

RESOLUTION

Resolution 7 (EC-LVIII) – SHIP OWNERS AND MASTERS' CONCERNS WITH REGARD TO VOS DATA EXCHANGE

THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL,

Recalling the request made by the Executive Council at its fifty-seventh session for the JCOMM Ship Observations Team (SOT) to assess the risks associated with allowing Voluntary Observing Ships (VOS) call signs and position data being made freely available on external websites not maintained by the National Meteorological or Hydrometeorological Services, and to provide options to address the problem, as appropriate,

Noting the proposals prepared by PMO-III and endorsed and submitted to the Executive Council by the JCOMM Co-presidents,

Acknowledging;

- (1) The seriousness of the problem, which, if not adequately addressed, could ultimately lead to the disappearance of the majority of VOS reports available on the Global Telecommunication System (GTS),
- (2) The concerns on the issue expressed by ship owners and masters,

Recommends:

- (1) Members that, in consultation with ship owners, wish to protect the identity of VOS may implement ship call sign masking, for a trial period of one year, a process which would facilitate open distribution of masked data on the GTS;
- (2) All Members implementing such a process to provide for the secure exchange of ship call signs and reports affected by the masking process, so as to assist in resolving real-time monitoring and climate analysis problems;

Requests the Secretary-General, as a high priority issue, to establish a high level dialogue, involving Members affected, the International Maritime Organization, the International Chamber of Shipping, shipping companies, and relevant organizations and technical commissions, for example the Joint WMO/IOC Technical Commission for Oceanography and Marine Meteorology or the Commission for Basic Systems, in order to determine if there is a link between VOS data availability on external websites and piracy and other ship security issues; to review the implementation and impact of masking; and to propose a general and universally acceptable solution to the issue that would address the concerns of ship owners and masters, as well as the data monitoring and quality information feedback requirements, for consideration by the Executive Council at its fifty-ninth session in 2007.
