



ICAO/IMO JWG ON HARMONIZATION OF
AERONAUTICAL AND MARITIME SAR
14th session
Agenda item 2.1

ICAO/IMO JWG 14/2-WP/4
31 May 2007
ENGLISH ONLY

CONSIDERATION OF TERMS OF REFERENCE – FUTURE WORK OF JWG AND PRIORITIES

Outcome of COMSAR 11 and MSC 82

Note by the IMO Secretariat

SUMMARY

<i>Executive summary:</i>	This document reports on decisions of COMSAR 11 and MSC 82 concerning the work of the JWG.
<i>Action to be taken:</i>	Paragraph 27.
<i>Related documents:</i>	COMSAR 11/18, MSC 82/24, MSC 82/24/Add.1 and Add.2

1. The decisions of the eighty-second session of the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC 82) (29 November to 8 December 2006), and of the eleventh session of the Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications and Search and Rescue (COMSAR 11) (19 to 23 February 2007) concerning the following agenda items of the fourteenth session of the JWG are set out in the ensuing paragraphs.

Agenda item 2 – Consideration of terms of reference – future work or the JWG and priorities

2. COMSAR 11 agreed on the continuation of the Joint ICAO/IMO Working Group for the next session and invited the Committee to approve it and extend the target completion date for the agenda item “Harmonization of aeronautical and maritime search and rescue procedures, including SAR training matters” to 2008. In addition, COMSAR 11 reviewed and agreed the terms of reference and provisional agenda for JWG 14. The Committee was invited to endorse the decision of the Sub-Committee at its eighty-third session (MSC 83, from 3 to 12 October 2007).

Agenda item 3 – Provision of conventions, plans manuals and other documents affecting SAR

Further work on the IAMSAR Manual (agenda item 3.4)

3. COMSAR 11 considered appendixes D, E, F, G, H and I to the report of JWG 13 (document COMSAR 11/6). In considering appendixes D, E, F, H and I, a draft proposing amendments to the IAMSAR Manual, and the associated draft MSC circular on adoption of amendments was prepared. With

regard to Appendix G it was decided to refer the draft amendment back to the JWG for incorporating into all three volumes (see further below regarding agenda item 4.3).

4. COMSAR 11 endorsed the draft MSC circular on adoption of amendments to the IAMSAR Manual (COMSAR 11/18 annex 8) for submission to ICAO for approval, and MSC 83 for adoption with an entry into force date of [1 January 2009].

Agenda item 4 – SAR operational principles, procedures and techniques

Safety of passenger ships (agenda item 4.1)

5. With regard to the safety of passenger ships, MSC 82 considered document MSC 82/8/4 providing the report on Phase 1 of the WMU Project on Search and Rescue Research related to Passenger Ships and document MSC 82/INF.6 providing an overview about current research and issues for future research related to search and rescue (SAR), as requested by MSC 80. MSC 82 instructed COMSAR 11 to consider the information collected in Phase 1 and provide comments on the issues identified in the annex for further research.

6. COMSAR 11 discussed the report on the WMU project on SAR research related to passenger ships. Various delegations supported the idea of the development of an Internet-based information platform as proposed in the annex to document MSC 82/8/4. However, it was clear to the Sub-Committee that such a platform could only be of benefit if all users provided information proactively. The Sub-Committee invited Member Governments to inform WMU about the competent national point of contact to allow for proper considerations of if and how to carry out an intermediate phase to gather information on SAR research and relevant development programmes allowing it to establish this information platform. WMU needs to provide information to MSC 83 updating the Committee on the work accomplished including recommendations on how best to proceed further.

Medical assistance in SAR services (agenda item 4.3)

7. MSC 82 approved MSC.1/Circ.1218 on Guidance on exchange of medical information between telemedical assistance services involved in international SAR operations.

8. MSC 82 endorsed the action taken by COMSAR 10 in instructing the Secretariat to convey the liaison statement to WHO and ILO for their advice regarding problems encountered in replenishing on-board medical supplies in accordance with MSC/Circ.1042 and MSC/Circ.1105 due to the difference in the health regulations in different countries. COMSAR 11 noted that no advice had been received from either WHO or ILO so far.

