR/Circ.33 26.02.2004	GMDSS coast station operator's certificate (CSOC) Model Course http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=3771/33.pdf
COMSAR/Circ.34 21.05.2004	Clarification on the use of Navtex B3B4 characters =00 and Navtex service areas http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=3689/34.pdf
COMSAR/Circ. 35 21.05.2004	Recommendations on medium frequency/high frequency (MF/HF) digital selective calling (DSC) test calls to coast stations http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=3690/35.pdf
COMSAR/Circ.37 28/02/2005	Guidance on Minimum Communication Needs of Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centres (MRCCs) http://www.imo.org/includes/blastData.asp/doc_id=4922/37.pdf

SUB-COMMITTEE ON RADIOCOMMUNICATIONS AND SEARCH AND RESCUE (COMSAR)

5th Session (11 December 2000)

Summary Reports:

COMSAR 5/14	Report to the Maritime Safety Committee. (Section 3 – Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS); Section 8 – Matters concerning search and rescue, including those related to the 1979 SAR Conference and the introduction of the GMDSS)
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6th Session (18 February 2002)

Summary Reports:

COMSAR 6/22	Report to the Maritime Safety Committee. (Section 3 – Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS); Section 8 – Matters concerning search and rescue, including those related to the 1979 SAR conference and the introduction of the GMDSS; Section 18 – Harmonization of GMDSS requirements for radio installations on board SOLAS ships)
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7th Session (13 January 2003)

Summary Reports:

COMSAR 7/23	Report to the Maritime Safety Committee. (Section 3 – Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS); Annex 18 – Draft COMSAR Circular on harmonization of GMDSS requirements for radio installations on board Solas Ships)
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8th Session (16-20 February 2004)

Summary Reports:

COMSAR 8/18	Report to the Maritime Safety Committee (Section 3 – Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS); Section 7- Matters concerning search and rescue, including those related to the 1979 SAR Conference and the implementation of the GMDSS)
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9th Session (7-11 February 2005)

Summary Reports:

COMSAR 9/19	Report to the Maritime Safety Committee. (Section 3 - Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS); Section 7 - Matters concerning search and rescue, including
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those related to the 1979 SOLAS Conference and the implementation of the GMDSS; Annex 3 – Draft resolution MSC.[](80) on adoption of amendments to resolution A.801(19) – Provision of radio services for the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS))

10th Session (6 – 10 March 2005)

Summary Reports:

COMSAR 10/16 Report to the Maritime Safety Committee. (Section 3 – Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS); Section 6 - Matters concerning search and rescue, including those related to the 1979 SAR Conference and the implementation of the GMDSS)

11th Session (19-23 February 2006)

Summary Reports:

COMSAR 11/18 Report to the Maritime Safety Committee. (Section 3 – Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS); Section 6 - Matters concerning search and rescue, including those related to the 1979 SAR Conference and the implementation of the GMDSS); Annex 3 - Draft Assembly Resolution – Criteria for the provision of mobile satellite communication systems in the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS)

12th Session (7 – 11 April 2008)

Summary Reports:

COMSAR 12/15 Report to the Maritime Safety Committee. (Section 3 – Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS); Section 6 - Matters concerning search and rescue, including those related to the 1979 SAR Conference and the implementation of the GMDSS)

MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE

72nd Session (17 – 26 May 2000)

Summary Reports:

MSC 72/23 Report of the Maritime Safety Committee on its 72nd Session

73rd Session (27 November – 6 December 2000)

No Documents issued on the subject

74th Session (30 May – 8 June 2001)

Summary Reports:

MSC 74/24 Report of the Maritime Safety Committee on its 74th Session

75th Session (15 – 24 May 2002)

Summary Reports:

MSC 75/24 Report of the Maritime Safety Committee on its 75th Session

76th Session (

No Documents issued on the subject

77th Session (28 May – 6 June 2003)

Summary Reports:

MSC 77/26 Report of the Maritime Safety Committee on its 77th Session

78th Session (12 – 21 May 2004)

