



INTERNATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DRILLING CONTRACTORS

MEMORANDUM

TO: Distribution

FROM: Alan Spackman, Vice President, Offshore Technical and Regulatory Affairs

SUBJECT: Report on the 15th session of the IMO Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications and Search and Rescue

DATE: 25 March 2011

The 15th session of IMO's Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications and Search and Rescue (COMSAR 15) was held from 8 to 12 March 2010 under the chairmanship of Mr. C. Slagado (Chile). The session was attended by representatives of 71 member countries, one associate member, two UN specialized agencies, six inter-governmental organizations and 17 non-governmental organizations. IADC was not represented at this session.

The following is a summary of issues addressed by the Sub-Committee that may interest of companies with offshore oil and gas operations:

GMDSS Master Plan

The Secretariat reported that it had issued GMDSS/Circ.12, amending the GMDSS Master Plan to reflect new information provided by Croatia, Cyprus, Estonia, France, Lithuania, Mauritius, Norway and Turkey. An update (to be issued as GMDSS/Circ.13) is anticipated in April 2011 to reflect new information from Argentina, Brazil, Canada, Chile, Egypt, France, Greece, and Hong Kong, China, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Latvia, Lebanon, Lithuania, the Netherlands, New Zealand, the Republic of Korea, Slovenia and the Russian Federation.

Promulgation of Arctic MSI services

The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) and the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) reported on the progress made regarding the implementation of the provision of MSI to Arctic waters. The IMO, IHO and WMO announced the establishment of five new Arctic NAVAREAs / METAREAs as part of the expansion of the IMO/IHO World-Wide Navigational Warning Service (WWNWS) into Arctic waters.

On 1 July 2010, a message was disseminated by the Arctic NAVAREAs / METAREAs declaring to be in an "Initial Operational Capability" (IOC) for the Arctic waters with a transition to "Full Operational Capability" (FOC) expected on 1 June 2011.

Development of draft MSC Circulars

The Sub-Committee endorsed draft MSC Circulars for submission to the Maritime Safety Committee's 89th session (MSC 89) as follows:

- A draft MSC circular on References to the VHF DSC EPIRB in SOLAS chapter IV.
- A draft MSC circular on Draft revised Guidelines on annual testing of 406 MHz satellite EPIRBs.

Amendments to the IAMSAR Manual

The Sub-Committee endorsed the draft amendments to the IAMSAR Manual and invited MSC 90 to approve it for inclusion in the 2013 edition of the IAMSAR Manual.

Revised edition of the NAVTEX Manual

The Sub-Committee endorsed the proposed amendments to the revised edition of the NAVTEX Manual and instructed the Secretariat to prepare the associated draft MSC circular on the revised edition of the NAVTEX Manual and to submit it, for consideration and approval by MSC 89.

Worldwide Met-Ocean Information and Warning Service

The Sub-Committee endorsed a draft Assembly resolution on the Worldwide Met-Ocean Information and Warning Service for approval by MSC 89 with a view to adoption by the Assembly at its 27th session (A 27).

Approval of COMSAR Circulars

The Sub-Committee approved COMSAR circulars as follows:

- COMSAR.1 circular on "Distress priority Communications for RCC from shore-to-ship via Inmarsat";
- COMSAR.1 circular providing the updated the List of NAVAREA Coordinators (authorizing the Secretariat to issue future updates of the list of NAVAREA Coordinators upon receipt of changes from either a NAVAREA Coordinator or from the IHO).

Review the performance standards for 406 MHz EPIRBs

The Sub-Committee noted, once again, that opinions on this matter were too far apart to come to an agreement for revised performance standards for 406 MHz EPIRBs in the foreseeable future. Taking also into account the developments in Cospas-Sarsat and the need to review the performance standards for 406 MHz EPIRBs in the near future in consideration of the improved overall Cospas-Sarsat system, it was decided to inform the Committee that the Sub-Committee was not in a position to develop a revision of resolution A.810(19) on Performance standards for float-free satellite EPIRBs operating on 406 MHz and invited the Committee to delete this item from the agenda.

Arrangements for the next session

COMSAR 16 is tentatively scheduled to be held from 12 to 16 March 2012.

It was agreed that working groups would be established for:

- Search and Rescue (SAR);
- GMDSS, ITU and operational matters and performance standards; and
- e-navigation.

Elections

The Sub-Committee re-elected Mr. C. Salgado (Chile) as Chairman and Mr. A. Olopoenia (Nigeria) as Vice Chairman for 2012.

The IMO report of this session is will be made available on the IADC website at:

<http://www.iadc.org/committees/offshore/Programme%20of%20Meetings.html>

Please feel free to contact me by phone (+1 / 713 292 1964) or e-mail (alan.spackman@iadc.org) with any questions you may have regarding this summary report.