



# PUBLIC NOTICE

Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th St., S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20554

News Media Information 202 / 418-0500  
Fax-On-Demand 202 / 418-2830  
TTY 202 / 418-2555  
Internet: <http://www.fcc.gov>  
<ftp.fcc.gov>

DA 07-4212  
Released: October 11, 2007

## WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS BUREAU SEEKS COMMENT ON REQUEST OF NATIONAL GMDSS IMPLEMENTATION TASK FORCE REGARDING MARITIME MOBILE SERVICE IDENTITIES

WT Docket No. 07-230

Comment Date: November 13, 2007

Reply Date: November 28, 2007

A maritime mobile service identity (MMSI) is a unique nine-digit number assigned to commercial and recreational U.S. vessels participating in the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS). The Commission assigns MMSIs to licensed vessels as part of the ship station licensing process. Operators of vessels that are not required to obtain an individual ship station license ("exempt" vessels)<sup>1</sup> can obtain MMSIs from designated private entities.<sup>2</sup> Exempt vessels with privately-issued MMSIs that later obtain individual ship station licenses receive new MMSIs in the licensing process.

On May 29, 2007, the National GMDSS Implementation Task Force (GMDSS Task Force)<sup>3</sup> filed a petition requesting that the Commission alter the Universal Licensing System (ULS) so as to permit operators of exempt vessels that later obtain individual ship station licenses to retain the privately-issued MMSI.<sup>4</sup> Conversely, the GMDSS Task Force also recommends that the designated private entities be permitted to manage MMSIs originally issued by the Commission when the operator of a licensed vessel

<sup>1</sup> A vessel is not required to be individually licensed if it is not subject to any radio equipment carriage requirement under any statute, treaty, or agreement to which the United States is a party; does not travel to foreign ports or make international communications; and does not carry equipment other than VHF (156-162 MHz) radios, emergency position-indicating radio beacons, and radar installations. See 47 C.F.R. § 80.13(c).

<sup>2</sup> See Commission Announces Agreements with Shine Micro, Inc., and United States Power Squadrons, Inc., and Termination of Agreement with Maritel, Inc., Regarding Assignment of Maritime Mobile Service Identities (MMSIs), *Public Notice*, 22 FCC Rcd 7329 (WTB MD 2007) (listing entities from which operators of exempt vessels can obtain MMSIs).

<sup>3</sup> The GMDSS Task Force was chartered by the U.S. Coast Guard to supplement government functions in expediting the implementation of the GMDSS. The membership includes over 1,500 representatives of government agencies, commercial vessel owners and operators, recreational vessel interests, training institutions, service agents, manufacturers, trade associations and maritime labor organizations.

<sup>4</sup> Petition to Request the FCC Adopt New Policies and Procedures Regarding MMSI Assignments (filed May 29, 2007) (Request).

decides not to renew the station license. The GMDSS Task Force argues that such modifications of the licensing process would alleviate a burden on operators by eliminating the need to have the new MMSI programmed into their shipboard equipment. Another suggested benefit is that it would prevent the same vessel from being assigned two MMSIs concurrently, which wastes numbers. We seek comment on these proposals. Commenters should particularly address the extent to which the current process burdens vessel operators, both with respect to the number of affected vessels and the degree of burden on each affected operator.

Relatedly, the GMDSS Task Force notes that the Commission has expanded the vessel descriptive data required on applications for new ship station licenses in order to enhance search and rescue operations. The GMDSS Task Force recommends that the Commission require incumbent licensees to provide the expanded data when they apply for license renewal. It also suggests that the Commission periodically contact licensees and other MMSI registrants to verify that the data on file remains correct, and that the MMSI is still active. It states that this will facilitate the recycling of numbers. We seek comment on these proposals. Commenters should particularly address the degree to which the lack of updated data has impeded search and rescue efforts.

### **Procedural Matters**

Comments on the Request are due **no later than November 13, 2007**. Reply comments are due **no later than November 28, 2007**. All filings should reference the docket number of this proceeding, WT 07-230.

