

13. WORLD-WIDE NAVIGATIONAL WARNING SERVICE AND WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION.

Source: UK Hydrographic Office.

Former Notice 13/04 is cancelled. Additions and amendments to the former notice are indicated by sidelines.

WORLD-WIDE NAVIGATIONAL WARNING SERVICE.

General Information

1. The World-Wide Navigational Warning Service (WWNWS), established through the joint efforts of the International Hydrographic Organization (IHO) and the International Maritime Organization (IMO), is a co-ordinated global service for the promulgation of navigational warnings. A document giving guidance and information on the service is available free from the International Hydrographic Bureau (IHB), B.P. 345 Monte Carlo, Monaco.
2. Navigational warnings are designed to give the mariner early information of important incidents which may constitute a danger to navigation. Many navigational warnings are of a temporary nature, but others remain in force for several weeks and may be succeeded by Notices to Mariners (NMs).
3. Masters are recommended to arrange, whenever possible, for the navigational warning broadcast to be monitored prior to sailing in case any dangers affecting their routes are notified.
4. The attention of masters is called to the necessity for making arrangements to ensure that all navigational warnings or other matters relating to safety of life at sea are brought to their notice, or that of the navigating officer on watch at the time, immediately on receipt. The provisions relating to the official log provide for a certificate to the effect that the master's attention has been called to all signals of importance or interest and observance of the requirement should ensure that this important matter is not overlooked.
5. The language used in both NAVAREA and Coastal warnings is invariably English, although warnings may additionally be transmitted in one or more of the official languages of the United Nations. Navigational warnings are of three types - NAVAREA warnings, Coastal warnings and Local warnings.

NAVAREA Warnings

1. For the purposes of the WWNWS the world is divided into 16 geographical sea areas termed NAVAREAS and identified by Roman numerals. The authority charged with collating and issuing long range navigational warnings to cover the whole of an area is called the NAVAREA Co-ordinator. The limits, NAVAREA Co-ordinator and transmitting stations of each NAVAREA are given in ALRS Vol. 3, where times, frequencies and other relevant information will also be found.
2. The type of information which might be contained in NAVAREA warnings includes failure of and changes to major navigational aids; newly discovered wrecks or natural hazards in or near main shipping lanes, and areas where Search And Rescue, anti-pollution operations, cable laying or other underwater activities are taking place. NAVAREA warnings will normally be sufficient for a vessel passing through main shipping lanes clear of the coast.
3. The information is repeated with varying frequency as time passes until either the danger has ceased or the information has been adequately promulgated elsewhere.
4. NAVAREA I Warnings contain information concerning principal shipping routes which are necessary for the mariner to know before entering coastal waters, such as:
 - a. Failure of and changes to major navigational aids.
 - b. Failure of and changes to long-range electronic position fixing systems (GPS/LORAN-C).
 - c. Newly discovered wrecks or natural hazards.
 - d. Areas where SAR or anti pollution operations are taking place (for avoidance of such areas).
 - e. Seismic surveys and other underwater activities in certain areas.
 - f. Positions of mobile drilling rigs (RIGLISTS) and other oil/gas related activities.
5. All NAVAREA I warnings are broadcast through one or more of the following:
 - a. SafetyNET - Enhanced Group Calling (EGC) International SafetyNET. For full broadcast details see ALRS Vols 3 and 5.
 - b. NAVTEX - depending upon the area affected, NAVAREA I Warnings may also be transmitted through NAVTEX. For full broadcast details see ALRS Vols 3 and 5.
6. A reprint of those NAVAREA I warnings issued in the current week, together with a numerical list of those in force, is included in Section III of the Weekly Edition of Admiralty Notices to Mariners. This list includes warnings cancelled when superseded by NMs. A numerical list of all NAVAREA I warnings in force is broadcast each Friday. Section III of the weekly edition of NMs also includes selected important warnings from other NAVAREA, HYDROLANT and HYDROPAC series. For availability of weekly editions of NMs see Annual Notice No 2.

