

Ref. T2/6.01

**IMPORTANCE OF CORRECT FORMATTING OF TRANSMISSIONS
ON NAVTEX SYSTEM**

1 Due to the importance of the prompt receipt of maritime safety information by ships, this circular is being issued following consultations between the Chairman of the COMSAR Sub-Committee, the Chairman of the NAVTEX Co-ordinating Panel and the Secretariat who considered this to be an urgent matter which should be brought to the attention of Member Governments without delay. The second session of the COMSAR Sub-Committee will be invited to endorse this action.

2 A recent incident in the United Kingdom has highlighted the importance of strict adherence to the operational and technical characteristics of the NAVTEX system.

3 Modern micro-processor controlled NAVTEX receivers may reject any messages which do not conform **EXACTLY** with the technical format of the transmission as contained in ANNEX II to RECOMMENDATION ITU-R M.540-2 which is given in the annex. For example, the addition of a **SECOND** space between the "ZCZC" and the "B1 B2 B3 B4" characters may be sufficient for the whole message to be lost.

4 It is strongly recommended all NAVTEX co-ordinators continuously monitor messages transmitted using the NAVTEX system to ensure that all conform precisely with the technical format given in the annex.

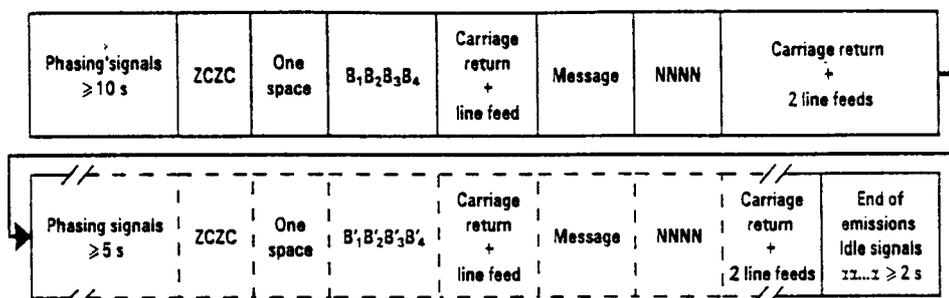
5 Member Governments are invited to bring this information to the attention of those involved in the promulgation of maritime safety information using the NAVTEX system.

ANNEX

ANNEX II (RECOMMENDATION ITU-R M.540-2)

TECHNICAL CHARACTERISTICS

- 1 The signals transmitted should be in conformity with the collective B-mode of the direct-printing system specified in Recommendations 476 and 625.
- 2 The technical format of the transmission should be as follows:



in which

ZCZC defines the end of the phasing period.

the B₁ character is a letter (A-Z) identifying the transmitter coverage area.

the B₂ character is a letter (A-Z) for each type of message.

2.1 Both the B₁ characters identifying the different transmitter coverage areas and the B₂ characters identifying the different types of messages are defined by IMO and chosen from Table 1 of recommendations 476 and 625, combination numbers 1-26.

2.1.1 Ship equipment should be capable of automatically rejecting unwanted information using character B₁.

2.1.2 Ship equipment should be capable of disabling print-out of selected types of messages using character B₂ with the exception of messages with B₂ characters A, B and D (see also § 2.1).

2.1.3 If any facility is rejected or disabled in § 2.1.1 and 2.1.2 above, the extent of any such limitation must be clearly indicated to the user.

2.2 B₃B₄ is a two-character serial number for each B₂, starting with 01 except in special cases where the serial number 00 is used (see § 6 below).

2.3 The characters ZCZC B₁ B₂ B₃ B₄ need not be printed.

- 3 The printer should only be activated if the preamble $B_1 - B_4$ is received without errors.
 - 4 Facilities should be provided to avoid printing of the same message several times on the same ship, when such a message has already been satisfactorily received.
 - 5 The necessary information for the measures under § 4 above should be deduced from the sequence $B_1 B_2 B_3 B_4$ and from the message.
 - 6 A message should always be printed if $B_3 B_4 = 00$.
 - 7 Extra (redundant) letter and figure shifts should be used in the message to reduce garbling.
 - 8 In case a message is repeated by another transmitting station (e.g. for better coverage) the original preamble $B_1 - B_4$ should be used.
 - 9 The equipment on board ships should be neither unduly complex nor expensive.
 - 10 The transmitter frequency tolerance for the mark and the space signals should be better than ± 10 Hz.
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