

Liaison Note to China MSA

Practice on AtoN distribution during freeze-up in the North China Sea

1 Introduction

The ARM Committee thanks the China MSA for their paper and presentation related to practices on AtoN distribution during freeze-up in the North China Sea.

The ARM committee was requested to note the document and develop relevant guidance for provision of AtoN in ice conditions.

2 Comments from the ARM committee

- Several IALA members have many years of experience of providing AtoN in harsh ice conditions and have established methods in place.
- There are floating AtoN specifically designed for use in icy waters. Various types of ice buoys are used in e.g. North America and Scandinavia with good results. Using this kind of floating aid makes it possible for an authority to use floating AtoN with sufficient daymark and radar conspicuity capacity without needing to be removed or replaced during winter.
- Fixed AtoN at critical positions can be fitted with heating to reduce the risk of being obscured by ice and snow.
- Radar reflectors or racons can be added to existing fixed AtoN to enhance radar detection in icy conditions during winter.
- Virtual AIS AtoN should be used with caution, due to observed offset location of the broadcasted position on the shipborne navigational display. The ARM Committee is currently updating the guidance on the use of virtual AIS AtoN in Guideline 1081.

There is currently an IALA Guideline 1108 on the challenges of providing AtoN services in polar regions, whilst Guideline G1136 provides guidance on AtoN services in extremely hot and humid climates. G1136 was produced following a workshop on the subject in 2016.

3 Action requested

The China MSA is invited to:

- Consider visiting one or more Competent Authorities with established methods for provision of AtoN in cold weather, to study current practices and types of AtoN in use.
- Note that ARM Committee is sending a request to ENG to consider developing relevant guidance.