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MEASURES FOR STRENGTHENING AND IMPROVING
THE MARITIME DISTRESS SYSTEM

RESOLUTION A.217(VII)
adopted on 12 October 1971

THE ASSEMBLY,

NOTING Article 16(i) of the Convention on the Inter-Governmental Maritime Consultative Organization concerning the functions of the Assembly,

CONSIDERING that there is a need for improving the Maritime Distress System and in particular as far as radio-telephony is concerned,

HAVING CONSIDERED the Recommendations of the Maritime Safety Committee at its twenty-second session regarding the adoption of measures aiming at achieving an early improvement of the Maritime Distress System,

DECIDES to adopt the Recommendations prepared by the Committee and appearing at Annex to this Resolution, with regard to:

- (a) Improving listening watch on 2182 kHz;
- (b) Avoidance of unnecessary radiotelephone alarm signal transmissions on 2182 kHz;

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- (c) Extension of the Maritime Distress System on the radiotelephone distress frequency;
- (d) Restricting calling on 2182 kHz;
- (e) Utilization of 2182 kHz solely for safety purposes;
- (f) Carriage of emergency position-indicating radio beacons;
- (g) Use of shore-based direction-finding stations,

RECOMMENDS Member Governments to take as soon as possible whatever action is required for the implementation of the recommended measures,

FURTHER DECIDES that the Resolution and its Annex be brought to the attention of ITU, with the request that action be taken as necessary with a view to implementing the measures recommended at Annex.

ANNEX

RECOMMENDATION ON IMPROVING LISTENING WATCH ON 2182 kHz

THE MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE,

CONSIDERING that there is a need for improving the listening watch on 2182 kHz,

TAKING ACCOUNT of Nos. 1349 and 1350 of the Radio Regulations and the footnote concerning Japan and the Philippines pertaining thereto,

HAVING EXAMINED the recommendations of the Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications on this subject,

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DECIDES to recommend that:

- (a) Administrations of ITU Region 2 consider implementing the silence periods on 2182 kHz now existing in ITU Regions 1 and 3;
- (b) Administrations consider, as part of their preparation for the next WARC for the Maritime Mobile Service, any further action which may be required, concerning silence periods;
- (c) this Recommendation be brought to the attention of ITU with the request that action be taken, as necessary, with a view to its wide implementation.

RECOMMENDATION ON AVOIDANCE OF UNNECESSARY
RADIOTELEPHONE ALARM SIGNAL TRANSMISSIONS
ON 2182 kHz

THE MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE,

CONSIDERING that unnecessary radiotelephone alarm signal transmissions must be avoided,

HAVING EXAMINED the recommendations of the Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications on this subject,

DECIDES to recommend the following measures for implementation by Member Governments:

- (a) to reduce unnecessary alarm signal emissions Member Governments should, as a matter of urgency, take all essential actions to prohibit tests of the radiotelephone alarm signal on 2182 kHz and to require the use of a suitable artificial aerial for any tests of the radiotelephone alarm signal on other frequencies;

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- (b) an exception is permitted for radiotelephone emergency equipment having only the distress frequency 2182 kHz, in which case, a suitable artificial aerial shall be employed.

RECOMMENDATION ON EXTENSION OF THE MARITIME
DISTRESS SYSTEM ON THE RADIOTELEPHONE
DISTRESS FREQUENCY

THE MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE,

CONSIDERING the need for achieving an early improvement of the Maritime Distress System particularly with regard to radiotelephony,

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the contents of Resolution MAR 17 of the World Administrative Radio Conference for the Maritime Mobile Service, 1967,

HAVING EXAMINED the recommendations of the Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications on this subject,

DECIDES to recommend that:

- (a) ships compulsorily fitted with either a radiotelegraph or a radiotelephone installation shall have in addition facilities for listening continuously, while at sea, on the radiotelephone distress frequency by means and in conditions which will have to be determined and approved by the Administration, e.g. a watch receiver whose output should be as near as possible to the place from which the ship is usually navigated;

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- (b) radiotelegraph ships should be encouraged to carry a radiotelephone transmitter capable of operating on the 2 MHz band, which should be equipped with an automatic radiotelephone alarm signal generator;
- (c) Administrations should consider introducing a national requirement concerning the carriage of a radiotelephone distress frequency watch receiver by ships to which the Convention does not apply, as far as it is practicable.

