

# AMERC NEWS

Incorporates Circular 239

November 2009

ISSUE THIRTY-ONE - READ INSIDE

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AMERC NEWS is the Journal of the Association of Marine Electronic and Radio Colleges.  
It is distributed to all Members, Associates and Affiliates of the Association.  
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## EDITORIAL

Surprisingly for one more attuned to the calendar than the clock, I tend to forget to send season's greetings with the late year issue although a defence that I write early has been weakened by the appearance of the stores these last few months. Anyway, back to the point, let us hope that 2010 is a good year for the Association and for you and yours. There is news inside of manuals that have been awaited and they may give you happy Christmas reading!!

Reviewing the technical press during preparations, I found little that was new but sometimes there are surprises bubbling below the surface. I was led to wonder what will emerge from the sleeves of the technologists and regulators with news of long range AIS collation via satellites. Added to this the painful subject of radiocommunications in the polar regions, long avoided as many of us know from practice, is being driven to the front step by the opening up of the passages over the top of Canada and Russia. You have to wonder, what next?

With our own affairs, the new examination system is under regular review and although AMERC NEWS will follow and report events, the major analysis will occur at AGM, now only six months away. You will see two new departures with the AGM, one a move inland to Birmingham and the other a shift to June which while not unknown has not been frequent. The homily must therefore be to put the date in that shiny new (or battered academic year) diary.

Talking of things bubbling up, look out for people change in 2010. For one thing, and this will probably surprise you, our Chairman, Mike Webster, has announced that following his retiring from post at South Tyneside College he will resign as Chairman of the Association at AGM. In a later issue of the NEWS, opportunity will be taken to make full tribute to Mike's major contribution to our affairs.

I have made it a rule when writing AMERC NEWS not to mention my own history but it was turned on its head recently. It seems I am one of the few survivors who can say I was there at the beginning, I may indeed be the 'last man standing.' I was newly appointed (grade A and two increments) when the Association first cranked up in 1962 and well remember the ferment it caused. As you all know I had my own history with the Association and the Executive has asked me to compile a list of those who contributed to the Association since the earliest days. Thought has yet to go into what can be planned but to commemorate the Golden Jubilee year of 2012 is on the agenda. I have agreed to produce a list of contributors, down to the recent past. I have made a start but I am placing myself in your hands, hoping you will be able to suggest names from your local area or elsewhere.

Finally don't forget to put some time aside to try the GMDSS Quiz on the website. I did and was impressed with the skill with which many of the answers had been prepared, including those ever troublesome distracters.

*Best Wishes  
Brian Cotton*

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

*The Association is pleased to make the following announcements*

### CHAIRMANSHIP

Mike Webster retires from his post at South Tyneside College at the end of 2009. He has agreed to the request of the Executive Committee that he should retain his membership of the Association until the 2010 AGM.

AMERC NEWS will be taking opportunity to make tribute to Mike for his wise and effective leadership of the Association in a future issue.

### AN APOLOGY

We omitted to mention in the last issue that Chris Harrison had been elected Vice Chairman of the Association at the 2009 AGM. In trying to make a coherent story from the significant rule changes, your Editor completely overlooked this position. Our apologies to Chris.

### GOLDEN JUBILEE

The Association will have been established for all of fifty years in 2012. The Executive Committee wishes to commemorate this Golden Jubilee in ways yet to be defined. One thing we know at this stage is that it intends to contact those who contributed to the successes of the Association over the years.

Your Editor is compiling a list and would appreciate members contacting him with suggestions

### TED HACKETT

As we went to press we heard that Ted Hackett was recovering at home following a double operation at Preston Hospital. We understand that all went well and that he is in good cheer. We all send him our very best wishes.

### 2010 AGM

The Association AGM will be held on 10 June 2010 at the Marriott Hotel, Fiveways, Birmingham and further details will be announced in the next issue of AMERC NEWS.

The hotel is close to public transport facilities. Birmingham is easily reached from London and elsewhere by rail and served by regional airports

Members might like to note that the AGM will be held in *June*, not May as has generally been the custom.

