

INDEPENDENT GROUP OF EXPERTS TERMS OF REFERENCE, VERIFICATION AND EVALUATION PROCEDURES

1 Purpose

At the invitation of the Director of IMSO, to verify and evaluate information provided concerning a specific maritime mobile satellite system offered for use in the GMDSS, in relation to the relevant requirements and recommendations of IMO, ITU and IMSO, and advise the Director of IMSO accordingly.

2 Composition

2.1 The Group of Experts shall normally consist of no more than three independent experts, chosen on a case-by-case basis from a list of named experts nominated by IMSO Member States.

2.2 Nominations of named experts may be submitted by Member States, supported by a brief *Curriculum Vitae*, and reviewed by the Advisory Committee for suitability before their names are added to the list of approved experts.

2.3 The Director shall maintain a list of experts nominated by IMSO Member States. Experts should have:

considerable practical operational and technical experience of maritime mobile satellite systems and the GMDSS; and
knowledge and understanding of IMO, ITU and IMSO procedures, standards and recommendations.

2.4 The Director will normally appoint a different Group of Experts for each verification and evaluation exercise, choosing particularly those who demonstrably have no interest in the applicant Company or the specific application they will be considering.

2.5 When selecting a Group of Experts for a particular evaluation exercise, the Director will take into consideration the need for each expert to come from a different country or region, and seek to ensure that members of the Group have no conflicting interests and, in particular, do not have any connection with either the applicant company or the sponsoring government.

2.6 The IMO Secretariat and the Member Government sponsoring the application shall have the right to join the Group as Observers and make representations to the Assembly and its subsidiary body, as appropriate, on matters relating to the verification and evaluation exercise.

2.7 The Director will organise the work of the Group and provide secretariat services.

3 Method of Work

3.1 The Group of Experts will be convened, when required, by the Director and will normally work by correspondence, preferably by e-mail.

3.2 Once convened, a particular Group of Experts will continue in existence until the Organization has issued the applicant Company with a Notice of Recognition and Letter of Compliance and a Public Services Agreement is in force for the services concerned. That particular Group will then be disbanded.

3.3 The Group may elect a Co-ordinator from among its members.

3.4 The Group will be provided with information by the Member Government which is sponsoring the application. The package of information should be sufficient to enable the Group to evaluate and verify that the services proposed for inclusion in the GMDSS comply fully with the relevant requirements and recommendations of IMO, ITU and IMSO, as appropriate. Requests for further information or explanation should be sent to the Director, who will normally invite the sponsoring Government to provide the data requested.

3.5 The Group should deliver a Report to the Director, which may include at least the following elements:

- Overview of the applicant Company, including: full identity and location details and any other comments on the Company's business status so far as it may affect the Company's continuing ability to offer GMDSS services;
- General overview of the Company's satellite constellation, ground infrastructure, and full range of communication services;
- Verification of the information provided in relation to the services offered for the GMDSS;
- Evaluation of the services offered for the GMDSS and their degree of compliance with the relevant requirements;
- Conclusions and Recommendations.

3.6 Experts will not normally be required to travel during their term of duty, except that the whole Group, or its elected Co-ordinator, and its Observers may be invited to attend the session of the Advisory Committee that will review its report.

4 Confidentiality

4.1 When the Director convenes a Group of Experts for a particular evaluation and verification exercise, every expert appointed to that Group will be required to guarantee the protection of any confidential information the Group may be required to review, and sign a non-disclosure agreement to that effect.

5 Remuneration and Costs

5.1 Each expert shall be entitled to receive a daily fee, based on the appropriate level of current IMO daily fees for consultancy, for a fixed number of days, plus appropriate expenses as approved by the Organization. No other costs shall be chargeable to the Organization.

5.2 The Organization will recover the full cost of recognizing and approving new satellite services for the GMDSS from the applicant Company concerned through a fixed fee, payable in advance. The fee will be set at a level agreed by the Advisory Committee on the basis of a recommendation by the Director.
