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Circular Letter No.5071  
9 September 2025

To: All IMO Members  
United Nations and specialized agencies  
Intergovernmental organizations  
Non-governmental organizations in consultative status with IMO

Subject: **Thirteenth session of the Sub-Committee on Navigation,  
Communications and Search and Rescue (22 to 26 June 2026)**

1 The Secretary-General has the honour to invite representation at the thirteenth session of the Sub-Committee on Navigation, Communications and Search and Rescue (NCSR), which has been scheduled to take place from Monday, 22 to Friday, 26 June 2026, at IMO Headquarters, 4 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7SR.

2 The provisional agenda for the thirteenth session of the Sub-Committee (NCSR 13/1) is attached to this circular letter. Other relevant documentation will be issued in due course.

3 Working, experts and drafting groups may be established during the session on subjects to be selected from the following:

- .1 routing measures and ship reporting systems;
- .2 ITU-related matters;
- .3 SAR matters, including amendments to the IAMSAR Manual;
- .4 MSI documentation;
- .5 EPIRB implementation of the two-way communication service;
- .6 framework for data distribution and global IP-based connectivity between shore-based facilities and ships for ECDIS S-100 products, and operational guidance for route exchange;
- .7 performance standards for DFMC SBAS and ARAIM in shipborne radionavigation receivers;
- .8 transition scheme for the introduction of digital technology for VHF voice communications; and
- .9 performance standards for gyro-compasses and guidance for navigation and communication equipment intended for use on ships operating in polar waters,

whereby the Chair, in consultation with the Secretariat, taking into account the submissions received on the respective subjects, will advise before the session on the final selection of such groups.

4 The Secretary-General would appreciate being informed, in due course, of the names of representatives, delegates and observers, as appropriate, intending to participate in the forthcoming thirteenth session of the Sub-Committee.

#### **Use of hybrid meeting capability to complement in-person participation**

5 The Council, at its 132nd session (C 132), agreed to permanently establish the utilization of hybrid capabilities to support in-person meetings and invited the other IMO organs to do the same. Information on hybrid meetings is provided in Circular Letter No.4627.

#### **Submission of documents**

6 In accordance with the *Organization and method of work of the Maritime Safety Committee and the Marine Environment Protection Committee and their subsidiary bodies* (MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.6), the deadlines for the submission of documents to the session and the method of submitting documents are specified in paragraph 1 of the notes to the provisional agenda for NCSR 13 (NCSR 13/1). A link to a template is available on the home page of the IMODOCS website for use in the preparation of documents. Documents should be submitted through the Meeting Document Submission Portal, available on the IMODOCS home page (<https://docs.imo.org>) under the "Submissions" tab, to help streamline and harmonize the process of submitting documents for consideration by the different IMO bodies (MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.6, paragraph 6.2).

7 Further to the decisions taken by the Council at its 120th regular session (C 120/D, paragraph 4.9), and by the Maritime Safety Committee, at its 100th session (MSC 100/20, paragraphs 2.2 and 2.3), regarding access to information and transparency, submitters of meeting documents are invited to give their consent for their documents to be released to the public prior to the meeting by checking the "opt-in box" at the top right corner of the new document template provided on IMODOCS (pre-session public release). In the absence of explicit consent, submissions will not be released to the public prior to the meeting.

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## ANNEX 1

### REGISTRATION AND CODE OF CONDUCT

#### Registration

Member Governments, UN agencies, IGOs and NGOs are required to provide, prior to the meeting date, the names of all the members of their delegations including Permanent Representatives, Assistant Permanent Representatives and Members of Permanent Missions attending the meeting via the Online Meeting Registration System (OMRS), as advised in Circular Letter No.4336 of 5 November 2020.

**Active participants** are those registered as either *physical* (attending meetings at IMO Headquarters in person) or *remote-active*. They are authorized to take the floor and make interventions. Passive participants are those only able to follow proceedings remotely via live-streaming.

**Remote-active participants** will receive a personalized joining link via email daily before each session starts at approximately 08.30 UTC+1. The Zoom link is unique to the recipient and should not be shared with anyone. Accuracy of the registered email address in OMRS is crucial.

**Remote-passive participants** automatically receive a link, once their registration is approved, to a Web stream of the session (live-streaming), which will be broadcast via the IMODOCS page. It is important to note that the option for remote-passive participation is available only if the meeting is live-streamed.

**In-person participants** should not join the Zoom meeting when physically present in the Main Hall or Committee Rooms, as this will have a detrimental impact on the hybrid system and reduce the number of licences available for those joining remotely.