9. Concerning appendix G to the report of JWG 13, COMSAR 11 noted the information provided in regard to a proposed update of the sections in Volume I of the IAMSAR Manual referring to telemedical services. The Sub-Committee, after having lengthy discussion on this matter, was of the opinion that the information provided in appendix G was very valuable, however, part of the contents also belongs to Volumes II and III of the Manual. Therefore, the decision was to refer the draft amendment back to the JWG for incorporating into the three volumes.

10. COMSAR 11 noted that the work on the issues listed in document COMSAR 10/16, annex 15, could not be finalized and was still ongoing, in co-operation between medical experts attending the SAR Working Group. Consequently, the Sub-Committee agreed to invite the Committee to extend the target completion date for this item to 2008.

Effects of measures to enhance maritime and aeronautical security on SAR services (agenda item 4.4)

11. COMSAR 11 considered document COMSAR 11/6/1 by the United States discussing the need for SAR services-related issues to be considered as the Long-range Identification and Tracking (LRIT) system was further developed and implemented. With the understanding that it was not easy to establish a new system (LRIT) and that there was a lack of knowledge of LRIT by many SAR authorities, the decision was made to include in the report the list of questions (**Annex 1**). The Sub-Committee encouraged Member States to inform their competent national authorities to address these issues and submit proposals for consideration at the next Joint ICAO/IMO JWG.

12. COMSAR 11 also noted that at a later date it might be necessary for the Organization to develop appropriate guidance in relation to co-ordination between SAR services and national LRIT authorities in relation to LRIT. Members were invited to submit suitable proposals once the LRIT system had been implemented and was functioning.

13. COMSAR 11 considered recommendation 7 of the report of JWG-13 to encourage the continued use of Ship Reporting Systems (SRS) in addition to LRIT and expressed the need for LRIT information to be readily available as and when required by SAR authorities. The Sub-Committee concurred with the view of the JWG; and was of the opinion that IMO should encourage the continued use of Ship Reporting Systems (SRS) providing more detailed information in addition to LRIT.

14. With regard to the establishment of the LRIT system, MSC 82 authorized the necessary two to four meetings of the intersessional *Ad Hoc* Working Group on Engineering Aspects to finalize the technical specifications, and decided that an additional intersessional MSC Working Group needed to be established for the finalization of legal and financial aspects of costing and billing and for the finalization of draft legal agreements in preparation for approval by MSC 83.

15. COMSAR 11 extensively discussed LRIT matters. The third meeting of the Ad Hoc Working Group was held in the week prior to COMSAR 11, the fourth meeting from 9 to 12 May 2007 in Valetta and the fifth and final meeting from 12 to 14 June 2007 in Hamburg. The intersessional MSC Working Group meeting was held from 9 to 13 July 2007 in London. Requests for proposals for the establishment, operations and maintenance of the International Data Exchange (IDE) and International Data Centre (IDC) have been sent out. The next important meeting to discuss LRIT matters will be MSC 83.

Development of procedural strategies for the practical provision of SAR services (agenda item 4.5)

16. COMSAR 11 considered the proposal by Sweden (COMSAR 11/4) to revise COM/Circ.108 to produce a flow chart, which better described the operating procedure for a distress alert. In particular, the flow chart should stress the importance of using the distress button to initiate a distress call before commencing voice procedures. A considerable discussion resulted on the extent of the changes required to COM/Circ.108, whilst maintaining the principle that the flow chart be simple to understand. It was realised that the extent of the revision proposed by Sweden could result in an enlargement of the flow chart. Accordingly, the Sub-Committee agreed not to revise COM/Circ.108 but to prepare another circular for a simplified operating guidance on initial distress calls.

17. The development of this new circular proved to be difficult due to the need to describe details such as:

- different types of button procedures which might be found on ships;

complexities of HF procedures where it is necessary to await an acknowledgement before making a voice call as there is no HF listening watch; and

- aligning the procedures with work ongoing in the ITU.

