

Bulletin

CCS Australian Office, No. 105. 2026 Issue 004

Notice on Proper Setting of Inmarsat-C EGC for Receiving MSI in Australian Waters

1. Background

Recently, during an AMSA PSC inspection in Australia, a vessel was issued with a GMDSS-related deficiency:

“Inmarsat-C not set up to receive maritime safety information for the current area of operation.”

This type of deficiency has been frequently noted during PSC inspections in Australia. The cause of the deficiency was that the vessel was fitted with Inmarsat-C EGC equipment, but the EGC receiving settings had not been properly configured in accordance with the intended voyage route and the current area of operation. As a result, the vessel could not fully demonstrate that it was capable of receiving MSI applicable to the relevant Australian waters.

This issue is normally not caused by hardware failure of the equipment, but is related to the crew’s understanding of area-specific requirements, equipment settings, operation and familiarization.

2. Applicable Regulations and Standards

This notice is mainly based on the relevant requirements of the SOLAS Convention and associated IMO circulars, as well as AMSA regulations and guidance documents concerning MSI reception, EGC configuration, radiocommunication watchkeeping, position updating and crew familiarization.

SOLAS Chapter IV, Regulations 4 and 7, and Regulations 12 to 18

Chapter IV requires GMDSS ships, while at sea, to be capable of receiving Maritime Safety Information (MSI), and to be provided with a receiver capable of receiving MSI and Search and Rescue (SAR) related information.

Chapter IV also sets out requirements related to Inmarsat-C EGC, including radiocommunication watchkeeping, sources of energy, equipment approval, maintenance, radio personnel qualifications, radio records and position updating.

IMO MSC.1/Circ.1645

IMO MSC.1/Circ.1645 provides guidance on the reception of MSI and SAR-related information in the GMDSS. It also explains that the International EGC service includes Inmarsat SafetyNET, which is used for the coordinated broadcast and automatic reception of MSI and SAR-related information through the EGC system.

COMSAR.1/Circ.32/Rev.3

COMSAR.1/Circ.32/Rev.3, as guidance for the harmonized implementation of SOLAS Chapter IV requirements, states that the MSI and SAR-related information receiver should be kept under watch, and that such watch should be kept at the position from which the ship is normally navigated.

The circular also emphasizes that the radio operator responsible for watchkeeping should be familiar with the radio equipment and should regularly check the operation of the radio equipment and its sources of energy.

AMSA Marine Order 27 (MO27)

MO27 defines MSI as navigational and meteorological warnings, meteorological forecasts and other urgent safety-related messages broadcast to ships.

For applicable vessels, MO27 requires compliance with the relevant requirements of SOLAS IV/4 and SOLAS IV/12–18.

AMSA Marine Notice 05/2023 (Notice 05/23)

Notice 05/23 provides guidance on the reception of MSI.

AMSA GMDSS Handbook 2018 (Handbook)

The Handbook provides guidance on GMDSS equipment, procedures, MSI reception, radiocommunication watchkeeping and routine operation.

3. Characteristics of MSI Reception in Australian Waters

The Handbook states that the Australian Government has designated its surrounding waters as GMDSS Sea Area A3, with the exception of Antarctic waters south of approximately 76°S.

Australia does not provide a NAVTEX service. Due to the long coastline of Australia and the limited communication range of NAVTEX frequencies, coastal MSI in Australia is disseminated by Inmarsat EGC.

Notice 05/23 states that all vessels transiting METAREA X, NAVAREA X, or navigating off the Australian coast should ensure that they are able to receive all MSI necessary for the intended voyage. In addition, the master should ensure that MSI receivers are properly configured for the intended voyage, including while the vessel is in port. AMSA PSCOs may verify this during PSC inspections.

