

# Stratos To Bring Prepaid SMS To Maritime Crews

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Stratos Global announced Thursday the introduction of SMSCrewMail, a new prepaid short message system (SMS) and text e-mail service for maritime crewmembers seeking a cost-effective way to stay in touch with family and friends while at sea.

SMS messaging is an option available on digital GSM networks, which allows text messages of up to 160 characters to be sent and received via the network operator's message center to mobile phones, or from the Internet, using an SMS gateway website.

If the phone receiving an SMS message is powered off or out of range, messages are stored in the network and are delivered at the next opportunity. SMSCrewMail also allows maritime crews to send text e-mails up to 460 characters.

With SMSCrewMail as part of StratosOne and StratosNet, crewmembers can send and receive SMS and text e-mail messages using most Inmarsat satellite platforms, including Inmarsat-A/-B/-M/mini-M/R-BGAN/GAN and Fleet, as well as Iridium and Marinesat/Landsat.

It is also easy for a GSM or other e-mail user to reply to messages, as crewmembers are assigned a GSM number and a standard e-mail address.

Sending an SMS message or text e-mail from a maritime vessel deducts one credit from the prepaid card, but receiving messages is free of

charge, so loved ones can send unlimited messages to crewmembers without worrying about the cost being deducted from the prepaid card.

"SMS messaging is an increasingly popular way for users of mobile phones to communicate with friends and family," said Scott Hoyt, Stratos' senior vice president and chief marketing officer.

"Stratos is proud to partner with SMS Global to include SMSCrewMail as part of our industry-leading StratosOne and StratosNet services.

Now, in conjunction with our prepaid calling cards, maritime crewmembers can use SMS, e-mail, and voice calls, as cost-effective ways to keep in touch with loved ones on shore via satellite."

"On the average, seafarers spend approximately 20 days each month in the middle of a vast ocean with their only means of communication being the existing communications systems on the ship," said Arnt Pettersen, president of SMS Global.

"By combining SMSCrewMail with Stratos' shipboard satellite communications solutions, we can provide an efficient and innovative system that makes personal communications for crews simple, available and affordable."

SMSCrewMail is included at no extra cost to vessels using StratosOne and StratosNet. Messages generated from crewmembers are simply sent to the outbox of the onboard StratosOne or StratosNet e-mail client, and then delivered when the vessel connects to its e-mail service.

StratosOne is an all-in-one messaging solution that provides a low-cost, efficient and reliable platform for satellite-based maritime messaging and communications. With StratosOne, maritime users have access to a unified software solution that provides a single system to support all of

their messaging needs, including e-mail, fax, telex and SMS messaging.

StratosOne features an easy-to-use Windows-based interface, advanced SPAM filters and virus protection, and supports file attachments. The service also supports multiple e-mail addresses for maritime crews, with on-board billing, and provides optional access to up-to-date weather, news and sports information.

StratosNet is an integrated Internet service for mobile satellite users optimized for cost-effective communications over Inmarsat, Iridium and MSAT (MSV) satellite networks.

Unlike conventional terrestrial Internet Service Providers (ISPs), Stratos has tailored its service to meet the unique requirements of mobile satellite users, operating at speeds as low as 2.4 kbps, and up to 128 kbps and higher.

StratosNet offers built-in compression, Web access, Internet e-mail, file transfer protocol (FTP) capabilities, and advanced SPAM and virus protection.

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