

# Republic of the Marshall Islands

## MARITIME ADMINISTRATOR

11495 COMMERCE PARK DRIVE, RESTON, VIRGINIA 20191-1506  
TELEPHONE: +1-703-620-4880 FAX: +1-703-476-8522  
EMAIL: maritime@register-iri.com WEBSITE: www.register-iri.com

### MARINE SAFETY ADVISORY NO. 05-17

**To: Owners/Operators, Masters, Nautical Inspectors, Recognized Organizations**

**Subject: COMPLIANCE FOR REVISED VHF AND GMDSS HF NBDP CHANNELING REQUIREMENTS**

**Date: 18 January 2017**

This Advisory supersedes MSA #41-16 which is now revoked.

The International Maritime Organization (IMO) has pushed back the compliance date for ensuring Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) communication capability to **01 January 2024**.

#### **GMDSS High Frequency Narrow-band Direct Printing (HF NBDP)**

The IMO now requires that HF radiocommunications equipment capable of operating NBDP be updated to meet the new channeling arrangements, contained in the [2012 Radio Regulations HF, Appendix 17, Part B, Sections II and III](#) (HF direct-printing telegraphy), by the first safety radio survey after **01 January 2024**.

By that time, while most existing equipment should already be in compliance with these requirements, equipment that is unable to comply with the Radio Regulations will need to be replaced, and the newly installed HF NBDP equipment should be suitably type approved per guidance issued in the revised IMO Circular [MSC.1/Circ.1460/Rev.1](#).

Owners and Masters of vessels equipped with HF NBDP equipment should therefore ensure it is HF direct-printing telegraphy compliant in time for the first safety radio survey after **01 January 2024**.

#### **Very High Frequency (VHF)**

The situation with VHF is more complicated because, while the IMO postponed the implementation of NBDP changes for HF, the IMO did not postpone VHF changes (note that VHF changes do not apply to mandatory GMDSS channels but only apply to public correspondence channels). In addition, ports have not yet informed the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) Maritime Administrator (the "Administrator") or Classification Societies about any plans to upgrade to new public VHF correspondence channels, so there is no way to conclude whether or not, and when, different ports will comply with VHF changes/upgrades.

This MSA expires one (1) year after its issuance, unless otherwise noted, extended, superseded or revoked.

Because the IMO has mandated that VHF be upgraded but it is not known if and when ports will also upgrade to be able to communicate with ships that have undertaken these changes, the Administrator does not yet require VHF systems to be upgraded. More information will be available after discussions at the IMO meeting of the Sub-committee on Navigation, Communications, and Search and Rescue (NCSR), 4<sup>th</sup> session, 06-10 March 2017.