## MARITIME CONSULTANCY GROUP (MCG) -1

*The MCG met in Kendal in late September, giving attention to the usual mix of operational matters. With the following report are some similar items which have subsequently come to our notice.*

### ASSOCIATION RULES

Members will recall that substantial and significant rule changes were agreed at the 2009 AGM and are now in force.

Those needing to refer to the Rules will find them on the Association's website.

### CHARITABLE DONATION

The Executive Committee has agreed to make a charitable donation of £10,000.00 to Mercy Ships to assist the onboard professional staff with STCW training.

Mercy Ships take free surgery and medical care to ports of the world; there is an interesting review of the work of the organisation on the website:

[www.mercyships.org](http://www.mercyships.org)

### EXAMINATION PAPERS REVIEW

By now REC Coordinators will have been asked by the Chief Examiner to identify any anomalies in papers (including those used for practice) and to give feedback.

Proposals for changes will be collated and considered at the December meeting of the MCG. The intention is to implement the changes in February 2010.

### NEW EXAMINERS WELCOMED

The Association welcomes the following new GMDSS examiners:

Parag Agnihatri	TS Rahman
Duncan Taylor	Fleetwood NC
Philip Pryor	Western Training

### CRIMINAL RECORD CHECKS

It has become apparent that some AMERC GMDSS Examiners may not have been subject to checks by the Criminal Records Bureau (CRB) or its devolved administration equivalents - Disclosure Scotland and Access Northern Ireland.

REC Co-ordinators need to explore their local situations and deal with them appropriately.

### GMDSS QUIZ

The interactive GMDSS Quiz is now on line with free public access. It is designed in multi-choice format with sixteen topic areas - one of which selects 15 questions at random from the entire bank. Feedback is given as a score with hints for wrong answers. No records are kept of scores achieved.

The Quiz is still in evaluation mode. If you would like to contribute new questions or comment on existing ones, please use the Feedback form (via a link at the bottom of each Quiz page). Also use the form to tell us if you find the interactive quiz helpful or have suggestions for improvement. If you have not tried it yet go to:

[www.amerc.ac.uk/quiz](http://www.amerc.ac.uk/quiz)

## MARITIME CONSULTANCY GROUP (MCG) -2

### MEDICAL CERTIFICATES

Following an enquiry from a member, the MCA has advised that medical certification is not required for the issue of a GMDSS certificate.

However, before such a certificate can be used for sea-going purposes, it has to be endorsed by the MCA. This requires the issue of an ENG1. An ENG1 is also required for the purposes of revalidation along with sea-time to meet the STCW requirements.

Those who wish to use a GMDSS certificate for (non-STCW) shore based employment do not require the GMDSS certificate to be endorsed or indeed revalidated.

### GMDSS LOGBOOK

The following advice has been received following a number of queries.

The new GMDSS Logbook correctly identifies the frequency of testing for VHF handheld sets as monthly, not weekly as in the previous editions.

### ARCTIC COMMUNICATIONS

The opening up of the Northwest and Northeast Passages has caused new thinking about communications in these areas.

The European Space Agency is financing a study into future Arctic communication systems. This is to include current and planned satellite communications and gaps in coverage.

Five new navareas have been designated to cover MSI in Arctic regions.

### GMDSS HANDBOOK

The fifth edition (2009) of the *Handbook for Marine Radio Communication* by Graham Lees and Willie Williamson has just been published by Informa Professional

For those wishing to order, the ISBN number is 978-1-84311-797-1 and further details may be had from the website:

[www.informaprofessional.com](http://www.informaprofessional.com)

*(Page 6 has details of new ITU publications, including the 2009 Edition of the Maritime Manual).*

## GMDSS EXAMINATION STATISTICS

The NAC has provided the following GMDSS Examination Statistics for the period April 2009 to June 2009.

