WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION

JOINT WMO/IOC TECHNICAL COMMISSION FOR OCEANOGRAPHY AND MARINE METEOROLOGY (JCOMM)
EXPERT TEAM ON SEA ICE – FOURTH SESSION

STEERING GROUP FOR THE PROJECT GLOBAL DIGITAL SEA ICE DATA BANK (GDSIDB) – TWELTH SESSION

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Progress Report from the Coordinator of METAREAs XVII and XVIII

(Submitted by Dave Wartman and Leah Braithwaite, Environment Canada)

Summary and Purpose of Document

This document contains a report on the status of preparations for issuing marine safety information for METAREAs XVII and XVIII.

ACTION PROPOSED

The Expert Team on Sea Ice (ETSI) is invited to:

(a) Note and comment on the information in this document;

(b) Discuss the coordination of preparations for issuing sea ice and iceberg information among all of the Arctic METAREAs;

(c) Discuss and recommend means to resolve the issues identified in Paragraph 10;

(d) Recommend further steps toward ensuring the optimum delivery of sea ice and iceberg Information for the Arctic METAREAs.

Appendix 1. Presentation - Implementation of METNAV Areas XVII and XVIII Status Report

DISCUSSION

1. In December 2007, Canada accepted official recognition as the Issuing Service for marine weather forecasts and warnings for MetAreas XVII and XVIII as part of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS). Canada (Canadian Coast Guard) is the Issuing (and preparation) Service for Associated NavAreas XVII and XVIII

2. Norway is recognized as the Issuing Service for MetArea XIX and Russia for MetAreas XX and XXI.

3. It should be noted that Arctic MetAreas are dynamic – a decreasing ice cover will lead to increasing demand for weather and ice information, both temporally and spatially. Canada's approach will be to start with existing products and increase products and services

in association with increasing needs. It is anticipated that in first several years, the broadcast service for weather and ice information will essentially be seasonal with “null” bulletins being issued during the winter months.

4. At the present time, Canada is working with assistance from METArea Coordinator Henri Savina. Preparations continue with the target of being in testing status by May 2010. Product preparation and development is underway and internal testing began in the Fall of 2009. Acquisition of INMARSAT-C receivers is in process and work on a service contract for upload to begin soon. Installation of equipment is planned for Spring 2010.

5. The broadcast of METArea information beyond 75N will be through the Canadian NAVArea issuing service, the Canadian Coast Guard. Arrangements for monitoring of METArea information has begun with the acquisition of equipment. Facilitation of the coordination of transmissions for SafetyNET and NAVTEX with International Panels is occurring. A Certificate of Authorization to Participate as an Information Provider in the International SafetyNET Service has been issued from IMO.

6. NAVArea, METArea, and NAVTEX coverage diagrams, including service areas and times of transmission are being developed as products and transmission times are negotiated.

7. Initial discussions with the United States as a Preparation Service have taken place and it is expected that further conversations with American colleagues and discussions with Danish colleagues, as Preparation Services, will occur over next few months.

8. Discussions with Norway and Russia, for coordination and consistency across METArea boundaries, is being planned…possibly at a GMDSS meeting in Melbourne in late April however it is hoped that some planning will take place prior to this.

9. Sea ice information will consist of NAVTEX bulletins describing the ice edge. An overlap of 300 NM is planned between adjacent METAREAs.

10. Issues that must be resolved include:

- Broadcast times - need to be clarified and staggered so each Issuing Service can properly follow the previous.
- Definition of ice edge - recommended that the METNAV bulletins use 10% ice concentration as the ice edge with a disclaimer that there may be trace ice and bergs outside the ice edge
- Ice edge reconciliation – there must be continuity of the ice edge from one METAREA to the adjacent METAREA. An ftp site (or some similar solution) could be used for Issuing Services to place their ice information in advance of the broadcast allowing the next Issuing Service to integrate into their material as soon as possible.
- Disclaimer - Concern was expressed that the more detailed local ice information may be missed or ignored in favour of the METNAV bulletin. It is proposed that all the METNAV area bulletins take a common approach to providing a Disclaimer such as "For detailed local ice information go to…."
- Training – It is recommended that the 3 Issuing Services meet together for joint training / back-up plan discussion. The UK MET office is proposed as a most suitable venue.

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