Delegates wishing to change their participation status from in-person to remote-active or vice versa must do so in the OMRS through their respective OMRS Delegation Coordinator(s). Subsequently, they will receive a joining link for the meeting.

Delegates attending the meeting in person who have completed the registration procedure will be issued with an electronic access card at IMO to pass through the security barrier in the IMO Headquarters.

Issue of the access card will require photographic proof of identity, e.g. passport, identity card or driving licence. Delegates may also be required to show proof of identity at any time while they are in the IMO Headquarters if requested by IMO Security. In view of the significant costs incurred in producing access cards, delegates who have previously been issued with one are kindly requested to bring it with them for reactivation.

Any matters relating to the use of the OMRS and the participation in the forthcoming meetings of NCSR 13 should be communicated to:

Registration Unit  
Meeting Services and Interpretation Section  
Email: [onlineregistration@imo.org](mailto:onlineregistration@imo.org)

Members of delegations will not be registered to attend the meeting without authorization from their respective OMRS Delegation Coordinator(s). Delegates whose names do not appear on the OMRS list will be asked to contact their OMRS Delegation Coordinator in order to process their authorization to attend the meeting.

Delegates are advised that the Registration Desk will be open from 07.30 a.m. UTC+1 on **Monday, 22 June 2026**, when early arrival would be appreciated.

### **Remote or hybrid participation**

Delegates joining the meeting remotely are urged to use appropriate equipment, and are kindly requested to wait a few seconds before starting to speak and to endeavour to speak slowly and clearly, to facilitate interpretation in other languages

### **Statements**

To facilitate the interpretation of interventions during the session, delegations are encouraged to provide advance copies of statements to the Secretariat by email to [statements@imo.org](mailto:statements@imo.org).

### **Code of Conduct**

Delegates, participants, attendees and guests are subject to the Code of Conduct for Delegates, Observers and Other Participants at IMO Meetings, Events and Activities to Prevent Harassment including Sexual Harassment (Circular Letter No.4908).

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## ANNEX 2

### PROCEDURES GOVERNING THE SUPPORT BY IMO OF VISA APPLICATIONS

As established in article 7.2 of part III on Access and communications of the Headquarters Agreement, delegates are entitled to have their entry into the United Kingdom authorized without delay and without charge.

All delegates who are travelling to participate in this meeting will require an entry visa for the United Kingdom. Delegates should **not** apply for an electronic travel authorisation (ETA) but instead apply for an "**EXEMPT**" visa at [www.gov.uk/exempt-vignette](http://www.gov.uk/exempt-vignette), note the reference numbers and follow the online instructions to attend either the nominated Visa Application Centre or the United Kingdom Embassy or High Commission. Those delegates travelling to the United Kingdom on a regular basis may apply for a multi-entry exempt visa. United Kingdom visa applications should be accompanied by the following documentation:

- i. a copy of this circular letter, (numbered CL.5071), to be used as the official letter of invitation;
- ii. the nomination letter; and
- iii. a note verbale from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Delegates must be nominated by their competent ministry (usually the Ministry of Transport or the National Maritime Administration). The nomination letter should be accompanied by a note verbale issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

This exercise should be undertaken as early as possible, but no later than **six weeks** before the date of arrival in the UK.

If delegates encounter visa problems, either the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Transport, the National Maritime Administration or the competent ministry should send an official communication to the Head of the IMO External Relations Office requesting visa assistance. The communication should state the reasons given by the British Embassy/High Commission as to why visas have been or may be refused and contain the following details:

- i. First name  
Family name  
Profession  
Date of birth  
Passport no.  
Valid until  
Visa reference number  
Date and place of visa application
- ii. Purpose of visit
- iii. Duration of anticipated stay in the United Kingdom

Any requests for visa assistance should be communicated to [visa@imo.org](mailto:visa@imo.org).

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SUB-COMMITTEE ON NAVIGATION,  
COMMUNICATIONS AND SEARCH AND  
RESCUE  
13th session  
Agenda item 1

NCSR 13/1  
9 September 2025  
Original: ENGLISH  
Pre-session public release:

## PROVISIONAL AGENDA

**for the thirteenth session of the Sub-Committee  
to be held at IMO Headquarters,  
4 Albert Embankment, London SE1 7SR,  
from Monday, 22 to Friday, 26 June 2026**