EXAMINATION	ENTERED	PASSED
UK GOC	200	156
ALL GOC	626	500
UK ROC	52	48
ALL ROC	110	103
LRC	86	82

## M-NOTICES

The following M-Notices appear to have some relevance to Members and are briefly reviewed here. The full list of the current M-notices appear on the MCA website ([www.mcga.gov.uk](http://www.mcga.gov.uk)) to which reference should be made from time to time

### MGN 358 (M+F) CLASS-D VHF RADIOS

This Note advises that Class D equipment – VHF DSC - was developed to provide minimum facilities. It warns that some models coming to market may have additional facilities that do not comply with international standards.

Retailers and purchasers are warned to measure any prospective purchase against the MCA specifications.

September 2009

### M-NOTICES (M+F) DISTRIBUTION AGENT

The Note advises that the EC Group in Grays Essex is the new distributor for M-Notices and gives contact details.

The MCA website will remain a source for current Notices.

October 2009

### MIN 361 (M) VOLUNTARY OBSERVING SHIPS (VOS)

This Note explains the VOS schemes that provide meteorological data from ship to shore. It stresses the importance of the data provided, gives reassurances about protection of privacy and some details of the World Meteorological Organisation (WMO).

October 2009.

### MGN 401 (M+F) UK VTS AND LPS

This lengthy Note defines the UK interpretation of Vessel Traffic Services (VTS)S. It also specifies the responsibilities of those providing (VTS) and Local Port Services (LPS.).

Some might find the diagrams useful.

September 2009

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## ITU MANUALS

The ITU has now published the *Radio Regulations 2008 Edition*. Also available are:

*Maritime Manual 2009 Edition*

*List of Ship stations (49th) Edition 2009.*

*List of Coast Stations (21st) Edition 2009.*

*Radiodetermination and Special service Stations (17th) Edition 2008.*

For further information or to place an order, go to:

[www.itu.int](http://www.itu.int).

(Page 5 has reference to the 5th Edition of the *Handbook for Marine Radio Communication* by Graham Lees and Willie Williamson).

# AMERC NEWS

## SELECTED INDEX

(Updated each Issue)

January 2005 – September 2009

### NOTES:

- (i) **This is a selective index and only records items to which reference is likely to be needed. It is updated with each Issue of AMERC NEWS.**
- (ii) **Issues 17 to 31 are in pdf format and are fully searchable once loaded.**
- (iii) **Quarterly GMDSS Statistics provided by the NAC appear in AMERC NEWS.**
- (iv) **Technical Update supplements in pdf format together with an index can be found on the AMERC Website: [www.amerc.ac.uk](http://www.amerc.ac.uk).**

TOPIC	DETAIL	AN	DATE	Pp
Admiralty	Charts to common datum (MIN 272)	24	Jul 07	13
ADRS	Admiralty Digital Radio Signals Vol 6	23	Mar 7	9
ALRS	Relevant sets for examinations	30	Sep 09	5
Aerials	Dangers from lead-ins (MGN 330)	22	Nov 06	8
	Ditto (MGN 303)	20	Feb 06	8
African Centres	MRCC & MRSC established	22	Nov 06	8
	Capetown MRCC operational	24	Jul 07	12
AIS	Accuracy of transmission (MIN 290)	25	Nov 07	7
	Accuracy of transmission (MIN 231)	21	Jun 06	8
	Carriage requirements (MSN 1795)	21	Jun 06	8
	Class B UK trails (MIN 268)	23	Mar 07	6
	Double ended ferries (MGN 321)	21	Jun 06	8
	Greek coverage	27	Apr 08	8
	Monitoring coastal shipping – UK	22	Nov 06	13
	Navigation aids systems	21	Jun 06	10
	Non-SOLAS transponder coding (MIN 321)	27	Apr 08	5
	Operational guidance (MGN 277)	17	Feb 05	9
	Performance Standards	23	Mar 07	8
	RCC Network – UK	19	Oct 05	9
	Safety of Navigation (MIN 298)	25	Nov 07	7
	Small craft Class B (MIN 199)	19	Oct 05	7
	UK chain operational	22	Nov 06	8
	UK Third phase completed	26	Jan 08	7
	USCG space based AIS	24	Jul 07	13
	VHF use & ITU Regulations (MGN 324)	22	Nov 06	8
AMERC Address	Registered Office in Kendal	21	Jun 06	4
	Hon. Secretary address change	24	Jul 07	4
	Hon. Secretary telephone change	29	Feb 09	12
	New NAC Manager: Jackie King	26	Jan 08	6
	Treasurer's email address	27	Apr 08	18
AMERC Rules	Changes agreed and implemented	30	Sep 09	3
AMERC Titles	Revised for Association and roles	30	Sep 09	8

