

RESOLUTION A.419(XI)

*Adopted on 15 November 1979
Agenda item 10(b)*

WORLD-WIDE NAVIGATIONAL WARNING SERVICE

THE ASSEMBLY,

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

BEARING IN MIND the decisions of the XIth International Hydrographic Conference,

HAVING CONSIDERED the recommendations made by the Maritime Safety Committee at its thirty-eighth and fortieth sessions,

1. ADOPTS the World-wide Navigational Warning Service as set out in Annex 1 to the present resolution;
2. AUTHORIZES the Maritime Safety Committee to amend the World-wide Navigational Warning Service, as may be necessary, in accordance with the procedure set out in Annex 2 to the present resolution;
3. REVOKES resolution A.381(X).

ANNEX 1

WORLD-WIDE NAVIGATIONAL WARNING SERVICE

1 DEFINITIONS

For the purposes of this Service the following definitions apply:

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|------------------------------|---|
| (a) <i>Area</i> | A geographical sea area, as shown in Appendix 1, established for the purpose of co-ordinating the transmission of radio navigational warnings. The delimitation of such areas is not related to and shall not prejudice the delimitation of any boundaries between States. Where appropriate, the term NAVAREA followed by an identifying roman numeral may be used as a short title for the areas. |
| (b) <i>Sub-area</i> | A subdivision of an area in which a number of countries have established a co-ordinated system for the transmission of coastal warnings. |
| (c) <i>Region</i> | The part of an area or sub-area in which one country has accepted responsibility for the transmission of coastal warnings. |
| (d) <i>Area co-ordinator</i> | The authority charged with collating and issuing warnings and bulletins to cover the whole of the area. |

- (e) *Sub-area co-ordinator* The authority charged with the co-ordination of the navigational warning system within a designated sub-area in matters involving more than one national region. He shall serve as the central point of contact for national co-ordinators and is the authority charged with forwarding navigational warnings to his area co-ordinator.
- (f) *National co-ordinator* The authority charged with collating and issuing coastal warnings from the network of national coast radio stations, and responsible for sending immediately all relevant information to the area co-ordinator, or to his sub-area co-ordinator where that authority has been established.
- (g) *NAVAREA warning* Long-range warning broadcasts issued by the area co-ordinator for his area and broadcast by a powerful station or stations to cover the whole of that area and parts of adjacent areas.
- (h) *NAVAREA warning bulletin* A list of serial numbers of recent NAVAREA warnings issued and broadcast by the area co-ordinator.
- (i) *Coastal warning* A warning promulgated by a national co-ordinating authority through the national coast radio stations to cover a region or a portion of the area.
- (j) *Local warning* A warning to cover the area within the limits of jurisdiction of a harbour or port authority and which may not need promulgation outside these limits. Such warnings may be issued by those authorities.

2 REQUIREMENTS FOR AREA AND SUB-AREA CO-ORDINATORS

2.1 In each area, the area co-ordinator, and any sub-area co-ordinators established, should have at their disposal a well established hydrographic service as well as effective and adequate communication links with participating national co-ordinators. The area co-ordinator should, in addition, have at his disposal effective and adequate facilities for transmission to the entire area, taking into account the appropriate geographic location for propagation purposes. Transmission facilities should, in addition, include as much of the adjacent areas as can be covered in 24 hours sailing by a fast ship (about 700 miles).

3 NAVAREA WARNINGS AND BULLETINS

3.1 Warnings transmitted should normally refer only to the area concerned.

3.2 Warnings should be transmitted at specified times; they should be repeated in the broadcast immediately following the original transmission and thereafter as considered necessary.

3.3 Unless urgent operational considerations dictate more immediate implementation, changes to broadcast schedules should not be implemented prior to three months after appropriate national authorities have notified the International Telecommunication Union (ITU). National authorities implementing modifications are responsible for ensuring that the requirements of paragraph 5.1 are met and for informing mariners in good time of all changes. IMCO and IHO should also be informed of intended changes at the same time as they are communicated to ITU.

3.4 At least two daily transmission times are necessary to provide adequate promulgation of warnings. When NAVAREAs extend across more than six time zones, more than two broadcasts should be especially considered to ensure the possibility of warnings being received during fixed watchkeeping periods.

3.5 Arrangements may be made for warnings to be available at port offices and, where appropriate, for their eventual inclusion in a generally available printed form.

3.6 NAVAREA warning bulletins should be transmitted periodically.

3.7 Warnings should remain valid until cancelled by the area co-ordinator.

4 COASTAL WARNINGS

4.1 These warnings are restricted to coastal waters. Where there is a requirement for such warnings, it is desirable to cover a distance of up to 100–200 miles from the coast.

4.2 Warnings should be broadcast for as long as the information is valid or until it is made available by other means.

4.3 Warnings should be broadcast at scheduled times, and on receipt when the urgency demands, using if necessary the alerting systems available for this purpose.

