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CIRCULAR LETTER 25/2018  
12 March 2018

**REPORT ON THE FIFTH SESSION OF THE IMO SUB-COMMITTEE  
ON NAVIGATION, COMMUNICATIONS AND SEARCH AND RESCUE (NCSR 5)**

References:

- A. IHO CL 29/2017 dated 31 March - *Report on the 4<sup>th</sup> Session of the IMO Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications, and Search and Rescue*;
- B. IHO CL 5/2018 dated 18 January – *Preparation for the 5<sup>th</sup> Session of the IMO Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications, and Search and Rescue (NCSR)*.

Dear Hydrographer,

1. As announced in Reference A, the fifth session of the Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR 5) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) was held at the IMO Headquarters in London, United Kingdom, from 19 to 23 February 2018. The IHO was represented by Assistant Directors David Wyatt and Anthony Pharaoh, Mr Peter Doherty, the Chair of the World-Wide Navigational Warning Service Sub-Committee (WWNWS-SC) and Mr Christopher Janus, Branch Chief, NGA Maritime Watch - NAVAREA IV/XII. National Hydrographic Offices were also represented in the delegations of several countries, including Argentina, Brazil, China, Cyprus, Denmark, Germany, Greece, IR of Iran, Ireland, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom and United States. The following NAVAREA Coordinators were also represented: Argentina (VI), Canada (XVII & XVIII), Norway (XIX), United Kingdom (I) and United States (IV & XII).

2. As indicated in Reference B, the agenda for NCSR 5 included the following items of interest to IHO Member States:

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|-----------------|--|
| Agenda Item 3:  | Routeing measures and mandatory ship reporting systems;  |
| Agenda Item 6:  | Guidelines for the harmonized display of navigation information received via communications equipment;   |
| Agenda Item 7:  | Guidelines on standardized modes of operation, S-mode, (for navigational equipment);   |
| Agenda Item 8:  | Develop guidance on definition and harmonization of the format and structure of Maritime Service Portfolios (MSPs);  |
| Agenda Item 9:  | Updating of the GMDSS master plan and guidelines on MSI (maritime safety information) provisions;  |
| Agenda Item 10: | Consequential work related to the new Polar Code;  |
| Agenda Item 11: | Revision of SOLAS chapters III and IV for Modernization of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS), including related and consequential amendments to other existing instruments; |
| Agenda Item 14: | Developments in GMDSS satellite services; and  |
| Agenda Item 22: | Any other business.  |

3. The relevant discussions, considerations and decisions / recommendations are summarized in Annex A. The full report of NCSR 5 (NCSR 5/23) will be available on the IMODOCS website (<https://webaccounts.imo.org/>) when issued.

## **Dates for NCSR 6**

4. The sixth session of the NCSR (NCSR 6) is currently scheduled to be held at the IMO Headquarters from 21 to 25 January 2019.

## **Actions required from the IHO and its Member States**

5. The IHO Secretariat will ensure that the relevant subsidiary organs and subordinate bodies of the IHO are informed of the outcome of NCSR 5 and invite them to consider how it affects their activities and work plan and develop inputs to the relevant agenda items as appropriate. This action concerns primarily the Hydrographic Services and Standards Committee (HSSC) and its working groups and the WNWNS-SC.

6. As a result of the information provided by the International Mobile Satellite Organization (IMSO) related to the planned migration of the recognized mobile satellite services from the Inmarsat-3 satellite constellation to the Inmarsat-4 satellite constellation, the Sub-Committee, supported by the Chair of the International SafetyNET Coordinating Panel and the IHO WNWNS-SC, requested Member States and relevant intergovernmental Organizations to notify registered users of the SafetyNET Service about the migration plan and requested Member States to bring this information to the attention of the certified SafetyNET users, MSI providers and Maritime Rescue Coordination Centre (MRCC) operators in their respective countries, through the promulgation of Notices to Mariners, see Annex B for an example draft, and to encourage them to contact Inmarsat and the International SafetyNET Panel for further assistance, as appropriate.

7. National Hydrographic Offices are encouraged, in general, to maintain liaison with their national Maritime Administration to ensure that their views and interests are acknowledged in their country's views on, and contribution to, the progress of outputs affecting the provision of hydrographic services and maritime safety information.