CEC	Amended procedures (MIN340)	29	Feb 09	5
Committees	New Committee & Board structures	22	Nov 06	3
Course Audit	Chief Examiner to inspect timetable & notes	23	Mar 07	5
Course Approvals	AMERC provides certificates	22	Nov 06	4
CSOC	Discussions with HMCG	21	Jun 06	7
Direction Finding	At 406 MHz	30	Sep 09	9
DSC	Test call auto response from USCG	24	Jul 07	13
Dyslexia	Policy in Handbook	30	Sep 09	3
ECDIS	Software maintenance (MIN 316)	27	Apr 08	5
Electronic Charts	Approved standards by UKHO	28	Sep 08	8
ENEM	ENEM/Radio Maintenance (MGN 384)	29	Feb 09	5
	ENEM/RMC Structure	30	Sep 09	7
EPIRB	COSPAS-SARSAT statistics	29	Feb 09	5
EPIRB	Non SOLAS vessels (MSN 1810)	24	Jul 07	13
EPIRB	Registration (MSN 1816)	25	Nov 07	6
	Registration required (MGN 302)	20	Feb 06	8
	121.5/243 MHz ceasing Feb 09 (MGN 361)	27	Apr 07	05
Equipment Fit	SART & EPIRB duplicates	30	Sep 09	3
Examinations	Appeals on termination - flow chart	24	Jul07	5
	Application Forms – completing	21	Jun 06	5
	Application Forms – Re-examination	23	Mar 07	4
	Digital photography allowed	23	Mar 07	4
	Double marking	30	Sep 09	4
	Dyslexic Candidates	20	Feb 06	4
	Dyslexia Policy in Handbook	30	Sep 09	4
	Earlier attempts	21	Jun 06	7
	Fee Schedule revised	28	Sep 08	5
	GMDSS Knowledge Paper adopted	28	Sep 08	7
	Payment Methods	21	Jun 06	5
	Payments to NAC – correction	19	Oct 06	6
	Retention of scripts	20	Feb 06	6
	Scenario-based OPT trial agreed	21	Jun 06	6
	Scenario-based OPT working party	24	Jul 07	8
	Scenario-based OPT adopted	28	Sep 08	7
Examiners	Active Lists	25	Nov 07	4
	Active Lists	21	Jun 06	7
	Active Lists	19	Oct 05	6
	Active Lists	17	Feb 05	3
	Access to Chief Examiner via REC only	24	Jul 07	7
	Deputy & Assistant Chief Examiners	23	Mar 07	3
	Deputy & Assistant Chief Examiner Roles	26	Jan 08	5
	Deputy Chief Examiner appointed	25	Nov 07	4
	Handbook 6th Edition	17	Feb 05	3
	Handbook 7th Edition	27	Apr 08	04
	Taxation & Insurance	19	Oct 05	10
Expenses	New Claim Form	25	Nov 07	14
Fleet 77	Incorporated in Handbook	30	Sep 09	4
GMDSS Installed	Indonesia and Thailand	29	Feb 09	11
GOC	Proposed revision – Willie Williamson	23	Mar 07	15
	Critique of structure – Willie Williamson	24	Jul 07	9



