

exception of the "Status Quo" alternative.

Affected Environment

The environment which may be affected by the proposed action may be portions of the marine and terrestrial (both urban and rural) coastal region of the continental U.S., Alaska, Hawaii, the Caribbean, Guam, the Great Lakes and major inland bays and waterways (including Western Rivers) where the Coast Guard has jurisdiction and where commercial and/or recreational maritime traffic exist. The EA will discuss the general aspects of the affected environment outlined above and areas of discussion may include air quality, terrestrial vegetation and wildlife (perhaps including endangered species and their habitat), prime and unique farmlands, historic and cultural resources, wetlands, parks, sanctuaries, conservation/preservation areas, 100-year flood plains, marine vegetation and wildlife (perhaps including endangered species and their habitat), and water quality.

Anticipated Environmental Issues

Areas of Potential Environmental Concern

Internal research has revealed that the following areas may be issues of possible environmental concern: Radio waves (estimated 100 MHz to 1 GHz) from antenna sites; disposal of replaced system components and any associated hazardous materials, including future disposal of any hazardous materials associated with the new system; disturbance of nesting birds, or possible bird mortality from striking tower guy wires or from construction of antenna sites, enclosures, and land lines. Possible impacts from construction could be: disturbance of vegetation and wildlife (perhaps including endangered species and their habitat) wetland disturbance, air emissions, effects to historic/cultural resources including archeological resources, air quality, aesthetics, and construction noise.

Anticipated Environmental Benefits

Oil Spill Prevention. Increased prevention of accident such as oil spills or other hazardous materials from increased ability to track commercial shipping and prevent groundings.

Oil Spill Clean Up. Expedited cleanup of accidents such as oil spills or other hazardous material spills from increased ability to: pinpoint the location of a

distressed vessel or accident, respond quickly to distress calls, contact and coordinate with appropriate spill response teams and other important specialists outside the Coast Guard, disseminate marine safety information, and continue operations during natural disasters.

Endangered Species Act/Conservation Laws Warnings/Enforcement. Increased ability to communicate environmental information/warnings to mariners regarding endangered species sightings/activity (e.g., North Atlantic Right Whale, Kemp's Ridley sea turtle, manatee). Improved coordination of responses with National Marine Fisheries Service and state/local civilian responders to distressed endangered species (e.g., stranded, entangled, or distressed animals). Increased ability to communicate important environmental information to State or local environmental agencies for record purposes. Improved protection of communications for fisheries and conservation enforcement. Anticipated Non-Environmental Benefits.

Increased Safety of Human Life. Increased ability to communicate with, and respond to, the maritime public (recreational and commercial) when in distress. Position locating capability will improve response time, reducing loss of life. Digital Selective Calling capability will allow receipt of distress alerts from DSC-equipped vessels.

Increased Public Service. The Coast Guard will be able to receive all incoming short-range distress calls without interruption. Additionally, the Coast Guard will be able to close the current gaps in communication coverage and achieve improved overall communications with various Federal, State, and local agencies.

Increased Maritime Law Enforcement. The protection of sensitive communications will enhance the Coast Guard law enforcement capability and interoperability with other federal, state, and local agencies.

Increased National Security. In addition to supporting Maritime Law Enforcement, improved communications protection in the modernization NDS will support defense missions in the coastal areas.

R.J. Casto,

Rear Admiral, U.S. Coast Guard, Assistant Commandant for Acquisition.

[FR Doc. 98-6885 Filed 3-16-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-14-M

DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

Federal Aviation Administration

RTCA Special Committee 186/Eurocae Working Group 51; Automatic Dependent Surveillance—Broadcast (ADS-B)

Pursuant to section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (Pub. L. 92-463, 5 U.S.C., Appendix 2), notice is hereby given for Special Committee 186/EUROCAE Working Group 51 joint meeting to be held April 1-2, 1998, starting at 9:00 a.m. The meeting will be held at RTCA, 1140 Connecticut Avenue, NW., Suite 1020, Washington, DC 20036.

The agenda will include: (1) Chairman's Introductory Remarks/Review of Meeting Agenda; (2) Review and Approval of Minutes of the Previous Meeting; (3) Report of Working Group Activities: a. Working Group 1; b. 1090 MHz MOPS; c. CDTI MOPS; d. Working Group 4; (4) EUROCAE Working Group 51 Report, Status of VHR MOPS; a. Present ATC Systems; b. Evolving ATC Systems; c. Aircraft Changes and Architecture Options; d. Implementation Strategy; e. Summary; (5) EUROCAE Discussion of VDL Mode 4, Technical Description and Ongoing European Programs: a. EMERALD Program; b. FREER Project; (6) Discuss Special Committee 186 Reorganization; (7) Other Business; (8) Date and Place of Next Meeting.

Attendance is open to the interested public but limited to space availability. With the approval of the chairman, members of the public may present oral statements at the meeting. Persons wishing to present statements or obtain information should contact the RTCA Secretariat, 1140 Connecticut Avenue, NW., Suite 1020, Washington, DC 20036; (202) 833-9339 (phone); (202) 833-9434 (fax); or <http://www.rtca.org> (web site). Members of the public may present a written statement to the committee at any time.

Issued in Washington, DC, on March 11, 1998.

Terry R. Hannah,

Designated Official.

[FR Doc. 98-6813 Filed 3-16-98; 8:45 am]

BILLING CODE 4910-13-M