On behalf of the Secretary-General  
Yours sincerely,



Abri KAMPFER  
Director

## **Annexes**

- A. Summary of the discussions at NCSR 5
- B. Draft Notice to Mariners

### Summary of the discussions at NCSR 5

#### Agenda Item 3 - Routeing measures and mandatory ship reporting systems

1. The Sub-Committee approved the establishment of the Traffic Separation Scheme (TSS) and associated measures *In Dangan Channel*, with a view to adoption by the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC).
2. The Sub-Committee approved the establishment of the TSS and associated routeing measures *In the vicinity of Kattegat*, with a view to adoption by the Committee.
3. The Sub-Committee approved the amendment to the existing areas to be avoided *Off the coast of Ghana in the Atlantic Ocean*, with a view to adoption by the Committee.
4. The Sub-Committee approved the establishment of the precautionary area *Dangan Channel No.2* with the recommended directions of traffic flow, with a view to adoption by the Committee.
5. The Sub-Committee approved the establishment of deep-water routes, recommended routes and precautionary area *In the vicinity of Kattegat*, with a view to adoption by the Committee.
6. The Sub-Committee approved the establishment of two-way routes, precautionary areas and areas to be avoided *In the Bering Sea and Bering Strait*, with a view to adoption by the Committee.
7. The Sub-Committee approved the draft MSC resolution on *Mandatory ship reporting system in the Torres Strait region and the Inner Route of the Great Barrier Reef (REEFREP)*, with a view to adoption by the Committee.
8. The Sub-Committee invited Member States concerned to review the adopted mandatory ship reporting systems, as appropriate, for the purpose of reducing ships' reporting burden by utilizing automated ship reporting by electronic means, as specified in resolution MSC.433(98).
9. The provisions agreed by the Sub-Committee will now be submitted to the MSC for adoption at its 99<sup>th</sup> session in May 2018. Implementation of the provisions mentioned will be not less than six months after adoption by the MSC with the exception for those *In the vicinity of Kattegat*, which will be implemented on 1 July 2020.
10. The Sub-Committee endorsed the opinion of the Expert Group, with respect to the challenges met in the course of their work, and:
  - .1 invited Member States concerned to voluntarily submit to the Secretariat for advice, as appropriate, initial proposals at least 6 months in advance of the next session; and
  - .2 urged Member States to adhere to the requirements and guidelines and provide necessary information in the document in their submissions.

#### Agenda Item 6 - Guidelines for the harmonized display of navigation information received via communications equipment

11. The Sub-Committee considered the progress of several outputs related to the display of navigation-related information.

12. The Sub-Committee endorsed the draft *Interim Guidelines for the harmonized display of navigation information received via communications equipment* and the associated draft MSC Circular, for approval by the Committee.

13. In undertaking this work, the Navigation Working Group noted the interrelationship with the work on the *Standardized mode of operation, S-mode*, and the *Guidance on the definition and harmonization of the format and structure of maritime service within the Maritime Service Portfolio (MSP)*. The Working Group further noted that the proposal from Ukraine in document NCSR 5/6/1 (*Integration and presentation of available navigation-related information exchange via communication equipment by integrating VHF/MF/HF DSC into INS*), while addressing a crucial aspect, was only part of a wider solution needed to allow information received from any communications equipment to be route onto navigation equipment. It was therefore agreed to consider incorporating the Ukraine proposal at a later stage, prior to finalizing the guidelines.

14. Due to the decision taken by MSC 98, the proposed unrelated amendments prepared under the output on the "Interconnection of NAVTEX and Inmarsat SafetyNet receivers and their display on Integrated Navigation Display systems" would be kept on hold for an unknown period of time.

#### **Agenda Item 7 - Guidelines on standardized modes of operation, S-mode**

15. The Sub-Committee considered the document NCSR 5/7, submitted by Australia, the Republic of Korea, InterManager and the Nautical Institute, containing draft *Guidelines on the standardized modes of operation, S-mode*.

16. The Sub-Committee agreed that with the completion of the S-mode guidelines, a consequential revision to SN.1/Circ.243/Rev.1 on *Amended guidelines for the presentation of navigational related symbols, terms and abbreviations* was necessary. Hence the Sub-Committee agreed that the intersessional Correspondence Group should also be tasked with the revision of SN.1/Circ.243/Rev.1.

17. The Sub-Committee established, under the coordination of Australia, an intersessional Correspondence Group to continue the development of the draft *Guidelines on standardized modes of operation, S-Mode* under the associated terms of reference with the view of submitting to the next session of the Sub-Committee a report of the Correspondence Group's work, a consolidated draft S-Mode guidelines, and consequential draft amendments to SN.1/Circ.243/Rev.1.