Summary Reports:

MSC 78/26 Report of the Maritime Safety Committee on its 78th Session

79th Session (1 – 10 December 2004)

Summary Reports:

MSC 79/23 Report of the Maritime Safety Committee on its 79th Session

80th Session (11 – 20 May 2005)

Summary Reports:

MSC 80/24 Report of the Maritime Safety Committee on its 80th Session (Annex 13 – Resolution MSC.199(90) – Adoption of amendments to provision of radio services for the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) (Resolution A.801(19))

81st Session (10- 19 May 2006)

Summary Reports:

MSC 81/25 Report of the Maritime Safety Committee on its 81st Session.

82nd Session (29 November – 8 December 2006)

Summary Reports:

MSC 82/24 Report of the Maritime Safety Committee on its 82nd Session.

83rd Session (

Summary Reports:

MSC 83/28 Report of the Maritime Safety Committee on its 83rd Session (Annex 17 – Draft Assembly Resolution on criteria for the provision of mobile satellite communication systems in the Global maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS))

SUB-COMMITTEE ON STANDARDS OF TRAINING AND WATCHKEEPING

32nd Session (22 – 26 January 2001)

Summary Reports:

STW 32/16 Report to the Maritime Safety Committee

33rd Session (21 – 25 January 2002)

Summary Reports:

STW 33/17 Report to Maritime Safety Committee

34th Session (24 – 28 February 2003)

Summary Reports:

STW 34/14 Report to the Maritime Safety Committee

35th Session (26 – 30 January 2004)

Summary Reports:

STW 35/19 Report to the Maritime Safety Committee

36th Session (10 – 14 January 2005)

Summary Reports:

STW 36/17 Report to the Maritime Safety Committee

37th Session (23 – 27 January 2006)

Summary Reports:

STW 37/18 Report to the Maritime Safety Committee. (Annex 4 – Draft MSC Circular on promoting and verifying continued familiarization of GMDSS operators on board ships)

38th Session (22 – 26 January 2007)

Summary Reports:

STW 38/17 Report to the Maritime Safety Committee

39th Session (3 – 7 March 2008)

Summary Reports:

STW 39/12 Report to the Maritime Safety Committee

INTRODUCTION

"The GMDSS - which became fully effective on 1 February 1999 - is essentially a worldwide network of automated emergency communications for ships at sea. It means that all ocean-going passenger ships and cargo ships of 300 gross tonnage and upwards must be equipped with radio equipment that conforms to international standards as set out in the system. The basic concept is that search and rescue authorities ashore, as well as shipping in the immediate vicinity of the ship in distress, will be rapidly alerted through satellite and terrestrial communication techniques to a distress incident so that they can assist in a co-ordinated SAR operation with the minimum of delay."

Extract from : *"Surviving disaster - life saving at Sea". Focus on IMO, March 1999*

CD Demos

Email us for a two-day trial of [IMO-Vega on the Web](#), [IMDG Code on the Web](#), [SOLAS on the Web](#) or [MARPOL on the Web](#).

Shipping emergencies : Search and rescue and the GMDSS. *Focus on IMO, March 1999.*

http://www.imo.org/includes/blastDataOnly.asp/data_id=1478/GMDSS%20and%20SAR%201999.pdf

The complete GMDSS. The GMDSS is fully implemented. Maritime distress and safety communications enter new era. *In IMO News, No. 1, 1999, pp 9-20.*

SOLAS Convention

- **SOLAS. Consolidated edition 2009.** (IMO-IE110E). Language(s): E

Amendments to 1974 Solas Convention

- Conference of contracting governments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974 on the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System. Final Act of the Conference with resolutions (1 to 8) and Amendments to the 1974 SOLAS Convention concerning radiocommunications for the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System. 1989 edition. Language(s): E/F/S/A (IMO-156)

*N.B. The certified true copy** of the Final Act contains in addition a translation in Chinese and Russian*

- Amendments to SOLAS 1974 concerning Radiocommunications for the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System. 1989 edition. Language(s): E; F; S; A (IMO-156)

