



# PUBLIC NOTICE

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION  
445 Twelfth Street, S.W.  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20554

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## **WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS BUREAU PROMOTES INCREASED MARTIME SAFETY BY EXPANDING COLLECTION OF MARITIME MOBILE SERVICE INFORMATION**

On December 23, 2002, the Public Safety and Private Wireless Division, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau released a Public Notice inviting parties to file comments regarding a request submitted by the National GMDSS Implementation Task Force (Task Force)<sup>1</sup> that the Commission expand its Maritime Mobile Service Identity (MMSI) database to incorporate additional data fields in accordance with the recommendation in International Maritime Organization (IMO) Assembly Resolution A.887(21).<sup>2</sup> The Task Force suggested that the change be implemented by revising the Commission's application forms to require submission of the expanded data when applying for a station license and when renewing such licenses. All of the comments we received supported the request.<sup>3</sup> We have reviewed the record, and find that the adding the additional data fields is appropriate and will improve search and rescue operations.

In this regard, we conclude that adding the additional data fields is warranted because the efficiency and ease of use of the new GMDSS radio system has resulted in a substantial increase in inadvertent transmission of false alerts, particularly by vessels using the system voluntarily whose operators are not required to be trained or licensed.<sup>4</sup> The U.S. Coast Guard utilizes the information available from numerous databases, including the Commission's MMSI database, to enhance response to GMDSS distress alerts. The collection of the additional data fields recommended by the IMO will improve the validation process, which will help prevent the unnecessary launching of search and rescue assets.

Specifically, the Commission will collect the recommended data for each vessel (data that the Commission does not currently collect from applicants is indicated with an asterisk):

1. ship name;
2. Maritime Mobile Service Identity (MMSI);

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<sup>1</sup> The National GMDSS Implementation Task Force is chartered by the United States Coast Guard to supplement government functions in expediting the implementation of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) introduced by the International Maritime Organization.

<sup>2</sup> Wireless Telecommunications Bureau Seeks Comment on Request that the Commission Collect Full Maritime Mobile Service Identity Data Set Recommended by the International Maritime Organization, *Public Notice*, DA 02-3563 (WTB PSPWD rel. Dec. 23, 2002).

<sup>3</sup> Comments were received from the Task Force, Owen Anderson, Richard K. Bass, William R. Berkley, David Billstrom, the Boat Owners Association of the United States, CSX Lines, LLC, Hudson P. Hoen III, Chip Lohman, Marine Computer Systems, Inc., the North Pacific Marine Radio Council, the Puget Sound Harbor Safety Committee, the Radio Technical Commission for Maritime Services, Terry Stout, the United Safe Boating Institute, and Robert A. Winfield.

<sup>4</sup> CSX Lines comments at 2.

3. call sign;
4. \*EPIRB Identification Code (if applicable) and its homing frequency;
5. country;
6. ship identification number (IMO number or national registration number);
7. brief ship description;
8. \*name, address, telephone and telefax number of emergency contact person ashore;<sup>5</sup>
9. \*alternative 24-hour emergency telephone number (alternative contact ashore);<sup>6</sup>
10. \*capacity for persons on board (passengers and crew);
11. \*radio installation (Inmarsat-A,B,C,D, VHF DSC, etc.) for ship and survival craft;
12. identification number for all radio systems available;
13. \*type and number of survival craft; and
14. date of last modification of database record.

The Wireless Telecommunications Bureau is in the process of enhancing the Universal Licensing System (ULS) to allow the database to collect the additional data. A separate Public Notice will be released when the ULS enhancements are deployed.

For further information, contact Ghassan Khalek of the Policy and Rules Branch, Public Safety and Private Wireless Division, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau at (202) 418-0680, TTY (202) 418-7233, or via email to [gkhalek@fcc.gov](mailto:gkhalek@fcc.gov).

By the Chief, Public Safety and Private Wireless Division, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau.

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<sup>5</sup> The Commission will collect this information, but not make the information publicly available. The information will be provided only to the United States Coast Guard.

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