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| **World Meteorological Organization**  **JOINT WMO/IOC TECHNICAL COMMISSION FOR OCEANOGRAPHY AND MARINE METEOROLOGY (JCOMM)**  **EXPERT TEAM ON SEA ICE (ETSI)**  **Sixth Session**  **STEERING GROUP FOR THE PROJECT GLOBAL DIGITAL SEA ICE DATA BANK (GDSIDB)**  **Fourteenth Session** Helsinki, 28 February to 3 March 2017 | **Intergovernmental Oceanographic Commission (of UNESCO)**  **ETSI-6/GDSIDB-14/Doc. 3.1.2**  Submitted by:  ETSI  24.I.2017  **DRAFT** |

**Polar Matters (GMDSS, Polar Code)**

***(Submitted by ETSI Chair)***

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| Summary and Purpose of Document See discussion |

**ACTION PROPOSED**

The Expert Team on Sea Ice is invited to:

* Review/discuss current practice/contents of GMDSS bulletins in the light of the Polar Code
* Propose recommendations to ETMSS and the METAREA coordinators

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**References:**  http://www.www.gmdss.org

**Appendices**: IMO Polar Code

**DISCUSSION**

The implementation of the Polar Code leads to considerations and discussions on current ice information in GMDSS bulletins versus Polar Code requirements.

The ice information in GMDSS bulletins is basically sea ice edge and condensed iceberg information. The bulletins are not intended for tactical navigation in or near ice infested waters.

The Polar Code covers several METAREAS and deals with a suite of ship categories ranging from icebreakers to non-ice class ships, or in other words ships with different requirements for icemetocean products, for navigation in or near ice, or for ice avoidance.

The Polar Code does not specify which icemetocean products or formats a ship master need for decision making and safe vessel movements but it assumes a number of ice parameters to be available. It is requirement that a ship can receive relevant environmental information.

Concerning ice the main objective of current GMDSS bulletins is ice avoidance. The Polar Code goes further and introduces safety measures for operations in and near ice.

After a brief presentation on the subject the ETSI team is invited to review current GMDSS practice and technology in the light of the Polar Code requirements and propose changes/improvements to ETMSS and the METAREA coordinators.