5 AREA CO-ORDINATOR

5.1 In developing time schedules, the area co-ordinator should ensure that the times of broadcasting warnings do not coincide with those in adjacent areas. Due regard should be given to the hours of service fixed for all categories of ship station, and account should be taken of the difference in zone times between the eastern and western boundaries of the area. (To receive NAVAREA warnings, ship stations may need to adjust hours of service to allow for times of scheduled broadcasts.)

5.2 The compilation, co-ordination and processing of the warnings and bulletins to be broadcast should be left to the discretion of the area co-ordinator.

5.3 *In the case of navigational warnings which remain in force after the last broadcast, arrangements should be made to ensure that the information they contained is available world-wide.*

5.4 The area co-ordinator should ensure that those messages that warrant further promulgation in other areas are passed to all area co-ordinators.

5.5 Although arrangements made by the area co-ordinator should enable all ships to receive by some means messages in force for an area either before reaching or on entering an area, nevertheless it should be possible in exceptional cases for ships to obtain on request texts of messages in force, but not included in the current scheduled broadcasts.

6 ROUTEING OF INFORMATION

6.1 Incoming information requiring warning action:

- (a) National co-ordinators should issue a coastal warning where necessary. If the information is considered appropriate for promulgation as a NAVAREA warning it should be passed to the respective sub-area or area co-ordinator. Where it is felt necessary, the message should be prefixed by the desired degree of priority.
- (b) When national or area co-ordinators believe themselves to be the first recipient of information relating to another region or area, they should pass it to the appropriate national or area co-ordinator by the quickest possible means.
- (c) Area co-ordinators, on receiving the information concerning their area, will decide on the issue of a NAVAREA warning in accordance with 3, 5 and 7.

6.2 Dissemination of NAVAREA warnings:

- (a) Area co-ordinators should pass NAVAREA warnings which warrant further promulgation in adjacent areas directly to the appropriate area co-ordinators, using the quickest possible means.
- (b) National co-ordinators should arrange to receive NAVAREA warnings broadcast for their area, and to include those warnings in force for their region in their national Notices to Mariners.
- (c) Each area co-ordinator should ensure that written copies of those NAVAREA warnings likely to remain in force for more than six weeks are made available to those area co-ordinators or national authorities requesting them; weekly despatch by airmail is recommended in the absence of an alternative appropriate delivery arrangement.
- (d) National co-ordinators should consider the possibility and desirability of making NAVAREA warnings in force available to ships in port.

7 SUBJECT MATTER OF WARNINGS

7.1 NAVAREA warnings:

- (a) Generally speaking, area warnings are concerned with information detailed below which ocean-going mariners require for their safe navigation. This includes, in particular, failures of important aids to navigation, as well as information which may affect changes to planned navigational routes.
- (b) The following list of messages considered suitable for transmission as warnings in this system is not exhaustive and should only be regarded as a guideline. Furthermore, it presupposes that sufficiently precise information about the items has not previously been disseminated in Notices to Mariners:
 - (i) casualties to lights, fog signals and buoys affecting main shipping lanes;
 - (ii) the presence of dangerous wrecks in or near main shipping lanes and, if relevant, their marking;
 - (iii) establishment of major new aids to navigation or significant changes to existing ones when such establishment or change might be misleading to shipping;
 - (iv) the presence of large unwieldy tows in congested waters;
 - (v) drifting mines;
 - (vi) areas where search and rescue (SAR) and anti-pollution operations are being carried out (for avoidance of such areas);
 - (vii) the presence of newly discovered rocks, shoals, reefs and wrecks likely to constitute a danger to shipping, and, if relevant, their marking;
 - (viii) unexpected alteration or suspension of established routes;
 - (ix) cable or pipe-laying activities or other underwater operations constituting potential dangers in or near shipping lanes;
 - (x) establishment of offshore structures in or near shipping lanes;
 - (xi) significant malfunctioning of radio-navigation services;
 - (xii) information concerning special operations which might affect the safety of shipping, sometimes over wide areas, e.g. naval exercises, missile firings, space missions, nuclear tests, etc. These should be initially promulgated by the area co-ordinator concerned not less than five days in advance of the scheduled event, wherever possible. The messages should be repeated as considered necessary until the event is completed.

- (c) The categories of messages to be transmitted as warnings should be reviewed after a period of about 36 months, subsequent to the implementation of the system. Navigational warnings broadcast within the area should be consecutively numbered throughout the calendar year.

7.2 Coastal warnings:

Coastal warnings are concerned with information listed in 7.1 above which is sufficient for mariners to know when they enter a given sub-area or region. However, coastal warnings should not be restricted to main shipping lanes.

7.3 Local warnings:

Local warnings supplement the coastal system by giving detailed information on aspects which the ocean-going ship normally does not require. However, local warnings may be issued in the national language only.

7.4 The **area warning system** should normally be sufficient for the ships which proceed along the main oceanic routes of an area. However, in some waters knowledge of the coastal warnings may prove necessary.

8 USE OF NAVIGATIONAL WARNING SIGNAL (2200 Hz tone) AND SAFETY SIGNAL (TTT/Sécurité)

8.1 NAVAREA warnings:

The navigational warning signal or the safety signal should not be used to announce NAVAREA warnings.