This proceeding has been designated as a "permit-but-disclose" proceeding in accordance with the Commission's *ex parte* rules.<sup>5</sup> Parties making oral *ex parte* presentations in this proceeding are reminded that memoranda summarizing the presentation must contain the presentation's substance and not merely list the subjects discussed.<sup>6</sup> More than a one- or two-sentence description of the views and arguments presented is generally required.<sup>7</sup>

The Request is available for public inspection and copying in the Commission's Reference Center, Room CY-A257, 445 12th Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20554. Copies of the Request also may be obtained via the Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) by entering the docket number, WT 07-230. Copies of the Request are also available from Best Copy and Printing, Inc., telephone (800) 378-3160, facsimile (301) 816-0169, e-mail FCC@BCPIWEB.com.

Comments may be filed using the Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) or by filing paper copies. See *Electronic Filing of Documents in Rulemaking Proceedings*, 63 Fed. Reg. 24121 (1998). Comments filed through the ECFS can be sent as an electronic file via the Internet to <http://www.fcc.gov/cgb/ecfs/>. Generally, only one copy of an electronic submission must be filed. If multiple docket or rulemaking numbers appear in the caption of this proceeding, however, commenters must transmit one electronic copy of the comments to each docket or rulemaking number referenced in the caption. In completing the transmittal screen, commenters should include their full name, U.S. Postal

---

<sup>5</sup> See 47 C.F.R. §§ 1.1200(a), 1.1206.

<sup>6</sup> See Commission Emphasizes the Public's Responsibilities in Permit-But-Disclose Proceedings, *Public Notice*, 15 FCC Rcd 19945 (2000).

<sup>7</sup> See 47 C.F.R. § 1.1206(b)(2). Other rules pertaining to oral and written presentations are also set forth in Section 1.1206(b). See 47 C.F.R. § 1.1206(b).

Service mailing address, and the applicable docket or rulemaking number. Parties may also submit an electronic comment by Internet e-mail. To get filing instructions for e-mail comments, commenters should send an e-mail to [ecfs@fcc.gov](mailto:ecfs@fcc.gov), and should include the following words in the body of the message, "get form." A sample form and directions will be sent in reply.

Parties who choose to file by paper must file an original and four copies of each filing. If more than one docket or rulemaking number appears in the caption of this proceeding, commenters must submit two additional copies for each additional docket or rulemaking number.

Filings can be sent by hand or messenger delivery, by commercial overnight courier, or by first-class or overnight U.S. Postal Service mail (although we continue to experience delays in receiving U.S. Postal Service mail). The Commission's contractor will receive hand-delivered or messenger-delivered paper filings for the Commission's Secretary at 236 Massachusetts Avenue, N.E., Suite 110, Washington, D.C. 20002.

- The filing hours at this location are 8:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.
- All hand deliveries must be held together with rubber bands or fasteners.
- Any envelopes must be disposed of before entering the building.
- Commercial overnight mail (other than U.S. Postal Service Express Mail and Priority Mail) must be sent to 9300 East Hampton Drive, Capitol Heights, MD 20743.
- U.S. Postal Service first-class mail, Express Mail, and Priority Mail should be addressed to 445 12th Street, S.W., Washington, D.C. 20554.
- All filings must be addressed to the Commission's Secretary, Office of the Secretary, Federal Communications Commission.

Parties shall send one copy of their comments and reply comments to Best Copy and Printing, Inc., Portals II, 445 12th Street, S.W., Room CY-B402, Washington, D.C. 20554, (800) 378-3160, e-mail [FCC@BCPIWEB.com](mailto:FCC@BCPIWEB.com).

Comments filed in response to this *Public Notice* will be available for public inspection and copying during business hours in the FCC Reference Information Center, Portals II, 445 12th Street S.W., Room CY-A257, Washington, D.C. 20554, and via the Commission's Electronic Comment Filing System (ECFS) by entering the docket number, WT 07-230. The comments may also be purchased from Best Copy and Printing, Inc., telephone (800) 378-3160, facsimile (301) 816-0169, e-mail [FCC@BCPIWEB.com](mailto:FCC@BCPIWEB.com).

Alternate formats of this *Public Notice* (computer diskette, large print, audio recording, and Braille) are available to persons with disabilities by contacting Brian Millin at (202) 418-7426 (voice), (202) 418-7365 (TTY), or send an e-mail to [access@fcc.gov](mailto:access@fcc.gov).

For further information, contact Mr. Ghassan Khalek of the Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, Mobility Division, at (202) 418-1327, [ghassan.khalek@fcc.gov](mailto:ghassan.khalek@fcc.gov).

Action by the Deputy Chief, Mobility Division, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau.

- FCC -