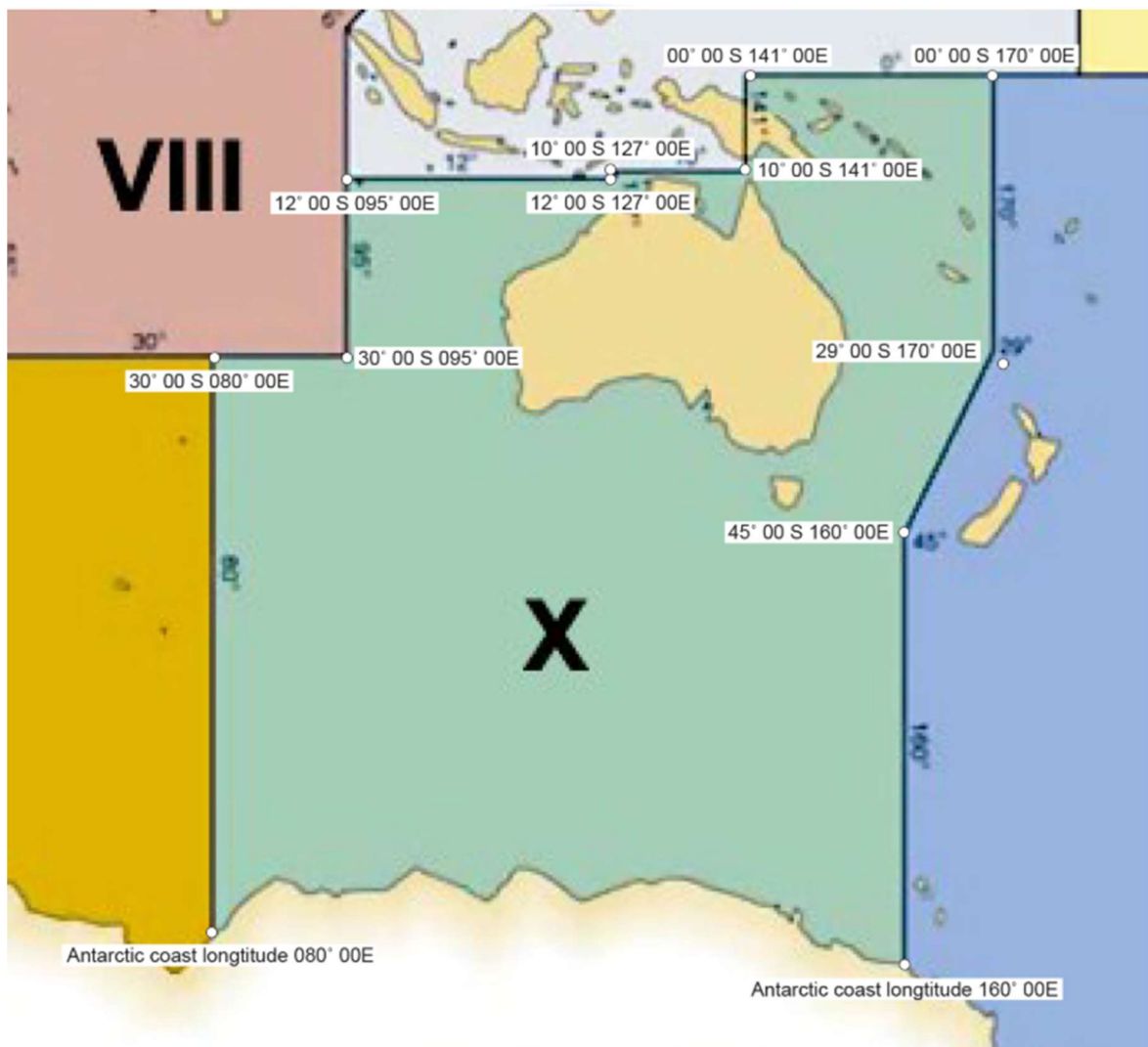


Figure 1 — NAVAREA X boundaries

Notice 05/23 states that Australian navigational warnings are promulgated to NAVAREA X and Coastal Warning Areas A to H. Meteorological warnings and forecasts are promulgated to METAREA X, high seas areas and relevant coastal waters.

AMSA / Joint Rescue Coordination Centre Australia (JRCC) and the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) promulgate MSI through EGC, including Inmarsat SafetyNET and Iridium SafetyCast, supplemented by HF radiotelephone broadcasts.