GOC	Revising the structure – Willie Williamson	27	Apr 08	13
HMCg	AMERC recognition of CSOC	23	Mar 07	4
HMCg	CSOC & RCSOC recognition finalised	24	Jul 07	4
IMO	New GMDSS Manual published	25	Nov 07	18
IMO	Mandatory requirements	29	Feb 09	5
ITU WARC	Preparations for 2007 – Kim Fisher	20	Feb 06	11
	Ditto	22	Nov 06	11
	Ditto	24	Jul 07	11
	Outcomes & Updates – Kim Fisher	26	Jan 08	8
	2011 WRC – Kim Fisher	30	Feb 09	6
INMARSAT	Barring & Safetynet (MGN 305)	20	Feb 06	8
Licences	Ofcom reforms to ship radio licences	23	Mar 07	7
LRC	Class E DSC controllers – examinations	22	Nov 06	5
Log Book	New design (MGN 395)	30	Sep 09	10
Loran	eLoran UK cover	27	Apr 08	8
	Conversion from Restricted R/T withdrawn	26	Jan 08	4
LRIT	Identities for SAR and security	22	Nov 06	13
	New SOLAS Regulations January 2008	26	Jan 08	7
	SOLAS Requirements (MIN 302)	25	Nov 07	6
	SOLAS Ch V amendments (MGN380)	29	Feb 09	5
	SOLAS Ch V amendments (MIS 343)	29	Feb 09	5
	Trial transmissions from Rugby	19	Oct 05	8
	USCG Consultation	23	Mar 07	9
Membership	(Full) Namibian Maritime Institute	28	Sep 08	3
	(Full) Red Ensign, RNLI, (Ass) Kim Holt	21	Jun 06	4
	(Full) Sir Derek Bibby Centre Mumbai	28	Sep 08	3
	(Full) THESI, CERNET, Starcenter, UKSA	24	Jul 07	3
	(Full) Western Training Association	24	Jul 07	3
	(Ass) Shetland School of Nautical Studies	24	Jul 07	3
	(Ass) TST, Australian Maritime College	24	Jul 07	3
	City College Plymouth (resigned)	24	Jul 07	3
	Hull College (resigned)	28	Sep 08	3
	St. Xavier Technical Institute (resigned)	28	Sep 08	3
MCA	Certificates of Course Approval	28	Sep 08	14
	Endorsement of certificates	30	Sep 09	8
MNTB	GOC approval documentation revisions	22	Nov 06	4
MNTB	GMDSS Guideline revised	21	Jun 06	7
Mobile Phones	Radar interference (MIN 290)	19	Oct 05	7
	Warnings against misuse (MSN 299)	20	Feb 06	7
MSI	Change to UK transmissions	23	Mar 07	9
	Summary of UK arrangements (MGN 375)	28	Sep 08	8
Navtex	Standard Abbreviations (MIN 265)	23	Mar 07	6
NAVRAS(M)	Use of GMDSS procedures	24	Jul 07	10
OPT	Erratum: only Sat B approved January 2008	25	Nov 07	5
	Sat B or F77 replace Sat A January 2008	24	Jul 07	9
Perth LES	Close down	23	Mar 07	9
Pirate Broadcasts	Forbidden (MGN 320)	21	Jun 06	5
	Update (MIN 366)	28	Sep 08	8
Piracy	Alerting by DSC	22	Nov 06	5

