

Commonwealth of Dominica



Office of the Maritime Administrator

TO: ALL SHIPOWNERS, OPERATORS, MASTERS AND OFFICERS OF MERCHANT SHIPS AND RECOGNIZED ORGANIZATIONS

SUBJECT: CLOSURE OF INMARSAT A SERVICE

REFERENCE: a) IMO Circular MSC/Circ. 1076 Closure of Inmarsat A

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Circular is to bring to the attention of all the shipowners, operators, masters, officers and recognized organizations of Dominica flag vessels about the closure of INMARSAT A service on 31 December 2007

APPLICABILITY: All Dominica vessels to which SOLAS 74 as amended apply

BACKGROUND:

- 1 Inmarsat A is the original analogue service provided via the Inmarsat satellites and was first introduced in 1982.
- 2 The last type approval by Inmarsat for a new model of maritime Inmarsat - A ship earth station (SES) was granted in 1991. No new Inmarsat A SES models have been type-approved since then.
- 3 Although Inmarsat - A SESs are approved for fitting in ships as part of their GMDSS equipment; however; the communication capabilities provided by Inmarsat -A SESs are now provided more efficiently and effectively by other types of digital Inmarsat terminals.
- 4 Inmarsat Ltd. Had formerly indicated that 5-years notice would be given for the withdrawal of Inmarsat -A services and had informed International Maritime Organization (IMO) that these services would be withdrawn on 31 December 2007.

INFORMATION:

- 1 Inmarsat - A services will be closed by midnight on 31st December 2007. All vessels with Inmarsat - A installations will not be able to use Inmarsat - A terminals for communications and distress/emergency calls.

- 2 Vessels presently having an Inmarsat A terminal as a secondary installation in compliance with dual equipment requirement of GMDSS will be cut off from communication automatically at the end of this year and then become non – GMDSS compliant if alternate equipment is not installed.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- 1 Shipowners, operators and masters of vessels should be aware that relevant vessels must have alternate equipment installed prior to 31st December 2007. The alternate equipment can be an Inmarsat standard B or C or Fleet 77 terminal or eventually the MF/HF NBDP radiotelex.
- 2 However, if the MF/HF NBDP is installed, shipowners and operators should be aware that due to the fact that there is a lack of shore stations providing such service, MF/HF NBDP radiotelex services will be also phased out in the near future (pending final decision on the date by the IMO).
- 3 If the Fleet 77 is installed, it must be activated by the authorized PSA and surveyors have to verify that such Fleet 77 terminals are capable of working with any land stations freely (activation under AAIC). Activation of Fleet 77 under ISPS Code is not acceptable.
- 4 Class and Flag State surveyors must ensure that Inmarsat Terminals on board are licensed by the Commonwealth of Dominica Maritime Administration.

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