

DOCKET FILE COPY ORIGINAL

04-344

Jean H. Daugherty II
1735 Ridgely Road
Edgewater, Md 21037

May 23, 2008
Re: 0800784 of 20 May, 2008

Scot Stone
Deputy Chief, Mobility Division
Wireless Telecommunications Bureau
Federal Communications Commission
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Mr. Stone

For several years at the National Transportation Safety Board, I was the Principal Correspondent to Petitions for Reconsideration of Cause, and can identify and fully appreciate a well built Stone Wall! I can understand your reluctance to respond to my question directly, but I really wish you would. Let me restate my issue.

I sail on the Chesapeake Bay, sometimes in deteriorating weather, such as you may drive in on the Beltway. One evening last fall, I and several other middle-aged friends were returning home at dusk in driving rain, when, near Thomas Point Light we were suddenly illuminated by a powerful spotlight. It was on a tug towing a long barge, and we were going to collide. He was not on my radar which was rendered useless by the heavy rain, and my fiberglass sailboat would have been very difficult for him to see on his more powerful equipment. I jibed immediately, suffering damage to my boat, and we narrowly missed. Strangely enough in the ensuing radio exchange we were quite civil to each other, understanding that neither of us was at fault. Although he was encumbered by the tow, he was gentleman enough to enquire about my difficulties. But the most serious problem I had was a hysterical guest, who was still whimpering when we docked an hour later.

What disturbs me is that had we been anywhere else in the world but the United States, We could have both been equipped with AIS B radios, and would have known each other's position long before a collision was eminent.

It's been more than two years since the Coast Guard requested FCC certification of certain AIS B Radios for sale in the United States. I believe I am knowledgeable of the processes that have taken place in pursuit of that certification. The scientists have spoken, respondents have responded with no demure, and even the petitioner to Docket 4-344 has expressed encouragement that these devices be certified. The rest of the World has already established rules to "ensure the accuracy of data transmitted from such devices". I am at a loss to understand why any further preparations or studies are required. I won't beleaguer you with all the suppositions debated by my fellow yachtsmen, you are already aware that they are universally critical of this delay.

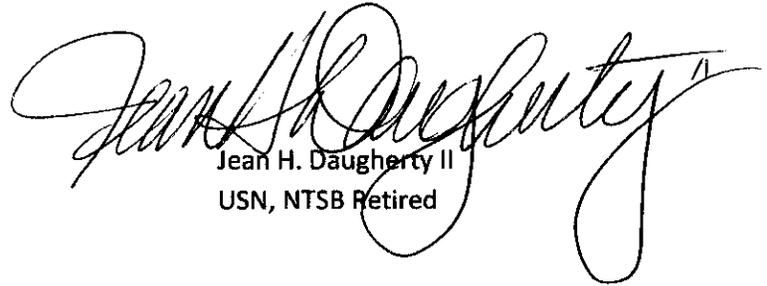
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While your Agency may be totally consumed with the herculean effort of Spectrum Auctions, and Television Service Provider warfare, no one is going to die as a result. I am driven to write you because I believe that this is not a simple bureaucratic procession but a life-threatening issue. History is replete with collisions at sea.

So I ask again, what is causing the delay? What are the as-yet unresolved issues? How can those of us whose safety is at risk help bring this urgent question to resolution?

Respectfully Yours



Jean H. Daugherty II
USN, NTSB Retired

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