#### **Agenda Item 8 - Develop guidance on definition and harmonization of the format and structure of Maritime Service Portfolios (MSPs)**

18. The Sub-Committee considered a number of document submissions and proposals covering the development of guidance on the definition and harmonization of the format and structure of Maritime Service Portfolios (MSPs). It was agreed to retain the template for maritime service descriptions in the draft Guidance.

19. The representative of the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA) informed the Sub-Committee that they had already developed a draft descriptions of maritime services for Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) Services using the draft template. While it was noted that this was still work in progress, the Sub-Committee concurred that it would serve as a good example and tool for other domain coordinating bodies and therefore it was agreed to include the draft descriptions of the VTS Services.

20. The Sub-Committee agreed to invite domain coordinating bodies, if established, to submit the description of maritime services under their remit, using the draft template, to HGDM 2:

- IALA for maritime service No.1 (VTS Information Service (INS))
- IALA for maritime service No.2 (Navigational Assistance Service (NAS))

- IALA for maritime service No.3 (Traffic Organization Service (TOS))
- IHMA for maritime service No.4 (Local Port Service (LPS))
- IHO for maritime service No.5 (Maritime Safety Information Service (MSI))
- IMPA for maritime service No.6 (Pilotage service)
- IHO for maritime service No.11 (Nautical Chart Service)
- IHO for maritime service No.12 (Nautical Publications Service)
- WMO for maritime service No.13 (Ice Navigation Service)
- WMO for maritime service No.14 (Meteorological Information Service)
- IHO for maritime service No.15 (Real-time hydrographic and environmental information Service)

The IHO representative noted that MSI is not within the remit of the IHO; it was agreed that the IHO would contribute and support this domain through the WNWNS-SC but responsibility would remain with the IMO.

21. It was noted that for the following maritime services the domain coordinating bodies have not yet been identified:

- Maritime service No.7 (Tug service)
- Maritime service No.8 (Vessel Shore Reporting)
- Maritime service No.9 (Telemedical Assistance Service (TMAS))
- Maritime service No.10 (Maritime Assistance Service (MAS))
- Maritime service No.16 (Search and Rescue Service)

22. The Sub-Committee agreed to establish a robust future process for the review of the received descriptions of maritime services, using the example templates, after finalization of the Guidance. In addition the Sub-Committee instructed the second meeting of the IMO/IHO Harmonization Group on Data Modelling (HGDM2) to consider development of a sustainable continuous review process, without a substantive role for the organs of the Organization as the resources were not available to support substantial additional tasking.

23. The Sub-Committee approved the revised terms of reference for the HGDM and agreed to the relaxation of the deadline for submissions from domain coordinating bodies in respect to submissions of maritime service descriptions.

24. As a result of the discussions on the prioritization of each e-navigation task, the Sub-Committee updated the IMO e-navigation Strategy Implementation Plan (SIP) and agreed to forward it to the Committee for approval as an MSC Circular.

#### **Agenda Item 9 - Updating of the GMDSS master plan and guidelines on MSI (maritime safety information) provisions**

25. The Sub-Committee noted the information provided by the World Meteorological Organization (WMO) on the activities undertaken by the newly formed Worldwide Met-Ocean Information and Warning Service (WWMIWS) Committee of the WMO/IOC Joint Technical Commission for Oceanography and Marine Meteorology (JCOMM) to coordinate the provision of MSI for the WWMIWS. This Committee reflects the IHO World-Wide Navigational Warning Service Sub-Committee (WWNWS-SC) and together they will coordinate the provision of MSI and the maintenance of the supporting documentation. The Sub-Committee also noted that the list of METAREA Coordinators had been included in a new annex 2 to the COMSAR.1 circular on the list of NAVAREA Coordinators. It was further noted that the circular had been renamed as List of NAVAREA and METAREA Coordinators, which was disseminated for the first time as COMSAR.1/Circ.58, on 9 June 2017.

26. The Sub-Committee noted that amendments to the GMDSS Master Plan had been distributed in GMDSS/Circ.21 on 31 May 2017 and Administrations were encouraged to check their national data for

accuracy and to provide the Organization with any necessary amendments. The Chair of the IHO World-Wide Navigational Warning Service Sub-Committee (WWNWS-SC) reported on the activities of the sub-committee, highlighting the on-going maintenance of the documentation related to the provision of Maritime Safety Information (MSI) and the capacity building training provided to the Meso-American and Caribbean Hydrographic Commission and the South West Pacific Hydrographic Commission regions.