8.2 Coastal warnings:

- (a) Coastal warnings should be identified for broadcasting purposes by the originator (co-ordinator) as 'vital', 'important', or 'for scheduled broadcast'.
- (b) 'Vital' navigational warnings should be transmitted on receipt and towards the end of the first available period of silence, preceded by the navigational warning signal and safety signal in accordance with the provisions of the Radio Regulations.
- (c) The navigational warning signal should not be used to announce a scheduled broadcast unless the broadcast contains a 'vital' navigational warning to be transmitted for the first time.
- (d) 'Important' navigational warnings should be transmitted towards the end of the first available period of silence, preceded by the safety signal in accordance with the provisions of the Radio Regulations.
- (e) A scheduled broadcast should not be preceded by the safety signal unless the broadcast contains an 'important' navigational warning to be transmitted for the first time, or the repetition of a 'vital' warning.

9 LANGUAGE TO BE USED

9.1 All navigational warnings, with the possible exception of those referred to in 7.3, should be transmitted in English (using where possible the Standard Marine Navigational Vocabulary) and:

- (a) for NAVAREA warnings, in one or more of the other official languages of the United Nations, as considered necessary;
- (b) for coastal warnings, in the national language.

10 MISCELLANEOUS

10.1 Classes of emission

For promulgation of NAVAREA warnings, radiotelegraphy (A1) should be used in all cases. In addition, area co-ordinators should consider the use of other modes of emission, e.g. direct printing, facsimile, telephony, etc., depending on the needs of the ships in the area and the facilities available.

10.2 Speed of transmission

Speed of transmission shall be in accordance with the relevant provisions of the Radio Regulations.

10.3 Order of transmission

In order to avoid unnecessary copying or waiting, coast stations should, as a general rule, transmit warnings in their scheduled broadcasts in reverse chronological order of receipt.

10.4 Intimation of duration of a warning

Where necessary, the duration of a warning, if known, should be given in the text of the warning.

10.5 Format

The elements of information to be included in a NAVAREA warning message, with a few examples, are shown in a recommended format reproduced in Appendix 2.

11 IMPORTANT METEOROLOGICAL INFORMATION

11.1 It is recognized to be of great assistance for mariners to receive meteorological warnings relating to safety of navigation together with navigational warnings and on the same frequencies. Area co-ordinators are encouraged to consider transmission of such meteorological warnings within the general principle laid down for NAVAREA warnings. To avoid misunderstanding, such warnings may be given a special prefix: 'MET warning'.

12 IMPLEMENTATION

12.1 It is not expected that all area co-ordinators will be in a position to implement the Service at the same time. Nevertheless, it is desirable that those areas able to begin operations in accordance with the Service should do so on a provisional basis consistent with meeting obligations imposed by any existing arrangements.

APPENDIX 2

PROPOSED FORMAT OF NAVIGATIONAL WARNINGS

COMPULSORY INFORMATION			INFORMATION AS APPROPRIATE			
NAVAREA	Annual Serial No.	General locality	Nature of danger	Exact position	Time observed*	Remarks
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
NAVAREA I	7	France — West Coast	Quessant light extinguished	48 40 N 04 45 W		
NAVAREA VIII	315	Seychelles	Vessel on fire emitting toxic fumes N E	231036Z	Pass well up wind
NAVAREA IV	13	Gulf of Mexico	Unwieldy tow			Production platform proceeding from Houston to position 28 75 N 90 02 W on 24th

- Note:**
1. Where it is necessary, a more accurate position (i.e. in seconds) may be given in column 5.
 2. Where it is necessary and known, duration of a warning should be given in column 7.
 3. Where possible, columns 4, 5, 6 and 7 should follow the Standard Marine Navigational Vocabulary.

* e.g. for drifting objects, such as mines, derelicts, etc.

ANNEX 2

**PROCEDURE FOR AMENDING THE WORLD-WIDE NAVIGATIONAL
WARNING SERVICE**

- 1 Proposed amendments to the World-wide Navigational Warning Service should be submitted to the Maritime Safety Committee for evaluation.
- 2 Amendments to the Service should normally come into force at intervals of approximately two years or at such longer periods as determined by the Maritime Safety Committee at the time of adoption. Amendments adopted by the Maritime Safety Committee will be notified to all concerned, will provide at least 12 months' notification and will come into force on 1 January of the following year.
- 3 The agreement of the International Hydrographic Organization and the active participation of other bodies should be sought according to the nature of the proposed amendments.
- 4 When the proposals for amendment have been examined in substance, the Maritime Safety Committee will entrust the Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications with the ensuing editorial tasks.
- 5 The NAVAREA schedule of broadcast times and frequencies, not being an integral part of the Service and being subject to frequent changes, will not be subject to the amendment procedure.

APPENDIX 1

GEOGRAPHICAL AREAS FOR CO-ORDINATING AND PROMULGATING RADIO-NAVIGATIONAL WARNINGS

Note: Geographical co-ordinates are approximate