COASTAL Warnings

1. Coastal warnings are issued for information which is of importance only in a particular coastal region; they are not restricted to main shipping lanes. They are generally transmitted more frequently than NAVAREA warnings, and only to the sea region surrounding the hazard. They will often supplement the information contained in NAVAREA warnings. Coastal warnings for all parts of the world are broadcast from the country of origin. Particulars are given in ALRS Vol. 3, where times, frequencies and other relevant information will be found.
2. Coastal navigational warnings can only be expected to give information of importance to assist the mariner about immediate dangers and major alterations to important navigational aids. The purpose is to assist mariners in coastal navigation up to the entrance of ports. It follows that information of a less urgent nature, which might form the subject of a NM, NAVAREA or Local Warning, may not be broadcast. Attention is drawn to ALRS Vol. 6 for details of port radio broadcasts.
3. United Kingdom coastal warnings (WZ Messages) contain information relating to the principal aids to navigation and other important hydrographic matters in waters around the British Isles, such as:
 - a. Casualties to major lights/fog signals, major floating lights and the more important buoys.
 - b. Drifting mines and derelicts in congested waters when the information is recent and sufficiently accurate.
 - c. Large unwieldy tows in congested waters.
 - d. Dangerous wrecks and new or amended shoal depths.
 - e. Establishment of salvage buoys in congested waters.
 - f. Areas where SAR and anti pollution operations are being carried out (for avoidance of such areas).
 - g. Negative Surges (see Annual Notice No. 15 for details).
 - h. Irregularities in the transmission of differential corrections to the Global Positioning System (DGPS).
 - i. New positions of mobile drilling rigs (RIGMOVES).
 - j. Cable operations or certain other underwater activities.
4. WZ messages are broadcast on NAVTEX, and also on VHF by HM Coastguard Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centres and Sub-Centres (MRCC/MRSC) in the British Isles; for full broadcast details see ALRS Vol. 3. WZ messages will be transmitted at some or all of the routine times, as appropriate to the contents of the message, for as many days as may be necessary. HM Coastguard MRCC/MRSCs broadcast Coastal navigational warnings for specific WZ Sea Regions as shown in ALRS Vol. 3. A warning will be repeated on request by the vessel to the Coastguard station concerned; operators should, however, make every effort to get the warning at the scheduled hours of transmission
5. WZ messages are numbered in a continuous sequence by the issuing authority (the UK Hydrographic Office). However, because NAVTEX stations and Coastguard centres around the UK transmit only the warnings for their own Sea Region, the serial numbers of WZ messages transmitted by any one station will not generally form an unbroken sequence. It should be noted that whilst Coastal warnings are not, as a rule, broadcast outside their region, warnings which concern events of singular importance may exceptionally be broadcast in adjacent regions.

LOCAL Warnings

1. Local warnings supplement the Coastal warning service by giving detailed information on aspects which the ocean going vessel normally does not require. They usually refer particularly to inshore waters and are often originated by coastguard, port or pilotage authorities. Local warnings issued in a Port Navigational Warning Service will concern events inshore of the pilot station which do not affect coastal navigation off the port. UK Port Authorities often provide navigational information as part of their Port Radio Service; details are given in ALRS Vol. 6.
2. Those inshore areas which lie between the limits of one port or harbour and the next are included in the Local Warning Service operated by HM Coastguard who compile and broadcast Local Radio Navigational Warnings relating to hazards which may affect craft in inshore waters outside Port and Harbour Authority limits. They will be on an *ad hoc* basis i.e. there will not be any numerical sequence and no specific broadcast schedules. The incidence of repetition of the broadcast will be at the discretion of the originating Coastguard station; details are given in ALRS Vol. 3.
3. The Channel Navigation Information Service (CNIS) provides frequent broadcasts of navigational and other information for the Dover Strait. Full details of this and the associated Ship Movement Reporting System (CALDOVREP) are contained in ALRS Vol. 6.
4. Local warnings may be issued in the national language only. Particulars are given in ALRS Vols. 3 and 6, where times, frequencies and other relevant information will be found.

Instrument Warning Broadcasts

Certain research buoys and other scientific equipment do not, of themselves, constitute a sufficient hazard to warrant a WZ (Coastal) warning. When outside interference with this equipment would cause an unacceptable disruption to the scientific programme, a brief message concerning the equipment may be broadcast from the nearest HM Coastguard MRCC/MRSC.

Vessels' Reports

Vessels encountering dangers to navigation or severe weather conditions should notify other vessels in the vicinity and the nearest HM Coastguard MRCC/MRSC. Messages should be preceded by the safety signal "Securite" pronounced "SAY CURE E TAY" (RT), repeated at short intervals, three times.

