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SHIP OBSERVATIONS TEAM

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VOSP-V PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION

Review of the PMO Roles and Responsibilities

(Submitted by Mr Graeme Ball, Chairperson of the JCOMM Ship Observations Team)

Summary and purpose of document

This document describes the role and responsibilities of Port Meteorological Officers (PMOs), not only in providing support to the VOS Scheme, but also in support of other national, regional and international marine meteorological or oceanographic programmes.

ACTION PROPOSED

The VOS Panel is invited to review the information contained in this report and comment, as appropriate.

REVIEW OF PMO ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES

Background

Port Meteorological Officers (PMOs) play a vital role in maintaining national Voluntary Observing Fleets (VOF) as part of the JCOMM Voluntary Observing Ship (VOS) Scheme. In recent years, the role has increased in many countries to also provide support to other marine meteorological or oceanographic observing programmes.

The VOS Panel, particularly through the Task Teams dealing with VOS issues, is endeavouring to harmonize the functions and practices of Port Meteorological Officers. Harmonising how PMOs deal with ships is becoming increasingly important as ships trade worldwide, and are likely to be visited by more than just their respective home PMO.

Role

A Port Meteorological Officer (PMO):

1. Is a representative of the National Meteorological Service (NMS), and the primary contact point with local maritime authorities and the marine community at large; and
2. Directly contributes to the success and viability of the JCOMM VOS Scheme by helping to maintain:
 - a. The size of the international VOF (VOS Fleet); and
 - b. The quality and frequency of ships' weather reports.

Responsibilities

The responsibilities of the Port Meteorological Officer(s) are broadly defined in numerous WMO publications, including:

1. WMO Technical Regulations (WMO-No. 49);
2. *Guide to Marine Meteorological Services* (WMO-No. 471); and
3. *Manual on Marine Meteorological Services* (WMO-No. 558).

Specific functions

At the national level, many NMS will specifically define the responsibilities of its respective PMO(s) in national guides, manuals and instructions. These responsibilities are often dependent on the specific port being serviced, and the type and volume of marine traffic visiting the port, and will include some or all of the following functions:

1. Recruit ships of any nationality into and maintain the national VOF.
2. Maintain accurate records of the ships recruited into the national VOF, including:
 - a. Full ship details, as required for WMO Publication Number 47;
 - b. All supplied and recovered instrumentation; and
 - c. All instrument checks and calibrations dates.
3. Regularly visit ships recruited to the national VOF to:

- a. Maintain contact with the Observers;
 - b. Provide ongoing training to Observers;
 - c. Maintain and inspect the meteorological and selected oceanographic instruments;
 - d. Check the presence and condition of supplied handbooks, meteorological tables and charts;
 - e. Maintain the ship's supply of logbooks, autographic charts, muslin, wicks and other mandatory consumables; and
 - f. Recover and inspect completed logbooks, autographic charts and electronic logbook data.
4. To provide the following services to a VOS, regardless of the ship's nationality and country of recruitment:
- a. Perform a barometer check;
 - b. Check meteorological code tables;
 - c. Check instructions for Observers;
 - d. Provide advice on bulletins, including a list of areas for which forecasts are issued and to update the relevant facsimile broadcast schedules.
5. At the request of the Master of a VOS, regardless of its country of recruitment, perform the following services:
- a. Check other meteorological and selected oceanographic instruments; and
 - b. Provide advice or assistance on meteorological matters.
6. Promote and maintain relationships with:
- a. Other intra-national PMOs and the NMS;
 - b. Harbour authorities and shipping companies;
 - c. Merchant marine schools and yacht clubs; and
 - d. International PMOs, as necessary.
7. To enquire with the ship's officers regarding any problems that may be experienced with regards to:
- a. The transmission of meteorological and oceanographic observations to a Land Earth Stations (LESSs) or other facility;
 - b. The reception and adequacy of forecasts, bulletins and facsimile broadcasts, and to bring this information to the attention of the national meteorological service.
8. Support complementary national, international and regional marine meteorological and oceanographic programmes, such as:
- a. The deployment of drifting buoys and profiling floats; and
 - b. The SOOP and ASAP.
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