



Maritime and Coastguard Agency

Shore-to-Ship Communications During a Distress

Notice to all Masters and Officers of Merchant Vessels, Skippers of Fishing Vessels, Telecommunication Authorities and Training Institutions.

This note supersedes Marine Guidance Note MGN 113

Summary

This Note draws attention to the contents of circular COMSAR/Circ.13 issued this year by the International Maritime Organization (IMO).

Key Points

- It is essential communications are maintained between the Rescue Co-ordination Centre (RCC) and ships in a distress situation and Masters should ensure all assistance is given to maintain these communications.

1. Severe difficulties can be faced by Rescue Co-ordination Centres (RCCs) in contacting ships in a distress situation due to satellite communications links being jammed by other traffic.
2. Recognising the difficulty, the International Maritime Organization (IMO) issues guidance to RCCs to assist them in contacting ships fitted with Inmarsat Ship Earth Station (SESs), busy with other traffic.
3. Masters should ensure, if in distress, or assisting in Search and Rescue, measures are taken to terminate all non-emergency communications from the ship and to offer all assistance to the RCC in maintaining communications.

Further Information

Further information on the contents of this Notice can be obtained from:

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