

U.S. Department
of Transportation

United States
Coast Guard



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16554
Ser: 95/20040

DEC 2 1994

Mr. William A. O'Neil
Secretary-General
International Maritime Organization
4 Albert Embankment
London SE1 7SR
United Kingdom

Dear Mr. O'Neil:

I would like to commend the Sub-Committee on Safety of Navigation (NAV) of the International Maritime Organization (IMO) for pioneering progress in the development of a worldwide navigation system for maritime interests. In this regard, I note the efforts made at the 40th session of NAV to develop Global Positioning System (GPS) receiver standards.

I would like to take this opportunity to reiterate my Government's position regarding the Standard Positioning Service (SPS) of GPS for use by the international community. As the United States made clear at the Tenth Air Navigation Conference and the 29th International Civil Aviation Organization Assembly, the United States intends, subject to the availability of funds as required by United States law, to make GPS-SPS available for the foreseeable future, on a continuous, worldwide basis and free of direct user fees. This service, which will be available as provided in the United States Government's technical sections of the Federal Radionavigation Plan on a nondiscriminatory basis to all users, will provide a horizontal accuracy of 100 meters (95 percent probability). The United States will take all necessary measures to maintain the integrity and reliability of the service and expects that it will be able to provide at least six years notice prior to termination of GPS operations or elimination of the GPS-SPS.

The GPS-SPS is a candidate component of the future Global Navigation Satellite System (GNSS) as envisioned by IMO, as well as ICAO. The United States believes that making GPS available to the international community will enable States to develop a more complete understanding of this valuable technology as a component of GNSS. The availability of GPS-SPS, of course, is not intended in any way to limit the rights of any state to control the operations of vessels and enforce safety regulations within its territorial waters.

In the coming years, the international community must decide how to implement an international civil GNSS. The United States pledges its full cooperation in that endeavor and will undertake a continuing exchange of information with IMO regarding the operation of GPS to assist IMO in carrying out its responsibilities.

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I would be grateful if you could confirm that the International Maritime Organization is satisfied with the foregoing, which I submit in lieu of an agreement. In that event, this letter and your reply will comprise mutual understandings regarding the Global Positioning System between the Government of the United States and the International Maritime Organization.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Robert E. Kramek". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

ROBERT E. KAMEK
Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard
Commandant