*N.B. The text of the certified true copy** is also available in ENG. FRE. SPA. CHI. ARA. RUS.*

- (Corrected text of) Resolution 2 of the Final Act of 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. London, 26 June 1990. Language(s): A/C/E/F/R/S. *Certified true copy***

Amendments to 1978 Solas Protocol

- Conference of parties to the Protocol of 1978 relating to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974 on the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System. Final Act of the Conference with resolution and Amendments to the Protocol of 1978 relating to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974 concerning radiocommunications for the Global Maritime Distress Safety System. Signed in London 11 November 1988. 1989 edition. Language(s): E; F; S; A (IMO -162)

*N.B. The certified true copy** of the amendments contains in addition a translation in Russian and Chinese*

GMDSS Manual. 4th ed. 2007 edition (IMO-IC970E)

The intent of this Manual is to provide in a single comprehensive publication an explanation of the principles upon which the GMDSS is based, the radiocommunication requirements and recommendations for its implementation, the operational performance standards and technical specifications to be met by GMDSS equipment, and the procedures for and method of operation of the various radio services which form the GMDSS and the Master Plan for the GMDSS. Regulations cited in the

text are taken from the 1988 (GMDSS) amendments to the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1974, as amended. The entry into force and implementation of the global maritime distress and safety system (GMDSS) between 1992 and 1999 was the most far-reaching development in maritime emergency assistance since the invention of the radio. The GMDSS Handbook presents the principles on which the GMDSS is based, the requirements for its implementation, the standards to be met by GMDSS equipment, and the method of operation of the various radio services which make up the GMDSS.

GMDSS Manual on CD-ROM (Version 3.0). (DC970E)

GMDSS operating guidance card. 1992 edition. (IMO-I969)

This useful A4 (297 mm x 210 mm) card provides guidance on the procedures to be followed under the global maritime distress and safety system (GMDSS) by masters of ships in distress. A tough plastic lamination and strips of double-sided adhesive tape on the back make the card ideal for display on ships' bridges and other suitable locations.

International SafetyNet manual. 2003 Edition. (IMO-IA908E). Language(s) : E, F, S.

SafetyNET is an international automatic direct-printing satellite-based service for the promulgation of navigation and meteorological warnings, meteorological forecasts and other urgent safety-related messages – maritime safety information (MSI) – to ships.

NAVTEX Manual. 2005 Edition. (IMO-IC951E). Language(s): E

NAVTEX is an international automated direct-printing service for promulgation of navigational and meteorological warnings and urgent information to ships. It has been developed to provide a low-cost, simple and automated means of receiving maritime safety information on board ships at sea and in coastal waters. The information transmitted is relevant to all sizes and types of vessel and the selective message-rejection feature ensures that every mariner can receive a safety information broadcast which is tailored to his particular needs.

SAR Convention (revised, 2000 Edition International Convention on maritime search and rescue, 1979. 1979 edition. (IMO-IA955E)

The International Convention on Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR), 1979, provided a framework for carrying out search and rescue operations following accidents at sea. Ratification was slow, however, partly because of problems with some of the provisions of the Convention, so a revised text was approved by the MSC at its 69th session (May 1998) by resolution MSC.70(69). The revised Convention entered into force on 1 January 2000.

Final Act of the International Conference on maritime search and rescue, 1979 : Certified true copy signed on 17 June 1980. London, IMO, 1980. Language(s): E/ F/ S/ R/C**

IAMSAR Manual : International aeronautical and maritime search and rescue manual.

Jointly published by IMO and the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), the three-volume IAMSAR Manual provides guidelines for a common aviation and maritime approach to organizing and providing search and rescue (SAR) services. Each volume (available separately in loose-leaf form, binder included) can be used as a standalone document or, in conjunction with the other two volumes, as a means to attain a full view of the SAR system.

Vol. I - Organization and Management . Consolidated edition 2008. 7th ed. (IMO-IF960E) Language(s): E, F, S)

Vol. II - Mission Co-ordination, assists personnel who plan and co-ordinate SAR operations and exercises.