Piracy	Modern Piracy - W. Williamson	17	Feb 05	7
	Anti-piracy Measures (MGN 298)	20	Feb 06	7
Photographs	To UK passport standard	30	Sep 09	8
Poseidon Pharos	GMDSS simulator approved	30	Sep 09	5
Replacements	Lost certificate procedures	30	Sep 09	8
Revalidation	Surveyors and pilots	24	Jul 07	10
	STW 37	21	Jun 06	7
Revalidation	Sea-time requirement	22	Nov 06	4
	Ditto	19	Oct 05	6
Radar	Performance standards(MIN 246)	21	Jun 06	7
	Corrigendum (MGN 298)	20	Feb 06	7
	Mobiles' interference (MIN 290)	19	Oct 05	7
	Radar Reflectors (MGN 349)	25	Nov 07	6
Safe Practices	MS Regulations 1998 (MIN 235)	22	Nov 06	8
SAR	Signals in distress & SAR (MGN 304)	20	Feb 06	8
Security	Ship Security - Phil Davies	22	Nov 06	9
Ship's Manuals	Need for accuracy and lucidity (MIN 312)	27	Apr 08	5
Shore Maintenance	Selenia Contract (MGN 292)	19	Oct 05	7
Shore Maintenance	Requirements (MGN 350)	25	Nov 07	6
SOLAS	Chapter V amendments (MSN 1812)	23	Mar 07	6
	Radiocommunications (MSN 1810)	23	Mar 07	6
	Revising SOLAS/Regs – Ian Waugh	27	Apr 07	16
SMCP	Standard phrases for communications	30	Sep 09	10
Surveys	Selenia Contacts (MGN 286)	20	Feb 06	7
	Authorisations	30	Sep 09	10
Syllabus Revision	ROC & LRC	30	Sep 09	4
	Alternative Compliance	25	Nov 07	7
Training Schemes	Using the VQ route (MGN 8)	22	Nov 06	8
Transas	GMDSS Simulator	22	Nov 06	6
	Hard panel needed for Version 4000	24	Jul 07	4
	Live receiver & work station requirements	25	Nov 07	4
Transas	TGS4100 Simulator equipment consistency	27	Apr 08	04
	TGS4100 Simulator training of staff	27	Apr 08	04
Use of Equipment	Maintenance records (MGN 331)	22	Nov 06	8
VDR	Performance Testing (MGN 272)	17	Feb 05	9
Website	Ideas needed	24	Jul 07	12
	Review of new arrangements	27	Apr 08	6
W/T Act 2006	Consolidation of Acts post-1949	23	Mar 07	10
Yacht Officers	Deck Officer CoC (MSN 1892)	23	Mar 07	6

## MN LEARNING CLUB

The Marine Society has set up a Learning Club for the Merchant Navy. Members will not be formal Open University students but they will have free, no-strings-attached access to the high quality online educational material taken from the Open University courses.

Features of the Club are:

- Access to tools to help organise and make sense of the studies
- Free and unlimited access to the Open Learning community
- Discussion forums

## BACK PAGE

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### SPACE AIS

Current AIS transmissions use line of sight communications and have the expected range limitations. To extend the reach for shore authorities, space based AIS (AIS-S) is being developed by COM DEV. The aim is to have a constellation of micro-satellites which will collate and deliver global AIS data to maritime authorities. The first satellites are to be launched in 2010.

AIS-S is planned to collect data from current AIS transmissions without changing the shipboard equipment. The AIS-S transmissions will be encrypted and only made available to competent maritime authorities.

There are several websites reporting this development, perhaps the best is:

[www.exactearth.com](http://www.exactearth.com).

### GORDON KENWORTHY-NEALE

Gordon Kenworthy-Neale in succession headed departments, some including marine electronics, at Riversdale College, The School of Maritime Studies in Cardiff and the Australian Maritime College. He was always a positive supporter of college associations, especially AMES and AMERC. He was delightful company.

Gordon was a marine engineer and held the rank of Captain (E) in the RNR and was ADC. Later he took holy orders and after retirement from the Australian Maritime College became Bishop of the Pacific Islands.

We extend our sympathy to the family and thank Jack Ayles, Chairman of AMERC in the mid-eighties, for giving us this sad news.

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This Newsletter duals as Circular 239. Check you have a full file. All Issues of AMERC NEWS appear on the AMERC Website and are fully searchable from Issue 17 onwards. Copies of the Circulars may be obtained from the Hon. Secretary. ***Do not forget to distribute copies to your colleagues.***

Articles and suggestions for future issues of AMERC NEWS can be sent at any time.

***Brian Cotton, Editor.***

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AMERC NEWS  
Editor: Professor Brian Cotton  
AMERC Website: [www.amerc.ac.uk](http://www.amerc.ac.uk)

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