Some delegations expressed the opinion that the new circular would be confusing to mariners as it would provide two flow charts to be displayed on the bridge of a ship.

18. In light of the foregoing, the Sub-Committee developed a preliminary revised draft diagram on simplified operating guidance on initial distress calls as set out in **Annex 2** and invited Member Governments and international organizations to submit comments and proposals to COMSAR 12 with a view to finalization.

19. It was also noticed that the diagram appears in other documents (e.g., MSC/Circ.892, IAMSAR Manual, GMDSS Hand Book) and it was important to consider the implications in that respect. Therefore, the Sub-Committee recommended that the diagram in document COMSAR 11/4, as amended, be forwarded to the next JWG ICAO/IMO Working Group for further consideration, taking into account the clarifications provided by Sweden in the next paragraph.

20. Sweden expressed the opinion that the proposed draft circular was a simple flow chart meant for shipmasters and ship officers handling the radio equipment in a distress situation. It was not intended to make any changes, revision, addition or replacement to the existing COM/Circ.108 (**Annex 3**), but to make it easier for radio operators onboard ship, and in line with the existing flow chart in COM/Circ.108. Hence, it was important that the proposed flow chart was displayed on board ships close to the radio equipment.

Agenda item 7 – SAR communications

Status of the GMDSS (agenda item 7.1)

21. COMSAR 11 considered recommendation 11 of the report of JWG 13 and document COMSAR 11/6/2 (Australia, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States) proposing a draft MSC circular on minimizing delays in SAR response to distress alerts. The Sub-Committee agreed with the JWG's views and the draft circular contained in the annex of COMSAR 11/6/2. After minor editorial changes, the Sub-Committee finalized the draft MSC circular on minimizing delays in SAR response and invited MSC 83 to approve the draft MSC circular.

22. With regard to the revision of resolution A.888(21), MSC 82 had decided, in principle, as follows that:

- .1 applications from a new satellite provider by a Member State should be submitted to MSC;
- .2 the evaluation of the potential satellite provider should be undertaken by MSC through an appropriate mechanism according to the provisions of resolution A.888(21);
- .3 the recognition of the satellite provider to operate in the GMDSS should be undertaken by MSC on the basis of evaluation by an appropriate mechanism;
- .4 the oversight, as decided by MSC 77, in all its context, should be undertaken by IMSO; and

- .5 resolution A.888(21) should be redrafted and any corresponding amendments to chapter IV, should be considered and finalized by COMSAR 11 in February 2007, to reflect the decision on the respective responsibilities of MSC and IMSO.

23. Accordingly, COMSAR 11 redrafted resolution A.888(21) in line with the instructions provided by MSC 82 and endorsed the (new) draft Assembly resolution A.[...](25) on Criteria for the Provision of Mobile Satellite Communication Systems in the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS), as amended for approval by MSC 83 with a view to adoption by the Assembly at its twenty-fifth session. The Sub-Committee further endorsed the corresponding draft amendments to SOLAS chapter IV, as amended with a view to adoption by MSC 83. These draft amendments were circulated to all IMO Members and Contracting Governments to SOLAS by means of Circular letter No. 2779 from 12 March 2007.

Future trends in SAR communications (agenda item 7.3)

24. COMSAR 11 considered recommendation 13 of the report of JWG 13, concerning the revision of SAR requirements and advances in communications and information technologies with the objectives of improving the GMDSS and harmonizing it with aeronautical communications to update capabilities and improve interoperability. The Sub-Committee also noted the examples of topics provided in COMSAR 11/6/3 that could be considered by the Sub-Committee to review GMDSS in light of new communications technology.

25. COMSAR 11 decided to add a new item 7.5, on Non-GMDSS communications systems which may be used for distress alerting to the JWG agenda.

Agenda item 9 – Any other business

Search and Rescue Optimal Planning System

26. In regard with recommendation 15 of the report of the JWG 13, COMSAR 11 was advised by the delegation of the United States that the SAROPS search planning programme is being installed at USCG JRCs. Administrative matters need to be resolved before further discussions on the United States' offer to share this technology with other countries. A report will be provided to the upcoming JWG session. The Sub-Committee invited the United States also to present the SAROPS search planning programme to COMSAR 12.

