

Commission for  
Communications Regulation



## **MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

**BETWEEN**

**COMMISSION FOR COMMUNICATIONS REGULATION**

**COMMISSIONERS OF IRISH LIGHTS**

**IRISH COAST GUARD**

**RELATING TO COOPERATION IN THE MANAGEMENT OF  
AUTOMATIC IDENTIFICATION SYSTEM (AIS)  
TRANSMISSIONS**

**AMENDMENT RECORD SHEET**

This is a controlled document.

Amendments will be issued by agreement between the parties.

Date	Section	Page No.	Summary of Changes

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This Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is made this 16th day of November 2010 between the Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg), the Commissioners of Irish Lights (CIL) and the Irish Coast Guard (IRCG).

## **1. Purpose of the MOU**

- 1.1. This MOU sets out the manner in which the parties will cooperate in the licensing of non-ship borne AIS (Automatic Identification System) apparatus including the consent process, slot allocation, MMSI allocation, interference detection and enforcement.
- 1.2. AIS is a broadcast transponder system operating in the 161.975 MHz and 162.025 MHz frequency bands. AIS transponder equipment is used on ships and aids to navigation (AtoNs), by Vessel Traffic Services (VTS) and by Maritime Competent Authorities.

## **2. Responsibilities & Authorities**

- 2.1 The Commission for Communications Regulation (ComReg) is the statutory body responsible for the regulation of the electronic communications sector. ComReg is responsible for the issuing of AIS licences for all applications other than those on board ships.
- 2.2 The Commissioners of Irish Lights (CIL) are the General Lighthouse Authority for Ireland. CIL provide Aids to Navigation (AtoN) for General Navigation and have responsibility for the superintendence and management of all marine aids to navigation. Statutory Sanction from CIL is required for the establishment, alteration or disestablishment of any AtoN including AIS AtoN.
- 2.3 The Irish Coast Guard (IRCG) discharges the State's responsibility for Maritime Search & Rescue (SAR), counter pollution and salvage operations at sea and safety awareness. IRCG operate Marine Rescue Coordination Centres and Sub-Centres at Dublin, Malin Head and Valentia and maintains a marine communications network around the Irish Coast and on inland waters. IRCG are the responsible authority for the Irish AIS Network.
- 2.4 For the purposes of this MoU each party shall ensure that a single point of contact is designated within its' organisation for liaison between all parties.

## **3 AIS Consent Process**

- 3.1 All non-ship borne AIS transmitters require a licence from ComReg as required by the Wireless Telegraphy Act of 1926 and, if considered an aid to navigation, a Statutory Sanction from CIL.
- 3.2 CIL will normally be the first point of contact for all non-ship borne AIS applicants.
- 3.3 All non-ship borne AIS deployments considered to be an Aid to Navigation must have received Statutory Sanction from CIL prior to requesting a licence from ComReg.
- 3.4 If CIL decide to grant Statutory Sanction for an AIS AtoN they will make it a condition of the Sanction that a valid AIS transmission licence is obtained from ComReg and that the subsequent licence is maintained. If a Fixed Access Time Division Multiple Access (FATDMA) slot is required CIL will indicate the appropriate slot on the Statutory Sanction.

- 3.5 Where CIL receive an application for AIS which is not considered an AtoN they will perform an initial assessment, in conjunction with IRCG (as appropriate) and forward the application with comment to ComReg for consideration.
- 3.6 ComReg will revert to CIL for advice on any slot allocations required in respect of non-AtoNs.
- 3.7 ComReg will forward to CIL any applications received for non-AtoN AIS for processing as per §3.5 (above).
- 3.8 CIL will advise ComReg as soon as practicable of any instances where a Statutory Sanction is withdrawn or Slot Allocation needs to be cancelled or revised.
- 3.9 ComReg will advise CIL as soon as practicable where any Licence for AIS is withdrawn, amended or cancelled.
- 3.10 The flow chart in Annex 2 outlines how the licensing process will be completed.