27. The Sub-Committee received a report from the Chair of the IMO NAVTEX Panel, including details of proposed new NAVTEX stations which had recently become operational and stations which had become or remained non-operational. After receiving statements from the delegations of Cyprus, Greece and Turkey on the delimitation of the NAVTEX service areas in the eastern Mediterranean; the Sub-Committee invited the Chair of the IMO NAVTEX Coordinating Panel to take action, as he deemed appropriate.

#### **Agenda Item 10 - Consequential work related to the new Polar Code**

28. The Sub-Committee re-established the Correspondence Group on consequential work related to the Polar Code, under the coordination of Germany, and instructed it to prepare, on the basis of document NCSR 5/10 (*Consequential Work Related to the New Polar Code – Report of the Correspondence Group*), paragraph 5.3, a draft "General guidance for navigation and communication equipment intended for use on ships operating in polar waters", taking into account the table – *Overview action items according to carriage requirements* – as set out in the annex to document NCSR 5/10, and the outcome of discussions at NCSR 5, MSC 99 and MSC 100, as appropriate; and to submit a report to NCSR 6 for consideration.

#### **Agenda Item 11 - Revision of SOLAS chapters III and IV for Modernization of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS), including related and consequential amendments to other existing instruments**

29. The Sub-Committee noted the outcomes of the discussions which took place on the further development of the preliminary draft revision of SOLAS chapters III and IV at the thirteenth meeting of the Joint IMO/ITU Experts Group, which were based on the interim report submitted by the Correspondence Group on the Modernization of the GMDSS. The Sub-Committee also considered the report of the Correspondence Group on the Modernization of the GMDSS, which contained comments and suggested revisions on SOLAS chapters III and IV and the plan for revision of related instruments. The Sub-Committee approved the proposed work plan for related and consequential amendments to existing instruments other than SOLAS and approved the terms of reference for the re-established Correspondence Group on the modernization of the GMDSS.

30. The Sub-Committee approved the terms of reference for the 14<sup>th</sup> meeting of the Joint IMO/ITU Experts Group, to be held 3-7 September 2018 at the IMO in London.

#### **Agenda Item 14 - Developments in GMDSS satellite services**

31. The Sub-Committee approved the International Mobile Satellite Organization's (IMSO) annual report on Inmarsat's public service obligations for the provision of recognized mobile satellite communication services in the GMDSS. The Sub-Committee also considered the information provided by IMSO related to the planned migration of the recognized mobile satellite services from the Inmarsat-3 satellite constellation to the Inmarsat-4 satellite constellation. Concerns were expressed regarding the short notice and aggressive schedule for the migration of the recognized GMDSS services (i.e. Inmarsat-C and Fleet 77) from the primary Inmarsat-3 satellites, with the exception of I3-F5, over to the Inmarsat-4 satellites, which gave insufficient time for the preparation of amendments to related instruments. (e.g. International SafetyNET Manual (MSC.1/Circ.1364/Rev.1), GMDSS Master Plan (GMDSS.1/Circ.21) and the IAMSAR Manual), the notification to mariners, Maritime Safety Information Providers (MSIPs), Maritime Rescue Coordination Centres (MRCCs) and other stakeholders and the availability of information.

32. It was further indicated that the migration would include four stages with relocation of satellites under each stage, and that the transition would require a certification process. Some old generation terminals might not recognize the change of satellites and would require some consequential actions. In addition, many MSIPs had not yet completed the migration to SafetyNET II services. The Sub-Committee noted that at the next meeting of the IHO Document Review Working Group a text for a "Notice to Mariners" would be prepared, including a step-by-step procedure, to be distributed among national Hydrographic Offices, explaining the impact and action to be taken on board ships when encountering challenges to make a connection with the I-4 satellites.

33. The Sub-Committee invited the International SafetyNET Coordinating Panel to notify registered users of the SafetyNET Service about the migration plan and requested Member States to bring this information to the attention of the certified SafetyNET users, MSIPs and MRCC operators in their respective countries, through the promulgation of Notices to Mariners, for instance, and to encourage them to contact Inmarsat and the International SafetyNET Panel for further assistance, as appropriate. The Sub-Committee also noted that consequential work on the International SafetyNET Manual would be undertaken by the IHO Document Review Working Group for approval by the WWNWS-SC and WMO; and for endorsement by NCSR 6 and subsequent approval by MSC 101. In addition, the Sub-Committee noted that information to inform Administrations was expected to be prepared by IMSO, to be circulated by the Organization as soon as possible.