Action requested of the JWG

27. The JWG is invited to note the information provided and take action as appropriate.

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ANNEX 1

(ANNEX 7 to COMSAR 11/18)

**LIST OF QUESTIONS ON SAR-RELATED LRIT ISSUES
THAT NEED TO BE ADDRESSED**

List of questions on SAR-related LRIT issues that need to be addressed:

- a) How will Rescue Co-ordination Centres (RCCs) access LRIT data?
- b) What is the procedure for on-demand LRIT information?
- c) What audit recordkeeping and restrictions might be required of SAR authorities who obtain LRIT data for SAR?
- d) Will there be provisions for collecting LRIT data from ships beyond 1000 miles offshore for SAR?
- e) Will Governments limit LRIT data for SAR purposes, and if so, by what mechanism?
- f) What SAR-related guidance needs to be provided to those responsible for the operation of LRIT and to SAR authorities?
- g) Will some Governments incorrectly or prematurely assume, as some did when GMDSS was introduced, that LRIT will reduce or eliminate the need for other SRSs for SAR?
- h) What is the process for ICAO access to LRIT information for aeronautical RCCs with maritime SAR regions? And
- i) Should development of SAR guidance, e.g., IAMSAR Manual or MSC circular, await experience gained after LRIT has been in operation?

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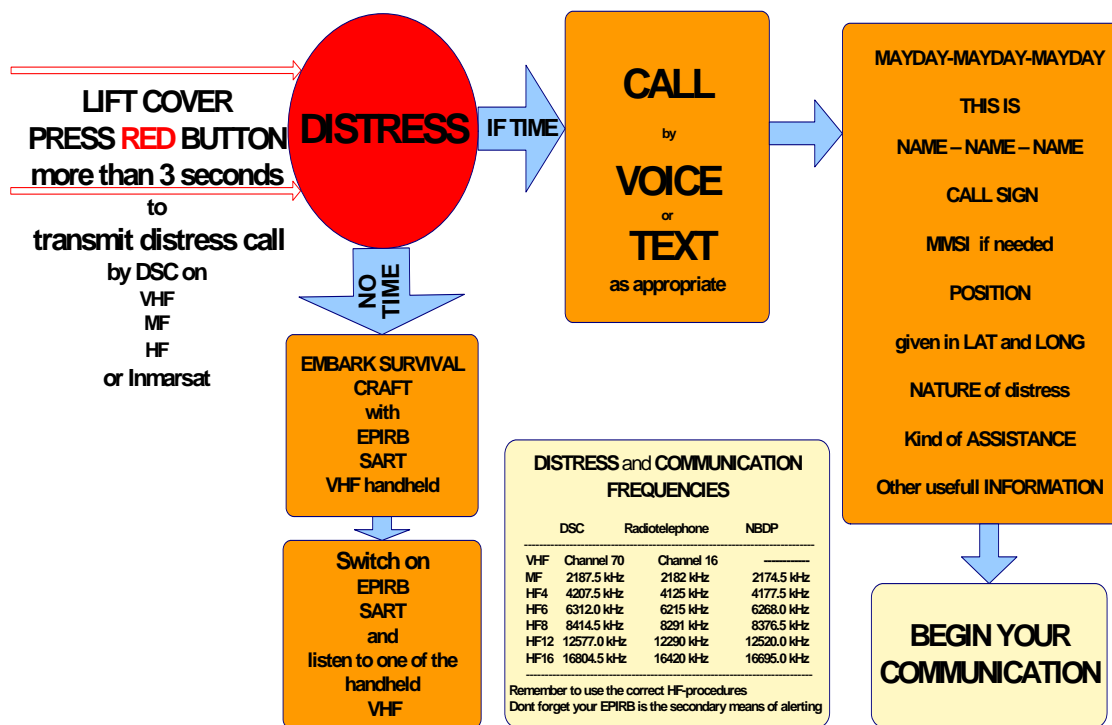
ANNEX 2

(ANNEX 2 to COMSAR 11/18)