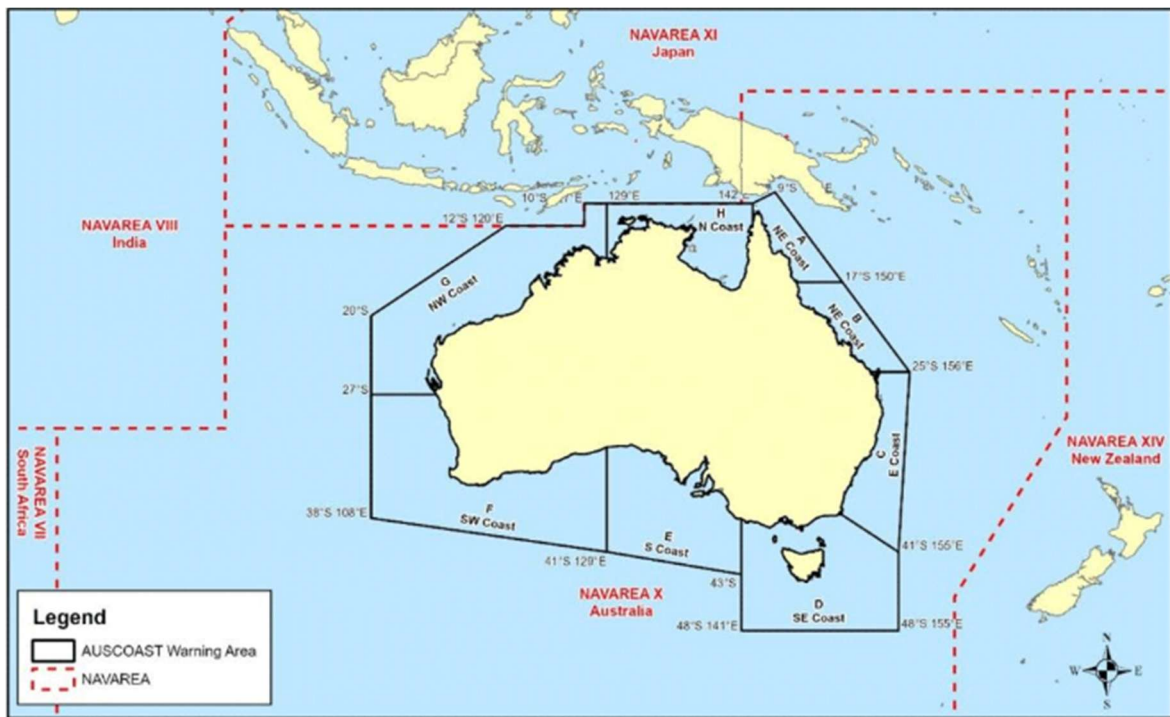


Figure 2 — Coastal Warning Areas A to H

The Handbook further states that the reception of EGC information is closely related to the position data stored in the equipment. If position information cannot be automatically updated, it should be manually updated at intervals not exceeding 4 hours. If the position is not updated for more than 12 hours, the EGC receiver will receive all MSI for the entire ocean region.

