



South African Maritime Safety Authority

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Date: 15 March 2018

Marine Notice No. 7 of 2018

Installation and commissioning of new coastal radio infrastructure equipment.

TO ALL REGIONAL MANAGERS, PRINCIPAL OFFICERS, SAMSA SURVEYORS, SMALL VESSEL SURVEYORS, HARBOUR MASTERS, SHIP MASTERS, SMALL VESSEL SKIPPERS AND OPERATORS, AND AFFECTED PARTIES

Summary

This Marine Notice serves to provide notification to affected parties of the installation and commissioning of new coast station radio equipment around the South African coast.

Interpretation

In this Marine Notice the definitions indicated have the following meaning;

HF DSC – Digital Selective Calling using the High Frequency Maritime Band between 3000 Khz and 30 Mhz - being a technique using digital codes that enables a radio station to establish contact with, and transfer information to, another station or group of stations;

MSI – Maritime Safety Information means navigational and meteorological warnings, meteorological forecasts and other urgent safety related messages broadcast to ships;

NAVTEX – means the system utilized for the broadcast and automatic reception of maritime safety information by means of narrow-band direct-printing telegraphy;

Sea Area A1 – A coastal area within radio telephone coverage of at least one VHF coast radio station providing continuous availability of Digital Selective Calling (DSC) alerting.

SOLAS – means Safety Of Life At Sea Convention 1974 as amended

VHF DSC – Digital Selective Calling on channel 70 VHF. being a technique using digital codes that enables a radio station to establish contact with, and transfer information to, another station or group of stations;

Background:

To keep in line with international best practice and in accordance with the instruction (Resolution A.801(19) to SOLAS contracting governments (South Africa being a signatory to the convention) to provide a maritime mobile service in the bands between 156 Mhz and 174 Mhz (VHF), which service utilizes DSC on VHF Ch. 70 as its mainstay for SOLAS watch keeping and Distress/Urgency/Safety alerting.

The South African Department of Transport decided in 2013 to upgrade the coastal maritime radio infrastructure to include VHF DSC operations.

The installation and commissioning of the equipment to offer this service was delayed due to various technicalities which have now been resolved.

TelkomSA Maritime are currently busy with the installation and testing of VHF DSC radio equipment operating on VHF Channel 70 at radio coast station sites situated around the coast of South Africa.

This equipment will initially run in parallel with the previous system so that there is no break in radio coverage on VHF Channel 16.

Additionally

South African Coast Station HF equipment both DSC and RT has been replaced and is being tested and commissioned.

A new NAVTEX station has been established at Cape Columbine to provide further coverage in the Orange River Mouth area.

The installation and commissioning process requires testing of the equipment and maritime radio users are advised that there might be some slight interruptions in service whilst these tests are being carried out.

This work is expected to be completed by 31 May 2018.

Once SAMSA have conducted an audit of the new upgraded radio system the service will come on line and a further Marine Notice will be published to notify the public of the fact.

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