**(Session commences at 9.30 a.m. (UTC+1) on Monday, 22 June 2026)**

Opening of the session

- 1 Adoption of the agenda
- 2 Decisions of other IMO bodies
- 3 Routing measures and ship reporting systems (7.22)
- 4 Updates to the LRIT system (7.23)
- 5 Developments in GMDSS services, including guidelines on maritime safety information (MSI) (7.2)
- 6 Response to matters related to the ITU-R Study Groups and ITU World Radiocommunication Conference (2.1)
- 7 Development of global maritime SAR services, including harmonization of maritime and aeronautical procedures and amendments to the IAMSAR Manual (1.34)
- 8 Development of guidelines for EPIRB which implement the two-way communication service via the SAR/Galileo Return Link service as a complement to EPIRB performance standards (resolution MSC.471(101)) (2.18)
- 9 Development of guidance to establish a framework for data distribution and global IP-based connectivity between shore-based facilities and ships for ECDIS S-100 products (2.12) and operational guidance for route exchange (2.15)
- 10 Development of performance standards for dual frequency multi-constellation satellite-based augmentation systems (DFMC SBAS) and advanced receiver autonomous integrity monitoring (ARAIM) in shipborne radionavigation receivers (2.7)
- 11 Development of a transition scheme for the introduction of digital technology for Very High Frequency (VHF) voice communications (2.5)

- 12 Revision of the Performance standards for gyro-compasses (resolution A.424(XI)) and Guidance for navigation and communication equipment intended for use on ships operating in polar waters (MSC.1/Circ.1612) (2.14)
- 13 Development of performance standards for Ranging mode (R-mode) in radionavigation receivers (2.17)
- 14 Unified interpretation of provisions of IMO safety, security, environment, facilitation, liability and compensation-related conventions (7.1)
- 15 Biennial status report and provisional agenda for NCSR 14
- 16 Election of Chair and Vice-Chair for 2027
- 17 Any other business
- 18 Report to the Maritime Safety Committee

**Notes:**

1 In accordance with the document on *Organization and method of work of the Maritime Safety Committee and the Marine Environment Protection Committee and their subsidiary bodies* (MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.6):

- .1 documents should be received by the Secretariat as follows:<sup>1</sup>
  - .1 documents (including information documents) containing more than six pages (bulky documents),<sup>2</sup> by **Friday, 20 March 2026** (13-week deadline);
  - .2 non-bulky documents including information documents (six pages or fewer) and bulky information documents submitted in electronic format, by **Friday, 17 April 2026** (nine-week deadline); and
  - .3 documents (four pages or fewer) commenting on those referred to in sub-paragraphs .1 and .2 above, by **Friday, 1 May 2026** (seven-week deadline). These documents should start with a paragraph clearly indicating the document on which comments are made and stating that the document is submitted in accordance with the provisions of paragraph 6.12.5 of MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.6;
- .2 for reasons of economy, documents should be submitted in single spacing, and be as concise as possible, and:
  - .1 all documents should include a brief summary prepared in accordance with section 6 of the annex to MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.6;

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<sup>1</sup> Documents other than information documents and reports from sub-committees, working, drafting, correspondence and other working groups and the Secretariat, and which contain more than 20 pages, in line with paragraph 6.11 of the annex to MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.6, will not be translated in their entirety. Such documents should include, for translation purposes, a summary not longer than four pages, with the technical content submitted as an annex in the language needed by working groups (i.e. English).

<sup>2</sup> In the case of documents containing more than 50 pages, the provisions of paragraph 6.12.1 of the annex to MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.6 are to be applied.

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- .2 substantive documents should conclude with a summary of the action which the Sub-Committee is invited to take; and
- .3 information documents should conclude with a summary of the information contained therein; and
- .3 the following word-processing format should be observed in order to standardize the presentation of documents:
- font: Arial;
  - font size: 11 pt;
  - justification: full;
  - margins: 2 cm top, 2.5 cm bottom, left and right.

A template is available on the IMODOCS website for use in the preparation of documents.

To facilitate processing, documents should be submitted via the Meeting Document Submission Portal on IMODOCS ([Submission Portal](#)) in DOCX format, as set out in paragraph 6.2 of MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.6.

2 Documents containing proposals for the establishment of, or amendments to, ships' routing systems or ship reporting systems should take into account the *Procedure for the submission of documents containing proposals for the establishment of, or amendments to, ships' routing systems or ship reporting systems* (MSC.1/Circ.1608).

3 The Maritime Safety Committee has recommended that the sub-committees should strictly observe the provisions in the annex to MSC-MEPC.1/Circ.5/Rev.6, which, inter alia, provide that the Secretariat should strictly apply the rules concerning the submission of documents and not accept late submissions from Member States or international organizations.

4 In order to improve access to information and increase transparency, submitters of meeting documents are invited to give their consent for their documents to be released to the public prior to the meeting by checking the "opt-in box" at the top right corner of the new document template provided on IMODOCS (pre-session public release). In the absence of explicit consent, submissions will not be released to the public prior to the meeting.

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