



Direção-Geral de Recursos Naturais,  
Segurança e Serviços Marítimos

Direção de Serviços de Administração Marítima

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<b>Subject:</b>	<b>ITU Radio Regulations - revised maritime frequencies and channeling arrangements on HF and VHF</b>
<b>To:</b>	Shipowners, Companies, Operators, Recognized Organizations, Surveyors, Shore Based Maintenance Facilities, Masters and Skippers of Portuguese Flagged vessels

*References: Appendices 17 and 18 to ITU Radio Regulations<sup>1</sup> (RR), with the amendments due to World Radiocommunication Conferences 2012 and 2015 (WRC12 and WRC15). Decree-Law n.º 73/2007 of 27 March, which amends and republishes Decree-Law n.º190/98 of 10 July, the Regulation of the Vessel's Radioelectric Service, which establishes, among others, the need of Portuguese Flagged vessels to be fitted with the radio equipment laid down by both SOLAS Convention and the National Regulations. Decree-Law n.º 145/95 of 14 June, which applies GMDSS to all Portuguese flagged vessels encompassed by SOLAS. Decree-Law n.º 174/94 of 25 June, which establishes and applies the National Maritime Distress and Safety System to Portuguese Flagged vessels wherever they are, and also to all ships and vessels on Portuguese territorial waters. IMO MSC.1/Circ.1460 - "Guidance on the validity of radiocommunications equipment installed and used on ships", as amended. IMO MSC.1/Circ.1389 - "Guidance on procedures for updating shipborne navigation and communication equipment". IMO Resolution A.803(19) "Performance standards for shipborne VHF radio installations capable of communication and digital selective calling". IMO Resolution A.806(19) "Performance standards for shipborne MF/HF radio installations capable of voice communication, narrow-band direct-printing and digital selective calling".*

<sup>1</sup> Radio Regulations (RR), the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Radio Regulations, including appendixes, resolutions and recommendations incorporated by reference, in its actual text.

## 1. OBJECTIVE

The aim of this circular is to inform about the interpretation of the Portuguese Maritime Administration, DGRM, from this point and onwards the *Administration*, on the implementation of the revision of frequencies and channeling arrangements for the maritime High Frequency (HF) and Very High Frequency (VHF) frequencies bands made by the World Radiocommunication Conferences 2012 and 2015 (WRC12 and WRC15) to Appendices 17 and 18 of RR on the existing and new shipborne radiocommunication equipments on Portuguese flagged vessels.

## 2. RADIO REGULATIONS REVISIONS

2.1 In a simple manner, the revision related with the maritime mobile service frequencies, operated by both WRC12 and WRC15, goes over changes to the assigned frequencies in the maritime mobile HF bands, for narrow-band direct-printing (NBDP) telegraphy where the total number of frequencies assigned were reduced to free up frequencies for other uses and purposes, and to four duplex VHF channels (CH19, CH20, CH78 and CH79) changing them into eight new single-frequency channels (CH1019, CH2019, CH1020, CH2020, CH1078, CH2078, CH1079 and CH2079), introducing a new display indication concept of the four-digit number channels. Channel 2006 (160,900 MHz), which is a new one, is reserved for experimental use for future applications or systems, like new AIS applications or man over board systems.

2.2 The International Maritime Organization (IMO) having in mind that MF/HF GMDSS equipment, in addition to meeting the requirements of the Radio Regulations and the relevant ITU-R<sup>2</sup> Recommendations, should also be in compliance with the Resolution A.806(19) on *“Performance standards for shipborne MF/HF radio installations capable of voice communication, narrow-band direct-printing and digital selective calling”*, has issued MSC.1/Circ.1460 on *“Guidance on the validity of radiocommunications equipment installed and used on ships”* recommending that HF radiocommunication equipment capable of operating NBDP should be updated by the first radio survey after 1 January 2017. At the 97<sup>th</sup>

<sup>2</sup> ITU-R, the Radiocommunication Standardization Sector, a permanent body of the International Telecommunications Union, in Geneva, Switzerland.

MSC which was held at IMO headquarters between 21 and 25 November 2016, it was agreed to amend this date and postpone it to the 1<sup>st</sup> January 2024.

2.3 For clarification the following surveys are intended as *radio survey*:

2.3.1 The periodic/renewal Radio Survey performed on SOLAS vessels, both passenger and cargo vessels;

2.3.2 The periodic survey to Radio Equipment performed on Fishing Vessels with length of 24 mts or more;

2.3.3 The renewal Radio Survey performed on Passenger vessels in domestic voyages;

2.3.4 The radio survey held on behalf of, or by the Administration on any Portuguese vessel which has specific requirements due to its area of operation.

2.4 In line with MF/HF GMDSS equipment, VHF used as GMDSS equipment, while in compliance with the Resolution A.803(19) on “*Performance Standards for shipborne VHF radio installations capable of communication and digital selective calling*” shall also meet the requirements of the Radio Regulations. This radiocommunication equipment does not need to be updated by the 1st January 2017, as they may be updated appropriately in accordance with the decisions of both the Administration and ANACOM<sup>3</sup>.

### 3. INTERPRETATION OF THE PORTUGUESE ADMINISTRATION ON THIS SUBJECT

3.1 MF/HF equipment: having in mind that GMDSS equipment and techniques are applicable not only to SOLAS vessels but also to fishing vessels with length of 24 mts and above, to passenger vessels in domestic voyages due to European and National Legislation and to other vessels in regard of their area of operation, the Administration considers that Portuguese flagged vessels using HF NBDP radiocommunication equipment as a mean of communication with either coast radio stations or other ship stations, and to be compliant with both national legislation and the changes due to the amendment of Radio Regulations, shall be updated by the first radio survey after 1 January 2024.

3.2 VHF equipment: for existing VHF radio communication equipment onboard, having in mind that GMDSS's channels for Distress, Urgency and Safety have not been amended, and many

<sup>3</sup> ANACOM, the National Authority for Communications (Autoridade Nacional de Comunicações)

other existing VHF channels are available for communication between new and existing VHF equipment, the Portuguese Administration considers that VHF radio communication equipment is deemed suitable for continued use, unless otherwise required, either by the ship's port of call operating the upgraded VHF channels, or VTS services around the world, or other kind of entities with whom vessels are supposed to interact and have upgraded their VHF channels, or unless otherwise expressed by the national legislation.

3.3 This Administration draws the attention of Shipowners, Companies, Operators, Recognized Organizations, Shore Based Maintenance facilities, Masters and Skippers of Portuguese Flagged Vessels for the *NATIONAL VHF PLAN*, as laid down in national legislation, which has to be fulfilled and applies to all VHF radiocommunication stations in the maritime mobile service, irrespective of flag, operating either in the territorial sea or ashore the Portuguese territory, and to all the Portuguese Flagged Vessels, either commerce, fishing or recreational.

Lisbon, 6 January 2017

The Director of the Maritime Administration Services Directorate

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