34. The Sub-Committee noted the information provided by IMSO in relation to the official launch of the SafetyNET II service by Inmarsat on 14 November 2017 to facilitate broadcast of MSI, including SAR communications to ships at sea. The Sub-Committee also endorsed the recognition of the Inmarsat FleetBroadband Maritime Safety Data Service for use in the GMDSS and approved the draft MSC resolution on *Statement of Recognition of Maritime Satellite Services provided by the Inmarsat Global Ltd.*, and forward it to the Committee for adoption.

35. Taking into account the information provided by IMSO and after a lengthy debate on the recognition of the Iridium mobile satellite system for use in the GMDSS, in which no clear consensus was reached, the Sub-Committee agreed to invite the Committee to note the discussions and diverse proposals, and provide guidance to the Sub-Committee on the way forward.

#### **Agenda Item 21 - Election of Chair and Vice-Chair for 2018**

36. The Sub-Committee unanimously elected Mr Ringo Lakeman (Netherlands), as Chair, and Mr Nigel Clifford (New Zealand), as Vice-Chair, for 2018.

#### **Agenda Item 22 - Any other business**

37. The IHO reported on the monitoring of ECDIS issues and Electronic Navigational Chart (ENC) coverage. The Sub-Committee noted that some items of MSC.1/Circ.1503 (*ECDIS – Guidance for good practice*) related in particular to operating anomalies will no longer be relevant for up-to-date ECDIS and noted the need to consider revising the Circular.

38. The Sub-Committee noted the information contained in document NCSR 5/22 (Secretariat) on the work undertaken by the 4<sup>th</sup> session of the Sub-Committee on the Implementation of IMO Instruments (III 4) to address the issue of non-compliant ECDIS using outdated editions of specifications from the port State control (PSC) perspective. Having noted that some ECDIS manufacturers still needed to upgrade their systems, III 4 had agreed to issue III.2/Circ.2 on Action to be taken by port States on the required updates of ECDIS. In approving III.2/Circ.2, III 4 had recognized, given that the deadline of the updates of ECDIS being 31 August 2017 had already been exceeded, that the circular, as an interim measure, would require a date of revocation. However, III 4 had been unable to determine a date of revocation of this circular due to the lack of information on when the required updating work of ECDIS would be completed.

39. After considering the documents submitted by Comité International Radio-Maritime (CIRM) (NCSR 5/22/2), IHO (NCSR 5/22/6) and International Chamber of Shipping (ICS) (NCDR 5/22/11), the Sub-Committee recommended III 5 to consider revoking III.2/Circ.2 as from 1 July 2018 and, bearing in mind that III 5 was scheduled to meet from 24 to 28 September 2018, invited the Committee to endorse this action.

40. The Sub-Committee noted the information provided by Argentina (NCSR 5/22/9) on the plan for installing automatic identification system aids to navigation (AIS AtoN) on the Antarctic Continent for the purpose of enhancing the safety of navigation and accordingly the safety of life at sea and the protection of the marine environment. The Sub-Committee invited Member States to inform mariners and operators of tourist cruises in the Antarctic Territory of the availability of the AIS AtoN installed, as well as of those aids that were planned to be installed during the austral summer, and to request mariners to inform the NAVAREA VI Coordinator ([snautica@hidro.gov.ar](mailto:snautica@hidro.gov.ar)) of any abnormalities they detect in the operation of those signals or of any other information they deemed relevant for improving the service.

**Proposed Draft Notice to Mariners**  
**NOTICE TO MARINER**

**INMARSAT I-3 TO I-4 MIGRATION**

THE INTERNATIONAL MARITIME ORGANIZATION (IMO), THE INTERNATIONAL HYDROGRAPHIC ORGANIZATION (IHO), AND THE WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION (WMO) INFORM THE MARITIME COMMUNITY OF THE PLANNED INMARSAT I-3 TO I-4 SATELLITE MIGRATION IN 2018.

