

WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION

**INTERGOVERNMENTAL OCEANOGRAPHIC
COMMISSION (OF UNESCO)**

JOINT WMO/IOC TECHNICAL COMMISSION FOR
OCEANOGRAPHY AND MARINE METEOROLOGY
(JCOMM)
EXPERT TEAM ON MARITIME SAFETY SERVICES

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WMO AND JOINT IMO/IHO/WMO REFERENCE DOCUMENTATION

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Summary and Purpose of Document

This document provides a summary report on activities linked with the development and maintenance of the WMO and joint IMO/IHO/WMO reference documentation (regulation & guidelines) for the promulgation of Maritime Safety Information (MSI)

ACTION PROPOSED

The Team is invited to note the information provided, and consider how WMO may most effectively develop and maintain the WMO regulation and guidance documents on MSI and contribute to the evolution of the joint IMO/IHO/WMO documentations.

DISCUSSION

1 WMO Reference Documentation)

1.1 WMO-No. 558 and WMO-No. 471

1.1.1 The regulations and guidance material for the provision of marine meteorological services are given in the WMO publications No. 558 (*Manual on Marine Meteorological Services*) and No. 471 (*Guide to Marine Meteorological Services*) [\[see ad-hoc background documents\]](#).

1.1.2 As these documents can be considered as ISO material for NMHS implementing or maintaining Quality Management Systems (QMS) to ensure the use of best practices for the provision of MSI, it is of major importance for the WMO Secretariat to update both documents as appropriate.

1.1.3 During the past years, ETMSS has proposed some changes and updates adopted by JCOMM and endorsed by the WMO EC, such as the guidelines and common abbreviations list for NAVTEX messages, the harmonization of the description of visibility in MSI in text form, the possibility to issue warnings for freak waves and dangerous seas, ice accretion and ice conditions, etc...

1.1.4 In addition, JCOMM-III recommended new procedures for amending WMO-No. 558 and WMO-No. 471, including, in addition to the procedure for the adoption of amendments during JCOMM sessions, a fast track procedure and a procedure for the adoption of amendments between JCOMM sessions [\[see ad-hoc background document\]](#).

1.1.5 The WMO Congress requested in 2007 the WMO Secretary-General to make available on-line those publications. Nevertheless, the complete cross-review of WMO-No. 558 and WMO No. 471, to incorporate all amendments adopted over the past decade or more, but also to correct noted anomalies, errors and inconsistencies, is still to be achieved. Appropriate resources should be identified within the WMO Secretariat. ETMSS members will work in close collaboration with the people in charge of this cross-review in the Secretariat.

1.1.6 As requested by JCOMM, ETMSS should focus, in association with ETWS and ETSI, in the development of more advanced guidelines and recommendations for the provision of sea state and sea ice in MSI.

1.2 WMO-No. 9, Volume D

1.2.1 Marine meteorology and other related geophysical information necessary for safe and economic conduct of shipping operations, as well as for fishing and other marine activities, are made available to the user by the various NMHSs. WMO Publication No. 9 (Weather Reporting), Volume D (Information for Shipping) comprises information on the meteorological broadcasts by radiotelegraphy and radiotelephony, meteorological broadcasts by radio-facsimile, global maritime distress and safety system, coastal radio stations and Inmarsat land earth stations accepting ships' weather and oceanographic reports, marine meteorological services available for main port, ship weather routing services, and visual storm warning signals. For WMO Members, this publication is the main source of metadata concerning the services provided by countries in other parts of the world, although the speed and regularity of updates is a cause of concern.

1.2.2 In seeking to maintain a high standard of accuracy in the material published in WMO-No. 9, Volume D, the WMO Secretariat depends entirely on the goodwill of the

meteorological services and their partners throughout the world. Their cooperation in keeping the WMO Secretariat fully informed of all changes is a decisive factor in attaining this aim.

1.2.3 Maps showing limits of METAREAs and sub-areas are also presented in the WMO-No. 9, Volume D. In liaison with e-Navigation, WMO could consider, in addition to the existing graphic maps contained in this publication, to include and maintain the official numerical database of all METAREAs and sub-areas used by Members for the provision of MSI, for use in ENC.

2 Joint IMO/IHO/WMO Reference Documentation

2.1 A Working Group has been established to review all WWNWS documentation, under the Chairmanship of Peter Doherty (Chairperson of IHO World Wide Navigational Warnings Service Sub-Committee - WWNWS). The Group has met on several occasions (usually in the week immediately following IMO/COMSAR meetings) and also conducts its work by correspondence. A wide range of experts, including NAVAREA, METAREA and National Coordinators, and representatives from IHO, IMO and WMO, have assisted with the work. From ETMSS, H. Savina, N. Ashton and A. Hainsworth have contributed. In order to achieve consistency throughout the documentation, the Group decided to take a top-down approach:

2.2 IMO Resolutions A705(17) on Promulgation of Maritime Safety Information and A706(17) on the IMO/IHO World-Wide Navigational Warning Service, were updated. Those Resolutions, endorsed by the WMO Executive Council, were submitted to IMO/COMSAR-12, adopted by IMO/MSC-85 in 2008, and subsequently issued as MSC Circulars (MSC.1/Circ.1287 and MSC.1/Circ.1288 respectively), and have entered into force on January 2010.

2.3 A new version of the *Joint IMO/IHO/WMO Manual on Maritime Safety Information (MSI)*, containing an updated section on met-ocean MSI including the new METAREA map with Arctic areas and amendments endorsed for WMO No. 558 (section 8), was produced. This new version, endorsed by WMO and IHO in October 2008, was subsequently submitted to COMSAR-13 and adopted by IMO/MSC-86 in 2009. It will enter into force on January 2011.

2.4 A new version of the *International SafetyNET Manual*, finalized in 2009, was submitted to IHO Committee, WMO Executive Council and IMO/COMSAR for approval, adopted by IMO/MSC in 2010 and subsequently issued as MSC Circular (MSC Circ. 1364). It will enter into force on January 2012.

2.5 A new version of the *International NAVTEX Manual* is in preparation. A draft version, available on IHO web site, has been reviewed by IHO/WWNWS-2 in August 2010. The new version is expected to be submitted to IMO COMSAR and MSC in 2011.

3. WWMIWS and METAREA Coordinators

3.1 Following the request by the WMO Executive Council, at its sixty-first session (Geneva, June 2009), an IMO/WMO World-Wide Met-ocean Information and Warning Service (WWMIWS) guideline document was prepared, including Terms of Reference of METAREA Coordinators, to complement the existing IMO/IHO World-Wide Navigational Warning Services (WWNWS, IMO Resolution A.706(17)). The WMO Executive Council has adopted the WWMIWS, at its sixty-second session (Geneva, June 2010).

3.2 The WWMIWS will be submitted to the next IMO/MSC at the end of 2010 [[see ad-hoc background document on WWMIWS – paper prepared for IMO/MSC](#)]. It is expected that MSC will ask its COMSAR Sub-Committee to consider the WMO proposal before adoption by MSC (expected end of 2011 or beginning of 2012) and issuance of the ad-hoc IMO Resolution.

3.3 In the meantime, the WMO Secretariat is expected to write formally to all Issuing Services as soon as possible, inviting them to agree to assume the role of METAREA Coordinator, or to propose an alternative Coordinator. For METAREAs with several Issuing Services, those Services should be encouraged to discuss to jointly propose a single METAREA Coordinator. It is important for identify as soon as possible the potential difficulties, if any, in order to be able to provide immediately to IMO the list of METAREA Coordinators when the WWMIWS will be adopted.