RECOMMENDATION ON RESTRICTING CALLING ON 2182 kHz

THE MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE,

HAVING CONSIDERED the need to improve the Maritime Distress System with particular regard to radiotelephony,

TAKING INTO ACCOUNT the relevant Radio Regulations,

HAVING NOTED Recommendation MAR 5 of the World Administrative Radio Conference for the Maritime Mobile Service, 1967, relating to the designation of common frequencies in the medium frequency bands for use by coast radiotelephone stations for communicating with ships of other nationalities,

DECIDES to recommend to Member Governments the following:

- (a) The following practice should be established for calling pilots:
 - (i) use of appropriate Maritime VHF channels;
 - (ii) call on working frequencies in the band 1605 to 4000 kHz;

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- (iii) use 2182 kHz only after steps (i) and (ii) above are unsuccessful and then only to determine the working frequency to be used.
- (b) The following practice should be established for ship-to-shore and inter-ship calling at national level;
 - (i) use of appropriate working frequency or frequencies;
 - (ii) use the frequency 2182 kHz only when other means of establishing contact are unavailable or unsuccessful;
- (c) When ships are bound to advise port authorities well in advance (for instance 12 hours or 24 hours) of their ETA, the relevant message should be transmitted through a coast station.
- (d) The following practice should be established for calling of ships by coast stations:
 - use of appropriate working frequency or frequencies where applicable and resort to 2182 kHz only when the former is unsuccessful or inapplicable.
- (e) In relation to (d) above:
 - (i) the early implementation by Administrations of selective calling is strongly recommended so that ships will be able to use this facility;
 - (ii) attention is drawn to the fact that some countries have already implemented selective calling on 2182 kHz and, at least one country on 2170.5 kHz,

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FURTHER DECIDES this recommendation be brought to the attention of ITU with the request that action is taken, as necessary, with a view to its wide implementation.

RECOMMENDATION ON UTILIZATION OF 2182 kHz
SOLELY FOR SAFETY PURPOSES

THE MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE,

CONSIDERING the need to improve the Maritime Distress System,

RECOGNIZING the importance of optimum conditions for the transmission of distress, urgency and safety signals,

RECOGNIZING FURTHER how seriously these conditions are limited by the present congestion on the international radiotelephone distress and calling frequency,

HAVING EXAMINED the recommendations of the Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications,

DECIDES to recommend that the use of this frequency should be restricted to the following:

- (a) distress and urgency signals and messages and safety signals;
- (b) calls related to radiodetermination in emergency situations;
- (c) calls and replies for the purpose of initiating contact prior to communicating on a working frequency relative to safety of navigation;
- (d) calls for establishing communication when the use of a working frequency is unsuccessful or not available, brief operating signals, very limited necessary testing and announcements of important transmissions which will follow on a working frequency,

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FURTHER DECIDES that this Recommendation be brought to the attention of ITU with the request that action be taken as necessary with a view to its wide implementation.

RECOMMENDATION ON CARRIAGE OF EMERGENCY
POSITION-INDICATING RADIO BEACONS

THE MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE,

RECOGNIZING:

- (i) that an emergency position-indicating radio beacon will improve safety of life at sea by greatly facilitating search and rescue;
- (ii) that emergency position-indicating radio beacons shall comply with the provisions of Article 36, Section VIII A of the Radio Regulations; and
- (iii) that amendments now agreed, to Chapter IV and Chapter V of the International Convention for the Safety of Life at Sea, 1960, will improve the listening watch and the homing capabilities of ships on the radiotelephone distress frequency,

RECOMMENDS that Administrations should require all ships and vessels where appropriate to be equipped with emergency position-indicating radio beacons operating on the most appropriate radio frequency/ies.

RECOMMENDATION ON USE OF SHORE-BASED
DIRECTION-FINDING STATIONS

THE MARITIME SAFETY COMMITTEE,

RECOGNIZING that shore-based direction-finding stations can contribute greatly to the prompt initiation and execution of

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search and rescue action for ships in distress at sea by the determination of their position,

RECOMMENDS that, where practicable and necessary, Administrations should establish shore-based direction-finding stations to take bearings of distress signals, calls and messages, particularly those transmitted on the radiotelephone distress frequency along coasts, especially in areas of high traffic density. The Committee further recommends that close collaboration between direction-finding stations of all nations whose coastlines are in the area should be an essential feature of such a direction-finding system.