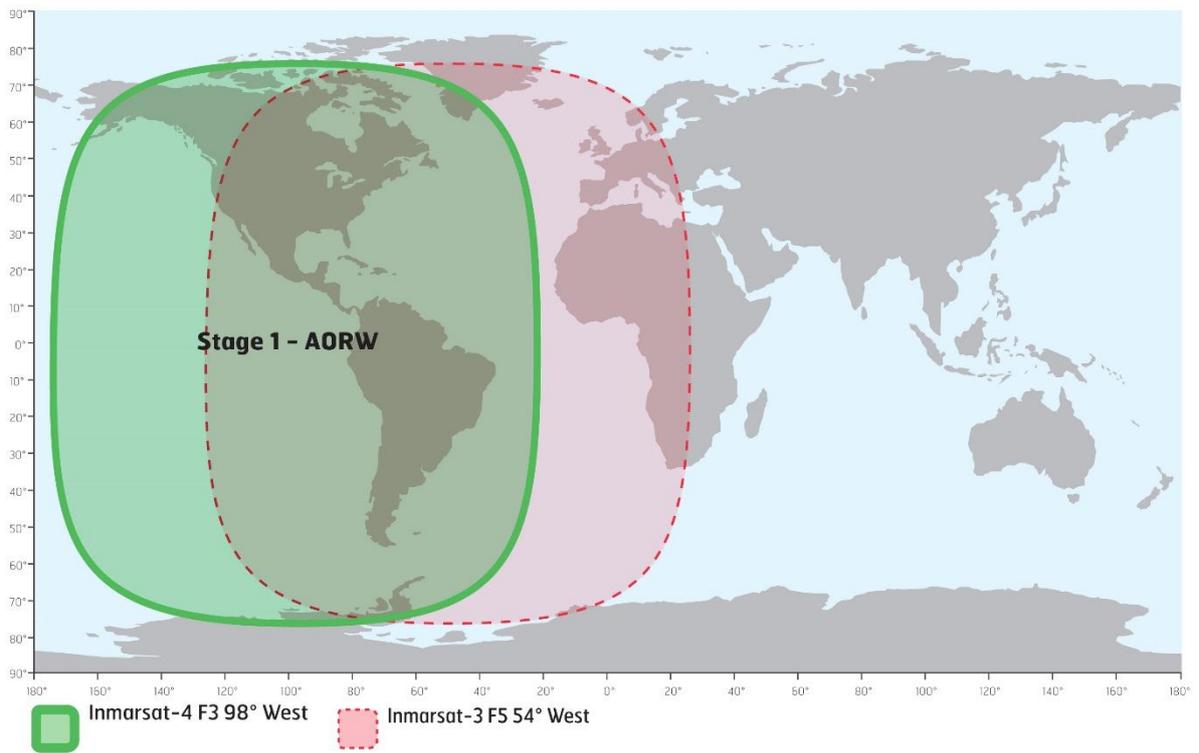
**INMARSAT I-3 TO I-4 MIGRATION**

The IMO, IHO and the WMO inform the maritime community of the planned Inmarsat I-3 to I-4 satellite migration in 2018. The services specific to the maritime sector include Inmarsat-C, Mini C, and Fleet77. These services have operated successfully over the I-4 satellites previously and therefore minimal service impact is anticipated. Inmarsat worked closely with Land Earth Station operators (LESOs), terminal manufacturers, Administrations that provide Maritime Safety Information (MSI) and other stakeholders during the extensive preparation of the migration plan. Safety services will be restored first with the highest priority. The migration will have minimal impact on seafarers.