Consolidated edition 2008.. 4th ed. Language(s): E,F,S (IMO-IC961E)

Vol. III - Mobile Facilities, is intended to be carried aboard rescue units, aircraft and vessels to help with performance of a search, rescue or on-scene co-coordinator function, and with aspects of SAR that pertain to their own emergencies. Consolidated edition 2008. 8th Ed. (IMO-IF962EE): Language(s): E, F, S

General requirements and performance standards for shipborne radiocommunications and navigational equipment including related operational recommendations and guidance : Consolidated edition. 4th Ed. 2002 edition. . (IMO-IB978)

In 1988, the International Maritime Organization printed a publication *Performance Standards for Navigational Equipment*. After many additional performance standards were adopted, this publication was replaced in 1997 with *General Requirements and Performance Standards for Shipborne Radiocommunications and Navigational Equipment*, which incorporated these new standards. Since the 1997 edition, three sets of amendments to that edition have been published (*Amendments 2000 and May and December 2000 Amendments* and *2001 Amendments*). These have been included in the new 2002 consolidated edition of the publication.

Performance standards for shipborne radiocommunications and navigational equipment . 2008 edition.
(IMO-IC978E)

IMO SMCP : IMO Standard Marine Communication Phrases. 2002 edition. (IMO-I987) Language(s): E,F,S
As navigational and safety communications from ship to shore and vice versa, from ship to ship, and on board ship must be precise, simple and unambiguous so as to avoid confusion and error, there is a need to standardize the language used. This is of particular importance in the light of the increasing number of internationally trading vessels with crews speaking many different languages, since problems of communication may cause misunderstandings leading to dangers to the vessel, the people on board and the environment. The Phrases are divided into part A and part B. Part A covers phrases applicable in external communications, and may be regarded as the replacement of the Standard Marine Navigational Vocabulary 1985. This part is enriched by essential phrases concerning ship handling and safety of navigation to be used in on-board communications. Part B includes other on-board standard safety-related phrases which, supplementary to part A, may also be regarded as useful for maritime English instruction.

Joint IMO/IHO/WMO Manual on Maritime safety information (MSI). (IMO-I910E). Language(s): E, S
This Manual provides a practical guide for anyone who is concerned with drafting radio navigational warnings or with the issuance of meteorological forecasts and warnings for the high seas under the GMDSS, as well as for the mariners who are expected to use the information they receive in such warnings and forecasts. It is assumed throughout that the navigational warnings are being issued under the auspices of the IHO/IMO World-Wide Navigational Warning Service (WWNWS) and that the meteorological forecasts and warnings are being issued under the patronage of the WMO, and in accordance with the requirements of IMO resolution A.706(17), as amended.

INMARSAT

International conference on the establishment of an international maritime satellite system, 1975-1976. Final act of the conference including the convention and operating agreement on the International Maritime Satellite Organisation (INMARSAT). 1976 edition. Language(s): E; F; S; R (IMO-930)

This Conference was convened to decide on the principle of setting up an international maritime satellite system, to be used to improve, among other services, the maritime distress and safety system, and the communication link between all bodies and groups involved in shipping. The publication contains: Final Act of the Conference; Convention on the International Maritime Satellite Organization (Inmarsat); Operating Agreement on Inmarsat; Resolutions and recommendations adopted by the Conference.

1985 Amendments to the Convention on the International Maritime Satellite Organization : Amendments to the operating agreement on the International Maritime Satellite Organization. 1985 edition. Language(s): E/ F/ R/S (IMO-934)

1989 Amendments to the Convention and to the operating agreement on the International Maritime Satellite Organization. 1989 edition. Language(s): E/F/R/S (IMO-942)

Contains the texts of the amendments to the Convention and to the Operating Agreement which were adopted and confirmed, respectively, by the Inmarsat Assembly at its sixth (extraordinary) session in January 1989.

