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(ADOPTED)

**31<sup>st</sup> ANNUAL MEETING – SEPTEMBER 2009**

Use of VMS Information for Search and Rescue

Proposal by USA/Iceland/Canada

**Background:**

During the summer of 2008 the Iceland and US Coast Guard participated in a Search and Rescue (SAR) exercise. It was noted that there were not any provisions in the NAFO Conservation and Enforcement Measures that permitted the use of VMS information for Search and Rescue or safety purposes. Article 26 (VMS) and Annex XIX did not specifically authorize the use of VMS information for these purposes.

At the September 2008 meeting at Vigo it was generally agreed that the use of VMS for SAR and maritime safety purposes should be authorized. Several countries indicated that domestic legislation or policy permitted the use of domestic VMS for purposes other than Fisheries compliance. Iceland, United States and Canada were tasked to cooperate on developing a proposal for review.

**Proposal:**

Amend Article 26 to add a new paragraph 13 as follows:

*13. Contracting Parties and the Secretariat may provide and/or use the NAFO VMS data for Search and Rescue and maritime safety purposes.*