



World Meteorological Organization
Organisation météorologique mondiale

Secrétariat

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Weather • Climate • Water
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Our ref.: OBS/WIGOS/OSD/MAR/SOT

GENEVA, 25 November 2013

Annex: 1 (available in English only)

Subject: Ship's callsign masking schemes implemented as per Resolution 27 (EC-LXI)

Dear Sir/Madam,

You may recall the concerns of the ship owners and masters' with regard to the issue of Voluntary Observing Ship (VOS) data exchange, as ultimately information on ship callsigns and position data could appear on some public websites. This letter complements information provided through our letter OBS/WIGOS/OSD/MAR/SOT dated 26 January 2009 and refers to implications of Resolution 27 (EC-LXI), which recommends in particular that Members, in consultation with ship owners, who wish to protect the identity of VOS, may extend the trial period for the implementation of their current callsign masking schemes as per Resolution 7 (EC-LVIII). Our previous correspondence specifically informed Members about masking schemes implemented by Australia, Japan, USA, and E-SURFMAR. Details of those masking schemes can be found on the WMO website at:

http://www.wmo.int/pages/prog/amp/mmop/JCOMM/OPA/SOT/VOS_masking.html

In addition, Environment Canada has now informed the WMO Secretariat of the technical details regarding the specific masking scheme it is currently implementing in accordance with Resolution 27 (EC-LXI) for their automated systems on VOS (AVOS). The details of this scheme and the conditions for accessing unmasked AVOS reports are provided in the Annex. The above webpage will be updated as new masking schemes are implemented, or changes with regard to existing masking schemes are notified to us.

In this context, I am writing to you to: (i) inform you about the existing schemes; (ii) if you are interested to access the masked data, and if not already done, suggest upgrading your data processing and quality monitoring systems accordingly; (iii) invite you to provide the WMO Secretariat (echarpentier@wmo.int) with information regarding your national activities and needs

To: Permanent Representatives (or Directors of Meteorological or Hydrometeorological Services) of Members of WMO (PR-6730)

cc: Hydrological Advisers to Permanent Representatives)
Mr Johan Stander, co-president, JCOMM) (for information)
Mr Fred Branski, president of CBS)

in terms of quality monitoring for VOS data and climate studies based on VOS data; and (iv) if not already done, nominate a focal point for each of those activities requiring access to the JCOMMOPS database of MASK / REAL callsigns. Upon your nomination, your focal point(s) will be provided with the necessary codes to access the database.

I look forward to your continued and active participation in met-ocean observations and services activities.

Yours faithfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, consisting of a stylized 'J' followed by a long, sweeping horizontal line that curves upwards at the end.

(J. Lengoasa)
for the Secretary-General

WORLD METEOROLOGICAL ORGANIZATION
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OBS/WIGOS/OSD/MAR/SOT, ANNEX

Ship's callsign masking scheme as implemented by Canada per Resolution 27 (EC-LXI)

***Interim callsign making of FM-13 SHIP reports provided
Environment Canada's Meteorological Service of Canada***

In accordance with World Meteorological Organization (WMO) Resolution 7 (EC-LVIII) and Resolution 27 (EC-LXI), Environment Canada (EC) implemented callsign making of FM-13 SHIP reports at 13:00 UTC 8 May 2012 in order to protect the identity of EC's Automated Volunteer Ship (AVOS) fleet. The masking scheme implemented follows the Ship Observing Team (SOT) SHIP method of concealing the TRUE vessel callsign in the FM-13 messages distributed to the Global Telecommunication System (GTS).

1. *Callsign masking*

Incoming FM-13 SHIP format messages from Environment Canada AVOS vessels received via Iridium short-burst-data transmission will have the TRUE ITU callsign replaced with the generic SHIP callsign prior to dissemination to the Global Telecommunication System (GTS) in order to protect the security and anonymity of AVOS equipped ships. This will be applied to all ships in the Canadian AVOS fleet. Callsign masking is being implemented on an interim basis until it can be replaced with proposed ENCODE scheme which will be implemented together with BUFR message formats.

2. *Provision of non-masked data*

For the purposes of real-time monitoring and climate analysis by National Meteorological and Hydrological Services (NMHSs) and monitoring centres, Environment Canada will provide real-time delivery and archive mode FM-13 messages with TRUE callsign via alternative mechanisms to GTS. Environment Canada will require assurances that the messages with TRUE callsign are not disseminated publicly. Arrangements are already in place to provide the TRUE callsign FM-13 messages to UK Metservice as well as the US National Weather Service.
