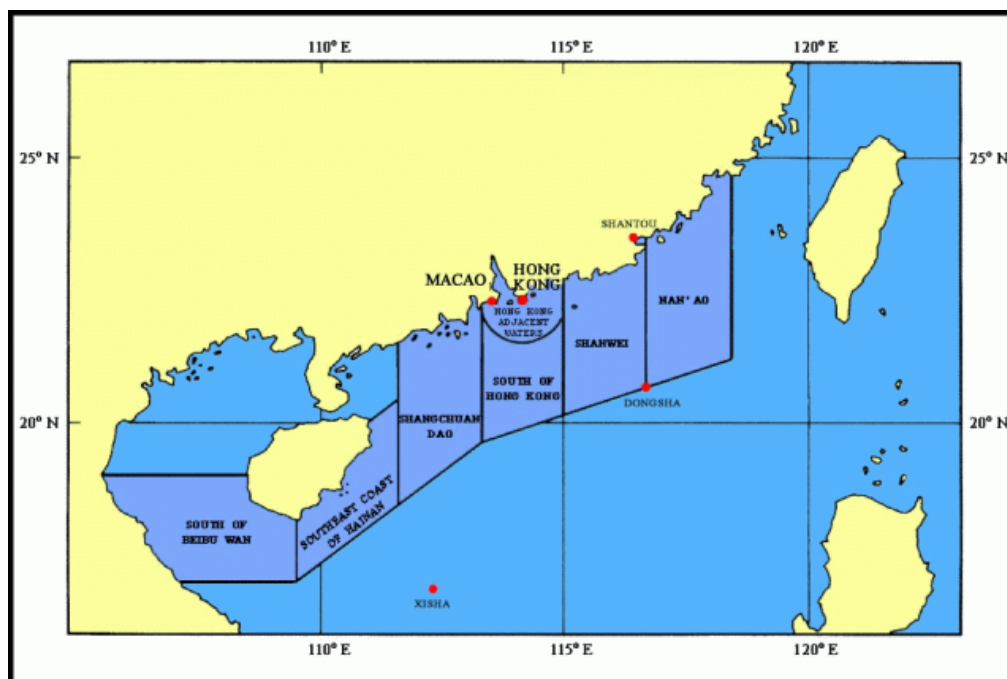


Marine meteorological services for ships - Radiotelephony meteorological messages

Written by Wu Chung-wai September 2012

All ocean-going passenger ships and cargo ships engaged in international voyages are required to be equipped with suitable communication equipment, such as the NAVTEX, for receiving meteorological messages. However, small vessels (e.g. fishing vessels, river trade vessels, Macau vessels or pleasure crafts) usually do not have a radio-telegraphy operator or satellite reception equipment on board, and they have to rely on radiotelephony for communications. Thus, some weather bulletins for the high seas are also broadcast by voice radiotelephony for the benefit of these small vessels.

The Hong Kong Observatory (HKO) issues Weather Information for South China Coastal Waters seven times daily. The bulletin contains warnings of widespread fog and high winds (force 6 or higher), a description of the general weather situation (including significant low pressure systems or tropical cyclones that may affect the forecast areas), 24-hour forecasts of winds, significant weather, and sea state, as well as an outlook for the next 48 hours for seven fishing areas (in Chinese only for South of Beibu Wan and Southeast Coast of Hainan) as shown in the map below.



The bulletins issued are transformed into voice messages by the Observatory's Dial-a-Weather System for broadcast automatically via the Marine Department's single sideband radiotelephony on 8812 kHz. They are broadcast 7 times daily at 0203, 0533, 0933, 1233, 1633, 2033 and 2233 UTC.



Radiotelephony receiver for small vessels