



## U.S. Coast Guard Sector Baltimore

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### MARITIME SAFETY & SECURITY BULLETIN 32-10

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#### CAUTION TO AIS USERS

#### NAVIGATING THE JAMES RIVER, YORK RIVER, UPPER CHESAPEAKE BAY, DELAWARE BAY, NEW JERSEY SHORE, AND NEW YORK HARBOR APPROACHES

On August 28, 2010, the U.S. Coast Guard issued Marine Safety Alert 07-10 advising of caution to certain AIS users. This alert can be found online at <http://homeport.uscg.mil/baltimore> < Safety and Security < Safety Alerts.

While conducting development testing of the Nationwide Automatic Identification System (NAIS) from July 27, 2010 to August 2010, the Coast Guard inadvertently tele-commanded most AIS users transiting the Eastern United States between lower Connecticut and North Carolina to switch to AIS frequencies other than the AIS default frequencies (161.975 MHz- Channel 87B -2087 and 162.025 MHz- Channel 88B -2088). As a result, those users within the uniquely defined channel management regions will neither see nor be seen by vessels operating on the default AIS channels when within these regions. Similarly, vessels operating on default frequencies will not see or be seen by those vessels that were inadvertently switched to other frequencies. No other AIS users or areas are impacted.

Once commanded or manually entered, the channel management information will stay in memory for 5 weeks or until an affected vessel moves more than 500 nautical miles from the defined region. AIS channel management commands can only be manually overridden or erased by the user via the unit's channel (regional frequencies) management function or automatically overridden via another channel management message for the same defined region. Reinitializing or resetting your AIS or transmission channels will not necessarily reprogram your unit back to the default channels.

Commencing September 1<sup>st</sup> and continuing for the subsequent 5 weeks, the Coast Guard will broadcast new channel management messages that will tele-command all AIS users back to default channels. To ensure messages are received, they will be broadcast on Channel 70- Digital Selective Calling, which is also monitored by all type-certified shipboard AIS. While this ensures all AIS users will get the message, regardless of what AIS channel the unit is operating on, it could cause a minor inconvenience to owners of older DSC radios who may receive an alert upon receipt of this message. It will have no other effect on DSC radios.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "John R. Dittmar".

**JOHN R. DITTMAR**  
**LIEUTENANT COMMANDER, U.S. COAST GUARD**  
**USCG SECTOR BALTIMORE**