

WAC Informal Working Group (IWG)-1

**Modifications to NTIA’s Preliminary View
on Agenda Item 1.9 (see WAC/010(31.03.09))**

Preparation for ITU Radiocommunication Conferences

**UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
PRELIMINARY VIEWS ON WRC-11**

AGENDA ITEM 1.9: to revise frequencies and channeling arrangements of Appendix 17 to the Radio Regulations, in accordance with Resolution **351 (Rev. WRC-07)**, in order to implement new digital technologies for the maritime mobile service.

ISSUES: Appendix **17** outlines the frequencies and channelling arrangements in the high-frequency bands for the maritime mobile service (MMS). During WRC-03, changes to Appendix **17** allowed for the use of digital technology on a no-protection, non-interference basis in certain bands (footnote “p”).

WRC-07 modified Resolution **351 (Rev. WRC-07)** to invite WRC-11 to consider necessary changes to Appendix **17** to implement the use of new technology by the MMS with a view to promote efficiency. To this end, the ITU-R tasks are to finalize studies:

1. to identify any necessary modifications to the frequency tables contained within Appendix **17**;
2. to identify any necessary transition arrangements for the introduction of new digital technologies and any consequential changes to Appendix **17**; and
3. to recommend how digital technologies can be introduced while ensuring compliance with distress and safety requirements.

BACKGROUND: The current spectrum needs of the maritime mobile service in the HF bands are now inextricably connected to new HF data exchange technologies which now function as an effective alternative for narrow-band direct printing (NBDP) for commercial shipping. In the past decade the use of NBDP for commercial communication worldwide has rapidly declined. The International Maritime Organization (IMO) noted that NBDP in the past has been mostly used for broadcasting of maritime safety information (MSI), ship reporting, weather forecasts, and for business communications, e.g. by fishing fleets. All these functions are now achieved through alternative data communications technology through HF and Satellite transmissions.

The global maritime community has successfully demonstrated that, improved utilization of maritime mobile service spectrum can be achieved by formally adopting the ongoing practice of using data transmissions on a variety of, Appendix **17** voice channels, NBDP channels and data

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/fax frequencies previously used primarily for radio telegraphy, Morse code and facsimile transmissions. Utilization of spectrum in this manner will provide critical additional flexibility for data exchange services in future.

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The ITU and IMO have now had 4 years to evaluate the HF data service for incorporation into the Global Maritime Distress Safety System (GMDSS). This experience has demonstrated that the communication protocols of the HF data service by the ITU and IMO will need to review communication protocols of the HF data service before completely removing the NBDP requirement from GMDSS. HF NBDP remains useful for distress communications in the Polar Regions (sea area A4) where other terrestrial means of communication are less reliable. Preservation of NBDP can be achieved by using the HF distress and safety frequencies in Appendix 15.

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Amendments to RR Appendix 17 may also have consequential impact to RR Appendix 25.

U.S. VIEW: If studies under Resolution 351 (WRC-07) show that new digital technologies protect existing distress and safety frequencies, and take into account the commercial communication aspect of the HF band use, the United States supports the revision of RR Appendix 17 to accommodate new digital technologies for the maritime mobile service.