Amendments to the Convention on the International Maritime Satellite Organization : Amendments to the operating agreement on the International Maritime Satellite Organization. *Certified true copy*** signed on 24 June 1998. 1998. Language(s): ENG/ FRE/RUS/SPA.

- **Report on the Indian Ocean Conference on Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR) and the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS),** Fremantle (Australia), 21-25 September 1998. London, IMO, 1999

Resolution 1 - Provisional Maritime Search and Rescue Plan for the Indian Ocean Region

Resolution 2 - Arrangements for the provision and co-ordination of search and rescue (SAR) services and co-operation between states

Resolution 3 - Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS)

Resolution 4 - Technical co-operation in Maritime Search and Rescue (SAR) and the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS)

Resolution 5 - Establishment of an international SAR Fund.

Resolution 6 - Completion of the provisional global maritime SAR plan

Resolution 7 - Expressions of appreciation

- **Report of the 9th Baltic/Barents Sea Regional Co-operation meeting on GMDSS.** Gothenburg, 14-16 October 1998. London, IMO, 1999. (IMO Doc. COMSAR 4/Inf.4)

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- **Report on the evaluation and assessment of maritime search and rescue and GMDSS facilities in Western Africa**. (15-30 June 2003 and 18-29 September 2006). London, IMO, 2006

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General operator's certificate for the global maritime distress and safety system Course + Compendium. 1997 edition. Model Course 1.25. (IMO- T125E)

The course covers the training recommended in Annex 3 to IMO Assembly resolution A.703(17) - Recommendations on Training of Radio Operators related to the General Operator's Certificate (GOC). A glossary of terms is included.

Maritime search and rescue administration. Model Course 3.13. 2005 edition. (IMO-TA313E)

Restricted operator's certificate for the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System Course + Compendium. 1998 edition. Model Course 1.26 (IMO-T126E)

Second-class radioelectronic certificate for Global Maritime Distress and Safety System radio personnel. Course + Compendium. 2002 edition Model Course 1.31. (IMO-T131E)

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VIDEOTEL MARINE INTERNATIONAL

- The Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS). Pal system, running time : 26 minutes

<http://www.videotel.co.uk>

- GMDSS training course. 8 Modules. CD-ROM. <http://www.videotel.co.uk>

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INTERNET RESOURCES

Inmarsat	http://www.inmarsat.org
International Radio Maritime Committee (CIRM)	http://www.cirm.org
COSPAS-SARSAT	http://www.cospas-sarsat.org/
Maritime Mobile Access & Retrieval System	http://gold.itu.int/MARS/

ITU list of countries, ship stations	http://gold.itu.ch/MARS
The GMDSS Examination page	http://members.aol.com/ab0di/
Distress and Safety Communications AMSA - Australia	http://www.amsa.gov.au/AUSSAR/sos.htm
<u>U.S. Coast Guard Navigation Center</u> An overview of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System GMDSS Task Force GMDSS Area of Operation The Cospas -Sarsat System GMDSS Compliance Requirements GMDSS Statistics GMDD Brochure GMDSS Reference Information GMDSS Inspection Chekclist GMDSS Bibliography – Other Information Sources (Courses in U.S.A.) GMDSS Documents Index Maritime Mobile Service Identities GMDSS Identities and Data Elements	http://www.navcen.uscg.gov http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/marcomms/gmdss/default.htm http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/marcomms/gmdss/gmdsstf.htm http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/marcomms/gmdss/area.htm http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/marcomms/gmdss/gmdss_systems.htm http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/marcomms/gmdss/gmdss_compliance.htm http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/marcomms/gmdss/gmdss_statistics.htm http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/marcomms/gmdss/gmdss_brochure.htm http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/marcomms/gmdss/reference_gmdss.htm http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/marcomms/gmdss/checklist.htm http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/marcomms/gmdss/bibliography.htm http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/marcomms/gmdss/document.htm http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/marcomms/gmdss/mmsi.htm http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/marcomms/gmdss/data.htm
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ARTICLES FROM THE PRESS

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