



IMO

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MSC/Circ.1171
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CLOSURE OF INMARSAT-E SERVICES BY INMARSAT LTD.

1 The Sub-Committee on Radiocommunications and Search and Rescue (COMSAR), at its ninth session (7 to 11 February 2005), noted that MSC 79 in December 2004 had agreed, in principle, based upon a realistic analysis of the comprehensive information received from Inmarsat Ltd. on the future viability of the Inmarsat L-band EPIRB system, with the conclusion of IMSO that there was no reasonable justification for requiring Inmarsat Ltd. to make the considerable investment needed to ensure continued provision of the Inmarsat-E service beyond 1 December 2006, and had also agreed that the service should be closed on that date, subject to the commitments given by the company. COMSAR 9 further noted that accordingly, MSC 79 had also requested IMSO to oversee the orderly closure of the Inmarsat-E service, ensuring that no existing registered L-band EPIRB users were left without equivalent EPIRB cover at any time.

2 The Maritime Safety Committee (MSC), at its eightieth session (11 to 20 May 2005), following the recommendation of COMSAR 9 and recognizing the importance of additional information, agreed to circulate the additional information on closure of Inmarsat-E services, given at annex.

3 Member Governments are invited to bring the annexed information to the attention of all parties concerned.

ANNEX

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ON
CLOSURE OF INMARSAT-E SERVICES BY INMARSAT LTD.**

1 After in depth consultations between the IMSO Secretariat and the company, Inmarsat Ltd. has advised IMSO that it will close the L-Band EPIRB service as from 1 December 2006, with the following commitments:

- .1 all existing registered users of L-Band EPIRBs will receive a replacement 406 MHz EPIRB with GPS capability free of charge;
- .2 this replacement programme will be carried out during 2006;
- .3 using its comprehensive registration database, Inmarsat Ltd. will notify all existing registered L-Band EPIRB users accordingly before 1 December 2005;
- .4 the replacement programme will address all registered users of L-Band EPIRBs, including leisure users, not just those within the 1974 SOLAS Convention, as amended. EPIRBs will be replaced on an equivalent "like-for-like" basis; and
- .5 no existing registered L-Band EPIRB users will therefore be left without equivalent EPIRB cover.

2 The orderly closure of the Inmarsat-E service will be overseen by IMSO.
