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Agenda item [[2]](#footnote-2) 5.3

Technical Domain / Task Number 2 COMMUNICATIONS

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Report from rapporteur on GMDSS

# Summary

The present report provides the outcomes on the modernization of GMDSS as decided during 3rd sub-committee NCSR from 29th February to 4th March 2016 at IMO headquarter.

## Purpose of the document

It is expected the ENAV Committee to take into account GMDSS in the e-navigation architecture and the e-navigation communication Plan and then support the modernization of GMDSS.

## Related documents

NCSR 1/28 annex 10: outcomes of the high level review of GMDSS (adopted by NCSR only)

NCSR 1/28 annex 11: revised planned of work for the GMDSS review and modernization project (endorsed by MSC95)

NCSR 3/14: completion of the detailed review of GMDSS (adopted by NCSR only)

# Background

# 2.1 Report of the twenty-second session of the ICAO/IMO Joint Working Group

The Sub-Committee noted that the ICAO/IMO Joint Working Group on Search and Rescue, under the chairmanship of Mr David Edwards (USA), had considered issues related to the Review and modernization of the GMDSS (NCSR 3/21, paragraphs 2.18 to 2.20, and section 7.4 of the annex) and that the relevant outcomes had been taken into consideration during the meeting of the Joint IMO/ITU Expert Group, held in October 2015.

**2.2 Report of the eleventh meeting of the Joint IMO/ITU Experts Group**

The Sub-Committee considered document NCSR 3/17 (Secretariat) providing the report of the eleventh meeting of the Joint IMO/ITU Experts Group on Maritime radiocommunication matters, which took place from 5 to 9 October 2015, under the Chairmanship of Mr. Kim Fisher (United Kingdom).

**2.3 Proposed revision of SOLAS chapter IV**

After consideration, the Sub-Committee NCSR agreed that the amendments to the SOLAS Convention and related instruments be addressed after completion of the Modernization Plan of the GMDSS and aim for an entry into force date of 2024. In this context it, was noted that, if MSC 96 would approve a new output on a revision of SOLAS chapter IV to accommodate the introduction of Iridium, this would have priority as a separate agenda item at NCSR 4.

# outcome of the detailed review of the GMDSS

## Report of the Correspondence Group on the review of the GMDSS

The Sub-Committee NCSR 3 considered the report of the Correspondence Group on the review of the GMDSS, provided by the United States (NCSR 3/14) containing the draft outcome of the Detailed Review of the GMDSS, together with documents NCSR 3/14/1 and NCSR 3/14/2 (United States). During the ensuing considerations, the following views were, inter alia, expressed:

.1 certain issues presented in the draft outcome of the Detailed Review of the GMDSS, in particular those related to integration and presentation of information received via communication equipment, should be discussed also under agenda items in respect to e-navigation;

.2 the financial implications of having additional satellite systems in the GMDSS should be taken into consideration, in particular, with respect to the broadcasting of Maritime Safety Information (with possible inclusion in resolution A.707(17)), the reliability and secure use of public switched telephone networks, together with recommendations set out in resolution A.856(20) (guidance to administration on development of a shore-based SAR telecommunication infrastructure)[[3]](#footnote-3), and the requirement for NAVAREA and METAREA coordinators to monitor correct broadcasting of information;

.3 automated frequency scanning in HF band could be a solution to address distress communications, however it should be introduced on a non-mandatory basis and the development of technical standards should be considered to allow for effective implementation;

.4 further consideration would be required with respect to the possible use of Cospas-Sarsat land network for the distribution of digital distress alerts under the modernized GMDSS, addressing, inter alia, the issues of one-way communication, priority of distress alerts, the burden of adding an additional service provider, potential carriage requirements and current arrangements for independent national implementation;

.5 the GMDSS modernization plan could serve as a framework for the development of e-navigation, which could address issues that would not be considered within the GMDSS review, such as shore-to-shore communications;

.6 the design of the GMDSS, as developed in the general review, needs to be simplified so that it remains straightforward, logical and clear to users;

.7 GMDSS model courses should also be added to the list of IMO instruments to be revised;

.8 in drafting related amendments to SOLAS, references should be made to the texts and terminology already developed by IMO or ITU; and

.9 further considerations should be given to the need to define "Security-related communications" and "other communications".

Having noted the outline of the Modernization Plan, the NCSR agreed that issues highlighted in the correspondence group's report on the outcome of the Detailed Review of the GMDSS under the paragraph headings "Implications for the Modernization Plan" should be further considered during the development of the GMDSS Modernization Plan, taking into account the views expressed in paragraph above and the issues presented in documents NCSR 3/14/1 and NCSR 3/14/2. It was further agreed that the Modernization Plan should contain a clear timeline and deliverables.

In relation to document NCSR 3/14/1, the Sub-Committee invited Cospas-Sarsat to conduct an analysis of the proposal for distribution of GMDSS digital distress alerts in addition to the current 406 MHz beacon alerts, and present appropriate findings and recommendations to the Sub-Committee.

Having noted annex 2 of document NCSR 3/14, containing the list of items not to be included in the GMDSS Modernization programme, the Sub-Committee noted the view of two observer organizations that certain items in that list, in their view, should be further discussed during the development of the Modernization Plan. The Sub-Committee further noted the information provided by the coordinator of the Correspondence Group on the Review of the GMDSS, that action had already been taken on some of the issues included in annex 2 and, therefore, did not have to be included in the GMDSS Modernization program.

Finally, the Sub-Committee NCSR 3 endorsed the draft outcome of the Detailed Review of the GMDSS and invited the Committee MSC, in accordance with the revised Plan of Work (NCSR 1/28, annex 11), to approve the outcome of the GMDSS Review and the continuation of the project in developing the Modernization Plan. In accordance with the revised Plan of work, the Sub-Committee HTW will be consulted on the general review of GMDSS.

# References

Report to related documents in paragraph 2

# Action requested of the Committee

The ENAV Committee is requested to take note of the above information and take action accordingly, in particular:

1. to consider GMDSS as a framework for the development of e-navigation, and
2. to consider shore-to-shore communication in completion of the GMDSS modernization carried out by IMO.

1. Input document number, to be assigned by the Committee Secretary [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Leave open if uncertain [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Res.A.856(20) recommands basic telecommunication infrastructure for administration, for instance to secure link betweenn RCC and Land Earth Station (LES). [↑](#footnote-ref-3)