



THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA
LIBERIA MARITIME AUTHORITY

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04 January 2022

Marine Advisory: 02/2022

(This Marine Advisory supersedes Marine Advisory 05/2021 dated 15 April 2021)

SUBJECT: Acceptance and Registration of Iridium GMDSS Terminals on Liberian Flagged Vessels

Changes: Section “Operations in Sea Area 4” revised to clarify that only one Iridium terminal needs to be installed to provide for duplication of service

Dear Shipowner/Operator/Master/Inspectors/Recognized Organizations:

The purpose of this Marine Advisory is to inform shipowners and operators of the Liberian Administration’s policy regarding the acceptance and registration of Iridium terminals as GMDSS units on Liberian flagged ships.

Background

In May 2018, IMO Maritime Safety Committee at its ninety-ninth session, adopted resolution MSC.451(99) on “Statement of recognition of the maritime mobile satellite services provided by Iridium Satellite LLC, including Iridium's enhanced group calling service”. MSC.451(99) officially recognized Iridium to provide GMDSS services. MSC.451(99) also invited International Mobile Satellite Organization (IMSO) to monitor the implementation of the recognized services by Iridium and report to MSC when a Public Services Agreement with Iridium had been concluded and the Letter of Compliance had been issued. Subsequently in December 2019, IMSO issued a Letter of Compliance to Iridium, certifying Iridium as provider of GMDSS services globally, including the dissemination of maritime safety information (MSI).

Liberia, as a sovereign Flag State, has the responsibility to ensure its registered vessels’ compliance to accepted international standards, including compliance with maritime communication requirements, and has the right and responsibility to monitor the activation and deactivation of satellite communication equipment and services on Liberian flagged vessels.

The Liberian Administration has accepted Iridium as a recognized Maritime Mobile Satellite Service (MMSS) for providing GMDSS services and the dissemination of MSI. Therefore, approved Iridium GMDSS terminals may be installed on Liberian flagged vessels for compliance with the applicable requirements of SOLAS Chapter IV regarding GMDSS and MSI.

This Advisory provides guidance on the activation and registration of Iridium terminals on Liberian flagged vessels.

Activation and Registration of Iridium Terminals

Iridium has designated several communication companies around the world as their designated GMDSS service providers. In turn the Liberian Administration has recognized some of the Iridium GMDSS service providers for activation of Iridium terminals on Liberia flagged vessels on behalf of the Administration.

Iridium GMDSS terminals installed on Liberian flagged vessels must be activated, and when appropriate deactivated, by one of the Iridium GMDSS service providers recognized by the Administration. A list of the Iridium GMDSS service providers recognized by the Administration can be found at (*insert link*).

Any Iridium terminal installed on board a Liberian flag ship must be reported to the Administration in accordance with international telecommunication rules (ITU) for amendment of the vessel's radio station license, for verification of compliance with SOLAS Chapter IV requirements, and inclusion in the Administration's communication database.

To this end the recognized Iridium GMDSS service provider will forward to the Administration the Iridium GMDSS terminal information needed for registration of the terminal in the Administration's communication database, for amendment of the vessel's radio station license to indicate Iridium as the ship earth station and GMDSS terminal(s), for inclusion of the terminal information in the ITU Report, and for updating the COSPAS-SARSAT database, as appropriate.

The Administration will issue the vessel an amended Ship Radio Station License as appropriate to indicate the activation of Iridium GMDSS terminals.

Operations in Sea Area 4

For vessels operating in Sea Area 4, the Liberian Administration will accept the activation of an Iridium GMDSS terminal on board the vessel as meeting the requirement for duplication of services provided a MF/HF installation with DSC and NBDP is used as the main station and the vessel has another recognized mobile satellite service ship earth station as required by SOLAS IV/10.1.1.

Please note that the second recognized mobile satellite service ship earth station as required by SOLAS IV/10.1.1 could be a second Iridium terminal, an Inmarsat terminal, or another mobile satellite service terminal if such are approved by IMO in the future for GMDSS.

Action

Shipowners and operators shall be guided by the aforementioned guidance for activating Iridium GMDSS terminals on Liberian flag vessels. The shipowners and operators should specifically note the following:

1. Iridium GMDSS terminals on Liberian flagged ships must be activated by one of the Iridium GMDSS service providers recognized by the Administration. The recognized Iridium GMDSS providers can be found at <https://www.liscr.com/iridium-services>.
2. Iridium GMDSS terminals installed on Liberian flagged vessels must be reported to the Administration.

For questions regarding this note please contact this Administration's Vessel Certification Department at email: IridiumServices@liscr.com or via telephone number +1 703 790 3434.

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