#### **4 AIS Slot Map**

- 4.1 The parties to this agreement will use the International Association of Marine Aids to Navigation and Lighthouse Authorities (IALA) Master Plan AIS Slot Map for the allocation of FATDMA slots.
- 4.2 Where a licence application requires the allocation of an FATDMA slot, CIL and IRCG will cooperate in advising ComReg on appropriate slot(s) which do not conflict with any existing or planned slot allocations.
- 4.3 CIL and IRCG will jointly maintain a populated slot map which will be available to the other parties when required.

#### **5 AIS Mobile Maritime Service Identities (MMSI)**

- 5.1 The parties to this agreement will follow the AIS Mobile Maritime Service Identities (MMSI)<sup>1</sup> scheme set out in the current version in force of International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Recommendation ITU-R M.585<sup>2</sup>.
- 5.2 ComReg will co-ordinate with all parties to this MoU the notification to the ITU of MMSI numbers issued, as part of the non-ship borne AIS licensing process

#### **6 AIS Interference Detection and Enforcement**

- 6.1 AIS is an important element of the SOLAS (Safety of Life at Sea) Convention requirements. The parties to this agreement recognise the safety critical nature of AIS transmissions and will cooperate to identify and remove any sources of interference
- 6.2 IRCG and CIL operate systems capable of detecting incorrect slot usage and other interference on the AIS VHF data link (VDL). However, the VDL is not monitored so interference will not always be detected immediately. Where such interference is detected it will be brought to the attention of ComReg. Other parties to the MoU will also be informed.

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<sup>1</sup> The Marine Survey Office/Marine Radio Affairs Unit of the Department of Transport is the authority for issuing MMSI for all AIS transmitters.

<sup>2</sup> Recommendation ITU-R 585 Assignment and use of maritime mobile service identities.

6.3 Where interference is reported by a third party all parties to the agreement will be informed and will use their best endeavours to identify the source.

6.4 When informed of interference ComReg will use its available resources to remove the sources of interference.

## **7 ITU Notifications**

7.1 The parties to this MoU will provide ComReg with all necessary information in respect of non-ship borne notifications in a timely fashion to ensure that ComReg can make the appropriate submissions to the ITU.

## **8 Legal considerations and Responsibilities**

8.1 Each party to this MoU will meet their own costs

8.2 Each party agrees to hold and keep harmless the other parties in relation to actions taken under this agreement

8.3 Nothing in this MoU shall constrain the parties from carrying out their statutory functions in a proper and timely manner. Performance of such functions shall take precedence over this MoU.

8.4 All parties agree not to disclose data provided under this MoU to third parties without the consent of the data provider

## **9 REVIEW OF MoU**

9.1 The coordination methods defined in this MoU may be reviewed in the light of experience of operation of relevant networks and future developments.

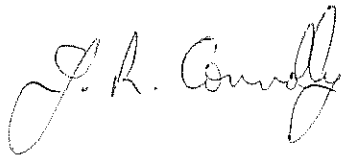
## **10 TERMINATION OF THE MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING**

