



Islander January 2009 Technology Update

The New Year Mix of Technology, Legislation and Other Stuff

The editor tells me that my readership may have increased by 50% in 2008 so, on that basis, I wish all three of you a very happy new year, and look forward to informing and entertaining you for another twelve months. My message to you is “Don’t believe all this “credit crunch” nonsense – let’s really go for it in 2009”!

Our pre-Christmas season was hectic, running from the Monaco Yacht Show in September all the way to the Antigua Charter Show in December, and including the Fort Lauderdale Show, METS and the Global Super Yacht Forum in Amsterdam, and the Mallorca Trade Mission to Antigua in early December. We then returned to Mallorca with just a week back in the office before Christmas, leaving our team running our new office in Antigua for the winter Caribbean season.

The autumn shows were still short on new and interesting technology. We put a great deal of effort during the autumn into pushing our manufacturers and service providers to launch their new services. It looked as though we may be disappointed but our patience has eventually been rewarded, and we can officially announce one significant launch for January 2009. This is a new, high-quality and reliable mini VSAT from the premier VSAT service provider, MTN. During the next few months we also expect to launch the best GSM service in the world which will allow almost any cell phone to be used on a yacht in any location worldwide. . Firstly however, an important new piece of legislation was introduced in the middle of last year, although complete information has been scarce until now.

SOLAS V/19-1 Long-Range Identification and Tracking regulation

This regulation is now in force as it had a compliance date of 31st December 2008.

We didn’t take much notice of this initially as the SOLAS regulation states that the LRIT regulation only applies to the following ship types engaged on international voyages:

- - All passenger ships including high speed craft,
- - Cargo ships, including high speed craft of 300 gross tonnage and above, and
- - Mobile offshore drilling units.

There was no mention of yachts although it states, “all vessels of 300 gross tonnage and above on international voyages will need to be compliant with LRIT regulations”.



So, like most, we assumed it wouldn't apply to us in yachting. But it does. We dug deeper and it depends on how your flag state interprets the rule.

The Cayman Islands defined their interpretation for yachts on 1st July 2008 in their LRIT Shipping Notice (CISN 05/2008). This Shipping Notice states that Yachts over 300 GT which are certified under the "Large Yacht Code" or hold a Cargo Ship Safety Radio Certificate are considered subject to the provisions of SOLAS V/19-1 and must comply with the requirements for LRIT.

So what is LRIT? LRIT is a maritime domain awareness initiative developed at the IMO as part of the wider Maritime Security measures adopted following the terrorist attacks of 11th September, 2001. LRIT allows Administrations to receive position reports from ships flying their Flag wherever they are in the world. It will also allow Governments to receive similar position reports from all ships in the vicinity of their coastlines and territorial waters.

This regulation requires ships and yachts to transmit the following information for LRIT purposes wherever they are in the world.

- the identity of the ship (IMO Number and Name),
- the position of the ship (Latitude and Longitude), and
- the date and time of the position report

The technology to be used is Inmarsat C. If you need to be compliant your existing Inmarsat C may work. Even if it is on the list of compliant models a test still needs to be carried out to check it does work. Once it has been tested by an authorised examiner and found to be compliant a certificate will be issued.

We have contacted our known Cayman Islands registered yachts over the last few months. Not many have complied by 31st December but they will need the certificate by their first Radio Survey in 2009.

If you are at all concerned or need to know more information, please contact us or read the Cayman Islands Ship Register web site at www.cishipping.com

iTunes dropping DRM encryption

Good news last week. This announcement was made at MacWorld show in San Francisco during Apple's last ever keynote at the event. Apple also announced that all four major music labels - Universal Music Group, Sony BMG, Warner Music Group and EMI - are now offering their music in 'iTunes Plus,' Apple's DRM-free format. Phil Schiller, Apple's head of marketing said that all 10 million songs in the iTunes library would be DRM-free by April this year. In addition, Apple said that individual songs on



iTunes will soon be available at one of three price points - US\$0.69, US\$0.99 or US\$1.29 - rather than the current US\$0.99 flat fee.

I think this is good news as I believe the DRM encryption of songs has had the opposite effect of what was intended. Due to the fact that after you purchase and download a song with DRM encryption you can only play that song on the referenced iPods and nothing else and even if you want to move songs you have legitimately purchased onto another PC iTunes library it will repeatedly prevent you from doing so, and you will start swearing uncontrollably... As Apple have made keeping legal so complicated and difficult it is extremely tempting to go back to downloading with no restrictions.

New MTN mini VSAT using a 60cm antenna

As the main Distributor for MTN, a SeaMobile Company, we are thrilled that they have finally launched their service on a smaller KNS 60cm antenna. The only restriction to the service is that it will only be available for the Med and the Caribbean. The service provided is exactly the same as the current premier MTN service with guaranteed bandwidth, flexible contracts and flexible bandwidth. The MTN service allows any application to be run and has no limits on bandwidth or data used.

New 85cm VSAT option for worldwide MTN VSAT service

In addition to the new 60cm we are also pleased to launch the new KNS 85cm 3-axis stabilised antenna with the premier MTN worldwide DirectNet VSAT service plan.

Both these smaller KNS antennas have been chosen by MTN as, like the Sea Tel 4006 and 6006, they are true 3-axis antennas and thus have more accurate pointing capability. However the same principle still applies in that the larger the antenna the better it will be, especially on the edge of the footprint and in bad weather. The general rule of thumb is that you should always go for the largest antenna your yacht can support. If you have always wanted a proper VSAT service, but the yacht has been too small to support a Sea Tel 4006, then this is now available.

4th Inmarsat I-4 satellite enters commercial service

On 7th January 2009 the new Inmarsat-4 (I-4) Americas satellite entered commercial service, paving the way for the introduction of full global coverage for the Fleet Broadband services.

To implement full global coverage and at the same time optimise data connectivity, Inmarsat now needs to reposition the satellites launched earlier I-4 F2 and then the I-4 F1 spacecraft. This repositioning process is scheduled to end on 24th February with the introduction of global coverage.

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Once repositioning is complete, the respective positions of each I-4 satellite will be 98 degrees West (I-4 Americas), 25 degrees East (I-4 EMEA) and 143.5 degrees East (I-4 Asia-Pacific).

So, all pretty dull stuff, I'm afraid, but this is information that some of you out there need to know!

Roger Horner of E3 Systems

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