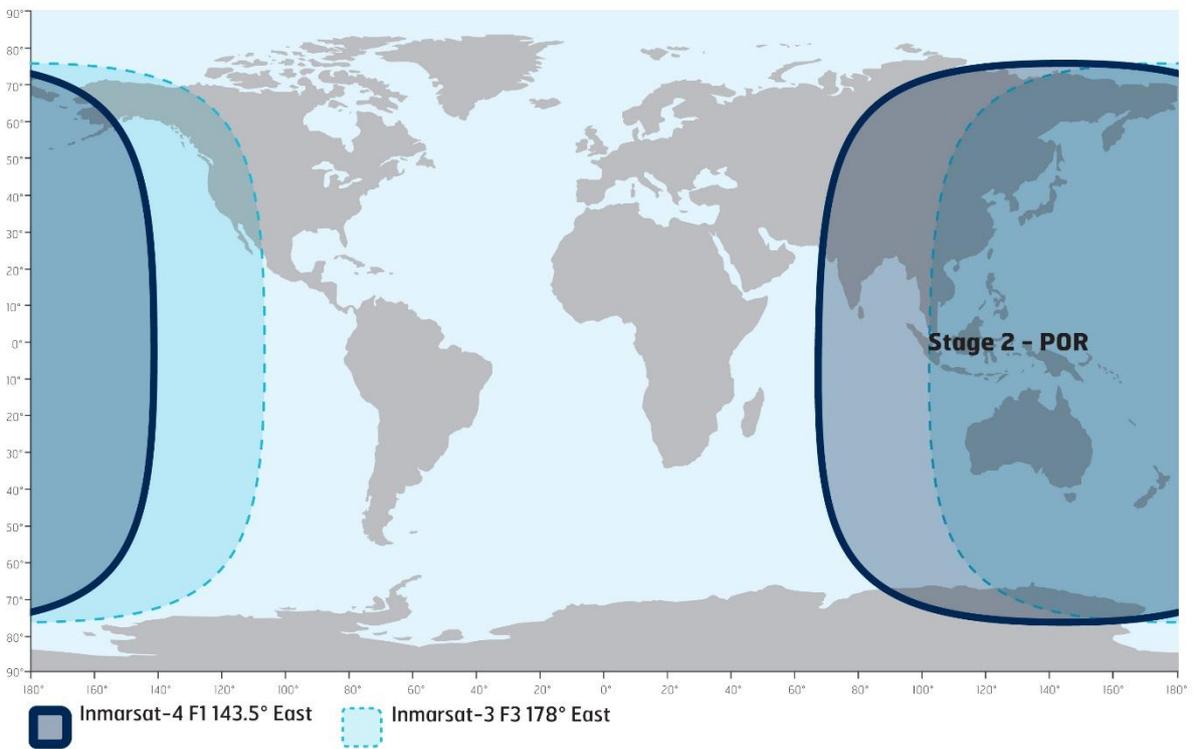
The migration will start in April 2018 and take approximately 9 months to complete. The approach of Inmarsat is to migrate these services satellite-by-satellite as illustrated below.

<b>I-3 to I-4 migration</b>	<b>Timelines</b>
Atlantic Ocean Region West (AORW) I-3 to I-4 Americas (AMER)	April 2018
Pacific Ocean Region (POR) I-3 to I-4 Asia/Pacific (APAC)	July 2018
Atlantic Ocean Region East (AORE) I-3 moved to I-3 F5	September 2018
Indian Ocean Region (IOR) I-3 to I-4 Alphasat EMEA	October 2018