10.1 Parties may withdraw from this Memorandum of Understanding subject to giving 6 months notice to the other parties.

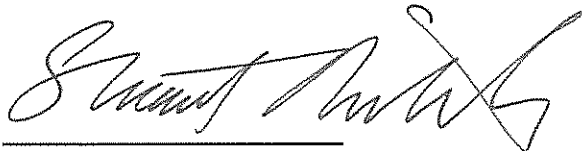
**11 DATE OF ENTRY INTO FORCE**

11.1 This Memorandum of Understanding shall enter into force on 1<sup>st</sup> December 2010.

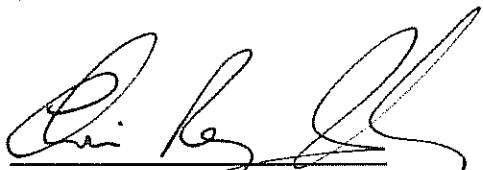
**Signatures**



**On behalf of the Commission for Communications Regulation  
Jim Connolly  
16 November 2010**



**On behalf of the Commissioners of Irish Lights  
Dr. Stuart Ruttle  
19 November 2010**



**On behalf of the Irish Coast Guard  
Chris Reynolds  
35<sup>th</sup> November 2010**

## **Annex 1**

### **Contact details**

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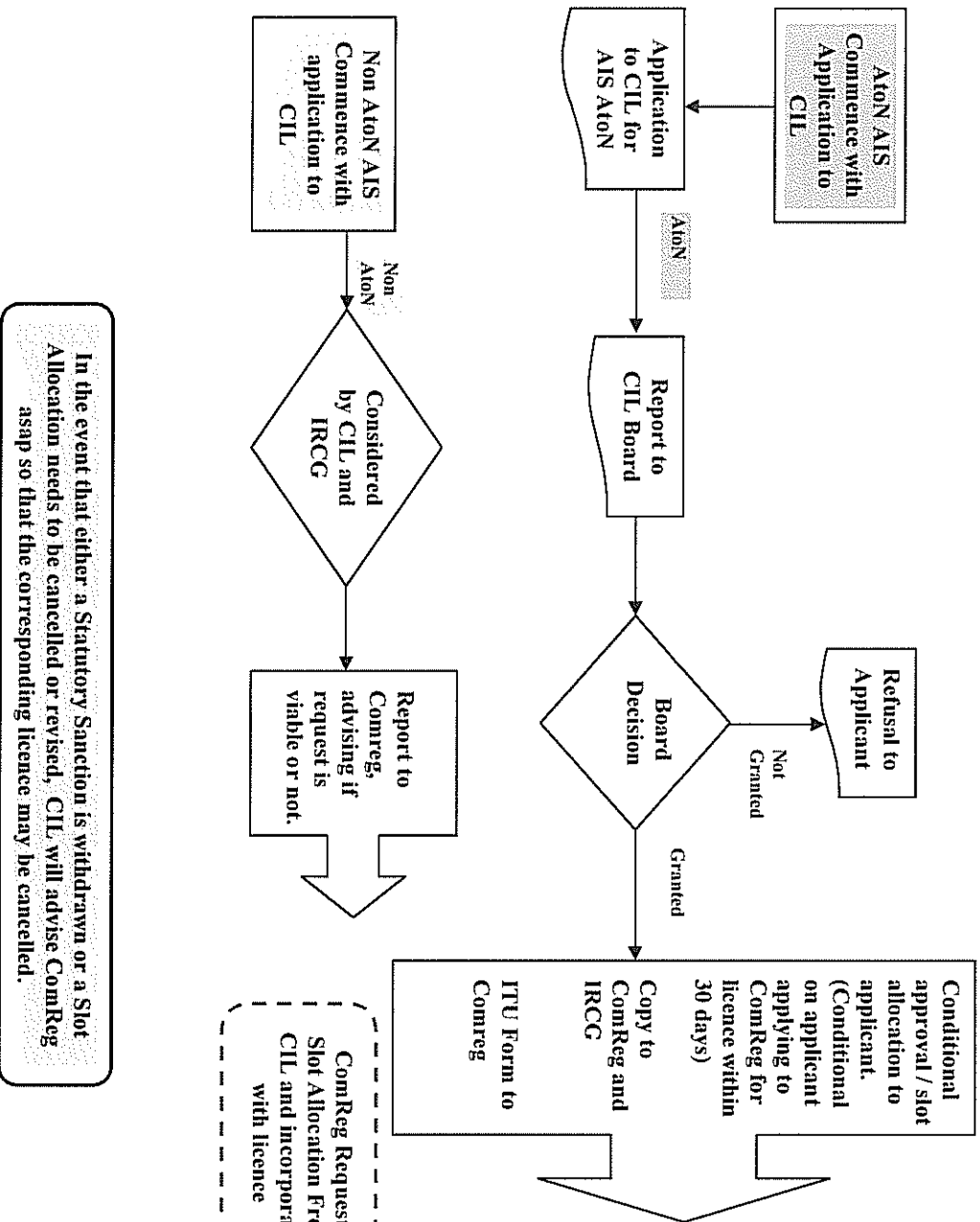
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# Commissioners of Irish Lights (CIL)



# ComReg

