

Working Group to articulate GMDSS SOLAS changes
GMDSS Task Force

Summary Record of meeting held on 6 March 2024

[GMDSS SOLAS Changes WG Documents](#)

1. **Purpose.** Meeting convened for the purpose of determining impact and consequential actions needed as a result of IMO SOLAS Chapter IV GMDSS changes which entered into force on 1 January 2024.
2. **Interactive guide.** Bob Marke introduced RTCM's updated interactive *Guide to International Requirements for Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) Communication Equipment under the International Convention for Safety of Life at Sea (SOLAS Convention - 2024 Amendments) v. 1.5 of this guide* [posted](#) on RTCM's website. The WG thanked Bob for making this available.
3. **Ship safety certificates.** The new SOLAS IV GMDSS ship safety certificates included in IMO Resolution MSC.496(105) were briefly reviewed, noting that one of the more significant changes was an added footnoted requirement "For a ship certified to operate in sea area A3, indicate the recognized mobile satellite service in brackets." Current FCC ship safety certificates are available as FCC Form 829. FCC indicated that OMB approval requirements for any changes would be a lengthy process. It is possible that existing forms might be acceptable if they were filed out appropriately (eg indicating the recognized mobile satellite service in brackets).

Action Item 1: Compare new safety certificates with those in FCC Form 829 and note differences. Ghassan (and Joe).

4. **New GMDSS SOLAS Carriage Requirements.** The table listing GMDSS equipment, IMO performance standard, IEC certification standard and installed on or after date was reviewed. Those affecting new installations after 1 January 2024 include:
 - a. Integrated Communication System. Optional, but if carried must meet Res MSC.517(105) IEC 62940:2016 certification standard predates and does not fully meet IMO requirements. Requirements (which go beyond GMDSS component requirements) are complicated and absent a current IEC standard difficult to inspect. ETSI standard for ICS does not appear to exist

Action Item 2: Check with IACS (and DMV and Lloyds) at NCSR 11 on how SOLAS requirements involving an integrated communication system in

conformance with Res. MSC.517(105) are being met in the absence of an updated IEC certification standard. Ghassan (and Patrick Gallagher).

- b. Aeronautical VHF handheld. Only substantive new requirement is to have a color which distinguishes it from the portable survival craft two-way VHF.
- c. Survival craft VHF handheld. Only change is requirement for Battery expiry date determination and marking, which is addressed in the new IEC 61097-12:2023 amendment.
- d. Radar SART. Requirements are fully addressed by IEC 61097-1:2007, already incorporated in FCC regulations.
- e. NAVTEX. The only apparent significant new requirement is an interface to the ship's Bridge Alert Management, included in MSC.508(105) and in the latest amendment to IEC 61097-6 Ed2.2.

Action Item 3: Confirm status if IMO decision whether Bridge Alert Management alarms are exclusively internal, or include external alarms (i.e. external distress and urgency alerts). All.

- f. 406 MHz EPIRBs. New installations after 1 July 2023. Certification addressed in FCC waivers. IEC 61097-2:2021 applies.
- g. Inmarsat-C, MF/HF radio, VHF radio. SOLAS requirements for new installations deferred until 2028. IEC 61097-4 (now complete), 61097-9 and 61097-7, respectively, applies.

Action Item 4: Note HF MSI requirement required by MSC.508(105) in new installations by 1 January 2024 won't be implemented until 1 January 2028 in IEC 61097-9. Retention of receive portions of old HF NBDP radio equipment will be necessary until replaced by new IEC 61097-9-compliant equipment.

- 5. **Notification of FCC inspectors of new SOLAS requirements.** FCC-licensed inspectors have not yet been notified of these SOLAS GMDSS changes affecting US vessels subject to port state inspection travelling overseas. Those ships could be detained, despite having passed FCC inspection. FCC will consider the matter and the possibility of a public notice or notice to inspectors.
- 6. **Training (GMDSS element) changes.** The working group discussed the need to amend GMDSS element and IMO radio model courses in light of these SOLAS GMDSS changes, such as elimination of HF NBDP transmit requirements. Changes appear not to have been made and courses and tests regarding (for example) NBDP calling and ARQ mode of communications continue despite no longer being required.

Action Item 5: Contact Jim Cavo USCG MMC-2 to determine status of Radio Model Courses consequential to GMDSS SOLAS changes coming into effect. USCG.

Next meeting: Thursday 11 April 2024 at 1:30 PM EDT, 10:30 AM PDT

Meeting Attendees

Bob Markle
Ed Thiedeman
Eric Weber
Ghassan Khalek
Kathleen Curameng
Katie Knox
Kurt Anderson
Malachi Clark
Patrick Gallagher
Patrick Geddes
Sean Foster
Thomas Derenge
Joe Hersey