Long Range Warnings issued by the United States

In addition to NAVAREA IV and NAVAREA XII warnings, the United States issues HYDROLANT and HYDROPAC warnings, full details of which can be found in ALRS Vol. 3.

WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION

1. The World Meteorological Organization (WMO) has established a global service for the transmission of high-seas weather warnings and routine weather bulletins, through the Enhanced Group Calling International SafetyNET Service. METeorological service AREAS (METAREAS) are identical to the 16 NAVAREAS within the World-Wide Navigational Warning Service (WWNWS) (see Section 1). Each METAREA has a designated National Meteorological Service responsible for issuing high seas weather warnings and bulletins. The designated authorities are not necessarily in the same country as the NAVAREA co-ordinators.
2. For full details of SafetyNET METAREA services see ALRS Vols. 3 and 5.

GALE Warnings

1. Gale warnings are issued when mean winds of at least force 8 or gusts reaching 43 to 51 knots are expected. Gale warnings remain in force until amended or cancelled. However, if the gale persists for more than 24 hours after the time of origin, the warning will be re-issued. The term "severe gale" implies a mean wind of at least force 9 or gusts reaching 52 to 60 knots. The term "storm" implies a mean wind of at least force 10 or gusts reaching 61 to 68 knots. The term "imminent" implies within 6 hours of the time of issue: "soon" implies between 6 and 12 hours; "later" implies more than 12 hours.
2. Gale warnings are broadcast through:
 - a. RT (MF) and VHF by HM Coastguard Co-ordination Centres in the British Isles and also on NAVTEX. Broadcast times vary with different groups of stations. For full broadcast details see ALRS Vol. 3.
 - b. SafetyNET; Enhanced Group Calling International SafetyNET - METAREA I only (i.e. area outside NAVTEX coverage). For full broadcast details see ALRS Vols. 3 and 5.
 - c. BBC Radio 4. For full broadcast details see ALRS Vol. 3.

OFFSHORE Shipping Forecast

1. A bulletin for offshore shipping comprising a summary of gale warnings, a plain language synopsis of general weather conditions and forecasts for 24 hours.
2. OFFSHORE Shipping Forecasts are broadcast through:
 - a. RT (MF) and VHF by HM Coastguard Co-ordination Centres in the British Isles and also on NAVTEX (518 kHz). Broadcast times vary with different groups of stations. For full broadcast details see ALRS Vol. 3.
 - b. SafetyNET; Enhanced Group Calling International SafetyNET - METAREA I only (i.e. area outside NAVTEX coverage). For full broadcast details see ALRS Vol. 5.
 - c. BBC Radio 4. For full broadcast details see ALRS Vol. 3.

COASTAL Inshore Waters Forecast

1. For the benefit of coastwise shipping, fishing vessels, etc., an inshore forecast covering the coastal waters of the UK out to 12 miles is broadcast at four hourly intervals from all HM Coastguard Co-ordination Centres providing a 24 hour forecast, a 24 hour outlook for 16 coastal areas and a brief 3 day outlook for the whole of the UK.
2. COASTAL Inshore Waters Forecasts are broadcast through:
 - a. VHF by HM Coastguard Co-ordination Centres in the British Isles and also on NAVTEX (490 kHz). For full broadcast details see ALRS Vol. 3.
 - b. BBC Radio 4. Due to time constraints, this forecast is for 9 areas around the UK coast. For full broadcast details see ALRS Vol. 3.

HIGH SEAS, ATLANTIC Weather Bulletin

1. A bulletin in plain language which commences with storm warnings, if any, followed by a plain language synopsis of weather conditions, also forecasts valid for 24 hours.
2. HIGH SEAS, ATLANTIC Weather Bulletins are broadcast through: SafetyNET, Enhanced Group Calling International SafetyNET - METAREA I only (i.e. area outside NAVTEX coverage). For full broadcast details see ALRS Vols. 3 and 5.

Ships' Weather Reports

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1. Reports from vessels which form part of the voluntary observing fleet under the auspices of the WMO. Full details are given in ALRS Vol. 3.
2. Ships' Weather Reports can be sent through Goonhilly Inmarsat Land Earth Station using Code 41 of Inmarsat A, Inmarsat B or Inmarsat C. For full Inmarsat details see ALRS Vols. 1 and 5.