PRELIMINARY REVISED DRAFT DIAGRAM ON SIMPLIFIED OPERATING GUIDANCE ON INITIAL DISTRESS CALLS

ANNEX

SIMPLIFIED OPERATING GUIDANCE ON INITIAL DISTRESS CALLS



ANNEX 3

INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION

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COM/Circ.108
23 January 1992

Ref.T2/6.05

GMDSS OPERATING GUIDANCE FOR MASTERS OF
SHIPS IN DISTRESS SITUATIONS

- 1 The Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications (COM) at its thirty-seventh session (COM 37/17, paragraph 3.43), prepared the GMDSS Operating Guidance for masters of ships in distress situations and brought it to the attention of the Sub-Committee on Life-Saving, Search and Rescue (LSR), recommending that it be displayed on the ships bridge as an A4 size poster.
- 2 The LSR Sub-Committee at its twenty-third session (LSR 23/21, paragraph 6.2) endorsed the text, given at annex, prepared by the COM Sub-Committee.
- 3 Member Governments are invited to bring the GMDSS Operating Guidance to the attention of seafarers and all others concerned.

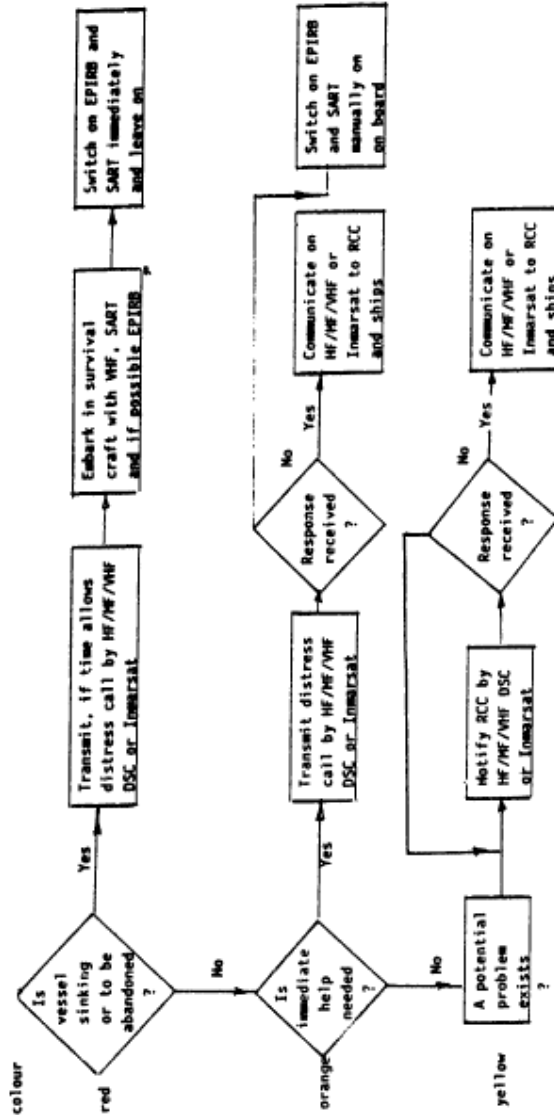
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ANNEX

COM/Circ.108

GROSS OPERATING GUIDANCE FOR MASTERS OF SHIPS IN DISTRESS SITUATIONS



1. EPIRB should float-free and activate automatically if it cannot be taken into survival craft.
2. Where necessary, ships should use any appropriate means to alert other ships.
3. Nothing above is intended to preclude the use of any and all available means of distress alerting.

RADIO DISTRESS COMMUNICATIONS			
	Digital selective calling (DSC)	Radiotelephone	Radiotelex
VHF	Channel 70	Channel 16	
MF	2187.5 kHz	2182 kHz	2174.5 kHz
HF 4	4207.5 kHz	4125 kHz	4177.5 kHz
MF 6	6312 kHz	6215 kHz	6268 kHz
HF 8	8414.5 kHz	8291 kHz	8376.5 kHz
HF 12	12577 kHz	12290 kHz	12520 kHz
HF 16	16804.5 kHz	16420 kHz	16695 kHz