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Stan Walter  
National Safety Officer  
South African Deep Sea Angling Association

23 March 2015

Subject: Marine Notice No. 4 of 2015

Dear Stan,

Your letter dated 19 March 2015 refers, please be advised as follows:

1. Telkom Maritime have advised SAMS that the introduction of Sea Area A1 has been postponed until the end of the year. This date coincides with the switch off of 29 Mhz watch keeping by the recognized authority (Telkom). Please advise your members that the carriage of 29 Mhz radios until this date, 01/01/2016, will satisfy the requirements of the Small Vessel regulations, a Marine Notice will be issued shortly to advise of the extension.

2. Cape Town Radio will not be closing, neither will any of the VHF coverage of the South African coast be affected in any way by South Africa declaring an A1 area which will introduce a DSC system. Telkom have additionally advised that they will continue to keep an aural watch on VHF Channel 16 until 2018.

The entire South African coastline from Ponto De Ouro to the Orange River is covered by a system of VHF repeater stations that are remotely controlled by Cape Town Radio. This system is not compromised and is in fact being upgraded to include DSC as well as Aural watch keeping as per the Marine Notice.

The only issue here is that 29 Mhz watch keeping by Telkom Maritime is to cease when the new system becomes active, hence small vessels can no longer rely on 29 Mhz radios to satisfy the requirements of the small vessel regulations.

29 Mhz radios are Land Mobile radios and were never meant or designed for maritime use. These radios were introduced for use by small vessels during the Suez crisis in the 1970's when shipping rounding South Africa increased dramatically thus increasing traffic on the maritime bands (VHF). To help ease this congestion a temporary plan was put in place to get small vessels off these marine bands by allowing them the use of three channels in the 29 Mhz Land Mobile radio band. This system was never considered as an equivalent for proper marine band radios and the need for them has long been a thing of the past as the congestion that caused the introduction of 29 Mhz radios no longer exists.

Marine Notice 4 of 2015 is an advisory notice to the small boating fraternity of the facts as laid out in the Notice.

In view of the foregoing, small vessel operators and owners may keep the 29 Mhz radios onboard for intership, communicating with clubs, licensed launch sites etc. However as a safety requirement vessels shall carry a VHF installation once the 29 Mhz watch keeping ceases.

Operators of marine band radios are further required to be in possession of an appropriate radio operator's certificate, which requirement may presently be covered by the Restricted/RT (VHF ONLY) certificate.

Those persons purchasing VHF radios are to please ensure that they are DSC compliant. Most VHF units on the market today already have the DSC function built in. This is in line with forward thinking to minimise the costs of having to replace non DSC compliant sets in the future.

I hope this addresses some of your concerns.

Yours Sincerely



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