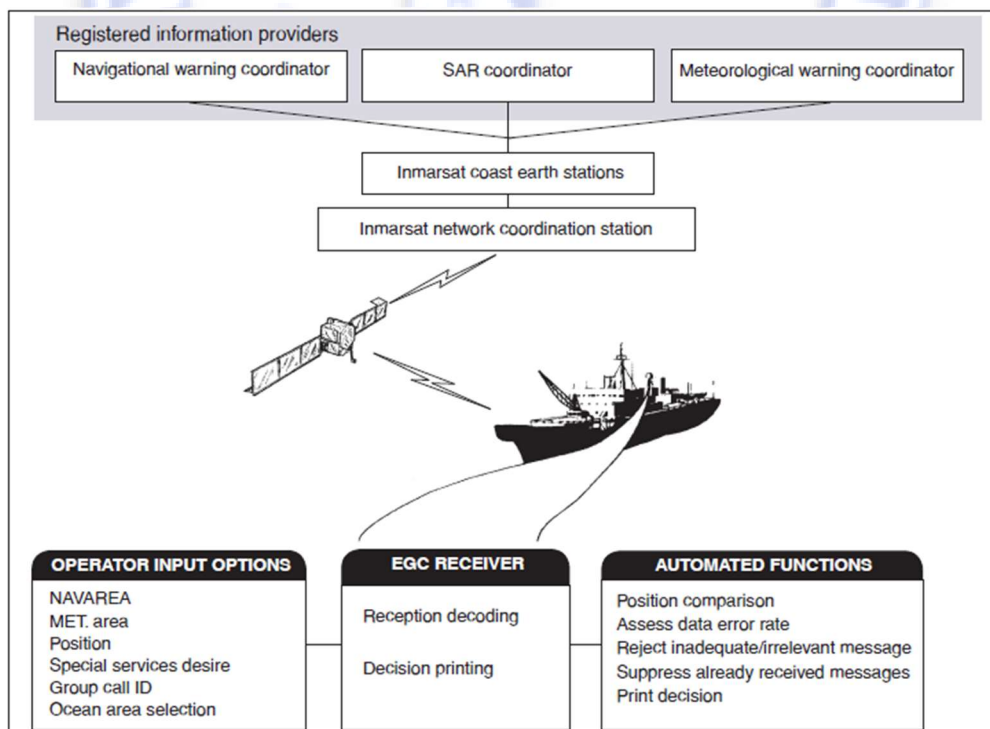


Figure 3 — International SafetyNET Service System Concept

Therefore, Notice 05/23 indicates that when a vessel enters, leaves or navigates along the Australian coast, the vessel should verify, based on the intended voyage route, whether the Inmarsat-C EGC has been set to receive information for the relevant Coastal Warning Areas.

4. Recommended Actions for Ships

Before arriving in Australian waters, the master and deck officers should confirm that the Inmarsat-C EGC has been correctly configured.

The following items are recommended for checking / setting:

- The Inmarsat-C SES is normally online;
- The EGC receiving function is enabled;
- The relevant Coastal Warning Areas have been checked / set;
- Coastal Navigation Warnings / AUSCOAST warnings are enabled;
- The MSI reception settings related to NAVAREA X / METAREA X have been checked;
- The printer / display is operating normally;
- Recently received EGC messages have been checked;
- GPS position input is normal;
- The position and time displayed by the equipment are correct;
- If position updating is not automatic, the position has been manually updated at intervals not exceeding 4 hours;
- The relevant setting checks have been recorded in the GMDSS radio log or relevant checklist;
- The officer on watch / GMDSS operator is able to demonstrate on board how to check and set the EGC configuration.

5. Conclusion and Reminder

The Inmarsat-C EGC equipment should be properly configured and used according to the intended voyage route and the current area of operation, so as to ensure effective reception of MSI applicable to Australian waters.

A vessel should not rely solely on the fact that “the Inmarsat-C equipment is online” or that “the Safety Radio Certificate is valid” as the only evidence of compliance. During PSC inspections, the PSCO may require shipboard personnel to explain or demonstrate:

- what MSI should be received for the current area of operation;
- how the Inmarsat-C EGC is configured;
- whether the relevant Australian Coastal Warning Areas have been enabled;
- whether relevant EGC information has been received;
- whether position input is correct; and
- whether relevant checks have been recorded.

Shipping companies, shipowners and ship management companies are advised to pay attention to the relevant requirements and to arrange specific familiarization and training accordingly.

References

1. SOLAS Chapter IV, Regulations 4 and 7, and Regulations 12 to 18
2. [IMO MSC.1/Circ.1645](#)
3. [COMSAR.1/Circ.32/Rev.3](#)
4. [AMSA Marine Order 27](#)
5. [AMSA Marine Notice 05/2023](#)
6. [AMSA GMDSS Handbook 2018](#)



CCS Australia Office
May 28, 2026

Announcement:

1. Intention is to assist and ensure owners to understand and well prepared, ensuring all updated requirements from AMSA can be met
2. For more information, please visit AMSA website at www.amsa.gov.au and CCS website at www.ccs.org.cn
3. The information contained does not and cannot supersede any AMSA or related governing parties requirements as well