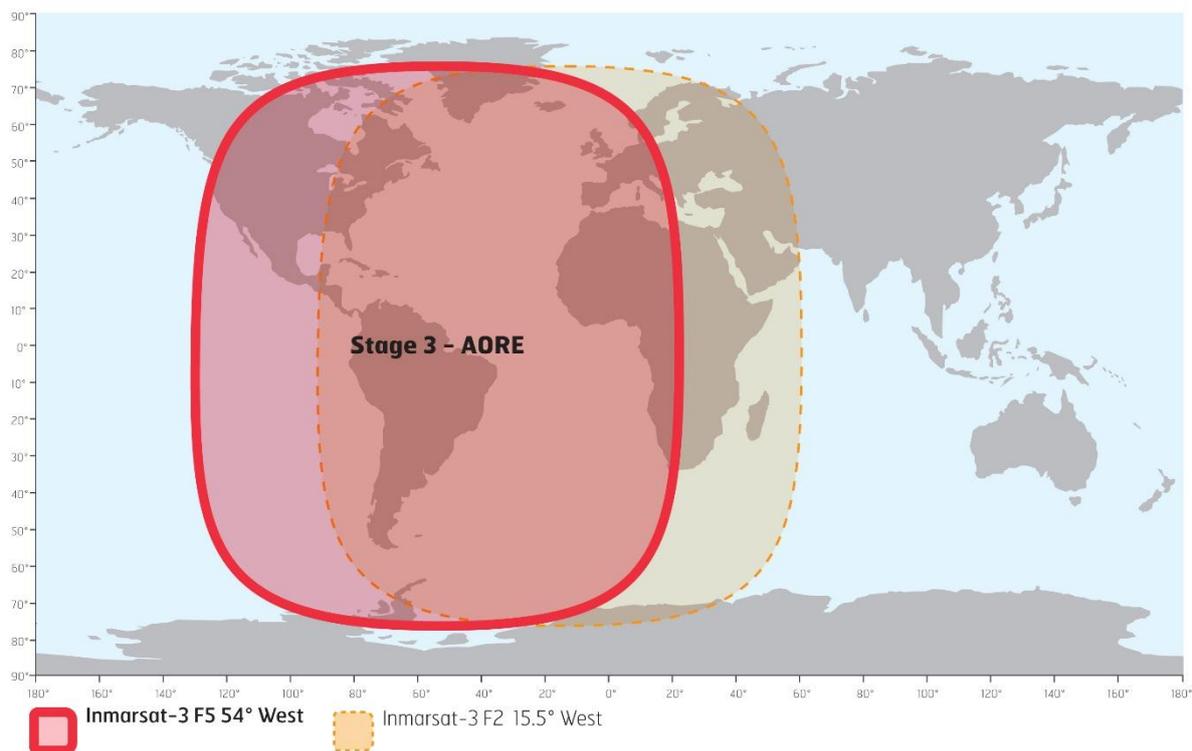
**Stage 1: AORW to AMER, April 2018**



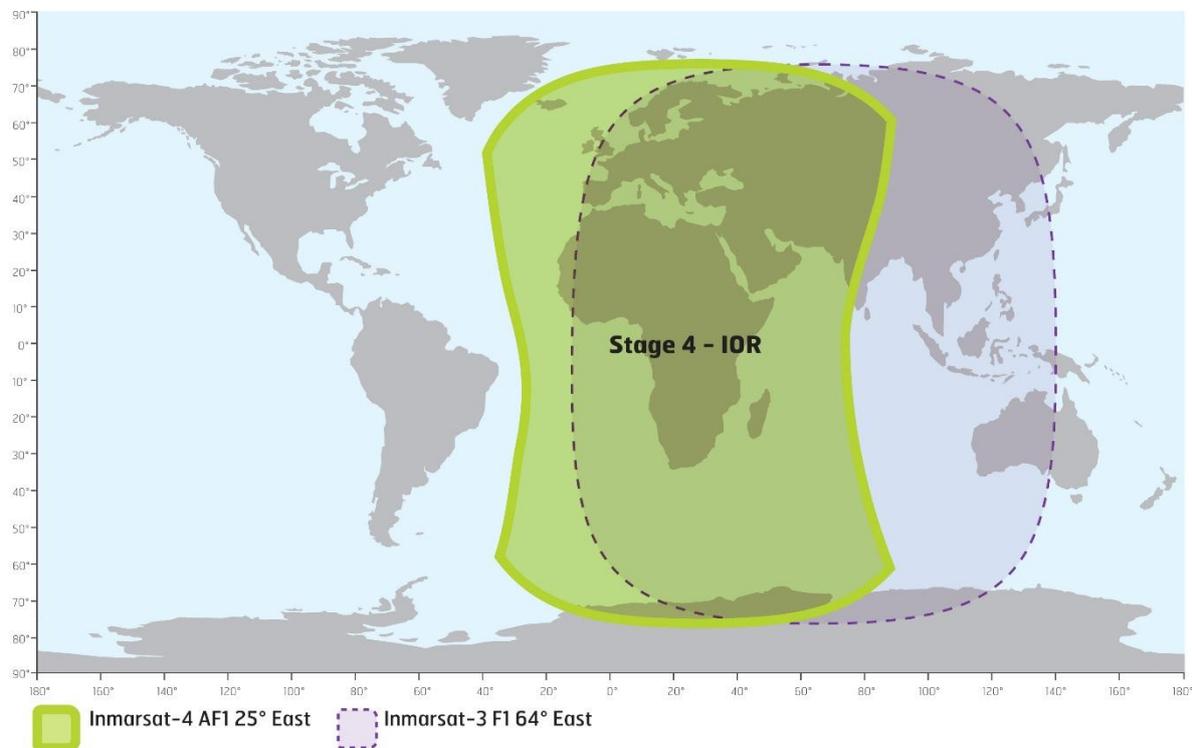
**Stage 2: POR to APAC, July 2018**



### **Stage 3: AORE to I-3 F5, September 2018**



### **Stage 4: IOR to Alphasat EMEA, October 2018**



Inmarsat will be communicating with you throughout the migration planning and execution phases, providing additional details as and when they become available. Further information can be found at <https://www.inmarsat.com/i3-i4-services-migration>. If you have any immediate questions or concerns, please contact Inmarsat at: [maritime.safety@inmarsat.com](mailto:maritime.safety@inmarsat.com).