



## Editorial

Welcome to issue 41 of AMERC News - which doubles as **Circular 254** and, as such, must be circulated to all GMDSS instructors/examiners by their AMERC centre contact.

In this issue we have the report on the most recent **Maritime Consultancy Group** (MCG-Page 2) - which reflects relevant items covered in the AMERC Executive Committee (EC) earlier the same day, including: **GOC Course Hours requirement**; an update on progress – or lack of – for the next series **General Knowledge (SOLAS) questions**; the requirement for centres to hold examination scripts; programming requirement for Sailor Sat-C **Coastal Warning** areas; the required specification for examination candidate photographs; and **pre-AGM 2012 Notice**.

That's followed by our **Member's Profiles section** (Page 3) – this time featuring member **The Western Training Association**.

We've another '**GMDSS Criss-Crossword**' (Page 5) to help stretch candidates knowledge of **international geography** and the use of **Admiralty List of Radio Signals** (ALRS) publications. The answers to puzzle 40 are also included.

Our **Explanation Please?** section explains some changes that you can introduce to your TRANSAS simulator to generate realistic voice signals for demonstrating gain controls, and fine-tuning, on the SSB Radio; and how to select 'Urgency/Safety' priority - and choose an LES - for emergency calls.

**Tales from the Key-Side** (page 8) features a compilation log extract showing radio communications during the sinking of **R.M.S Titanic** after she struck an iceberg in the North Atlantic ocean in April 1912, and the subsequent rescue operations.

This edition's **Maritime Miscellaneous** features notes from Kim Fisher, and Joe Hersey, on a meeting of IMO COMSAR - The 2012 World Radio Conference - held on 12–16 March 2012:

Our **2012 AGM** in Edinburgh is fast approaching – paperwork was distributed by the Secretary week-commencing 14<sup>th</sup> May. Please note that 'Motion 6' on the AGM Agenda should read '**That an application from Mumbai Maritime Training Institute for Full Membership is approved**' [the application for Associate Membership from 'Oil and Natural Gas Corporation Limited' remains as Motion 8] **As usual: the Secretary asks that attendees bring their paper copy with them, as there will be only very limited copies available for distribution on the day.** Other than that – here's hoping that you all have your national dress at the ready for this **50<sup>th</sup> anniversary** of the Association of Marine Electronic and Radio Colleges.

Sláinte

*Ian W*

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The **Maritime Consultancy Group (MCG)** meets regularly - currently four times each year – for the AMERC Executive Committee ‘Open Meeting’. MCG membership consists of AMERC Executive Committee (EC) representatives; the AMERC Chief Examiner; the MCA Chief Examiner and/or the MCA Deck & GMDSS Team Leader; and AMERC/industry specialists. The open meeting can (occasionally) be attended by other invited persons.

*(You can ask to be invited by contacting the AMERC Secretary).*

The following items from recent meeting(s) & follow-up are drawn to your attention:

**GMDSS GOC Course hours requirement:**

Centres are reminded that the **minimum** course hours for a UK GOC are 60, which includes 2.5hrs for examination time. Training time should therefore be not less than 57.5 hours for the group. A ‘typical’ day might include 7-8 contact hours (contact hours do not include breaks) – and there should be no more than 10 attendance hours expected of delegates, in total and including lunch/tea breaks, in any one day. Actual hours should be shown in the course programme/timetable issued to delegates. Any homework is additional, and should not be counted as part of the 60-hour requirement.

**SOLAS Procedures – example examination questions:**

The draft General Knowledge (GK) papers recently issued drew mixed feedback from centres. It is not now the intention to produce ‘final draft’ papers for the Examiner’s Panel in June, but to take final comment at that meeting before agreeing a way forward for the next series of papers.

**Examination paperwork - retention:** Centres are reminded that they are required to retain examination scripts for a minimum of twelve months - in a secure environment – after which the paperwork may be disposed of in a secure and environmentally friendly manner.

**Operational Performance Test (OPT):**

When programming Sailor Inmarsat-C equipment for ‘Additional NAVAREA’ and/or ‘Coastal Navigation Warning’ Areas – any coastal warning area letters should be removed where they are not relevant to the current, or additional, area. It is not necessary to also remove the ‘X’ for Navigation Warnings; Met Warnings etc in that Coastal Warning section, as these are redundant without an area being specified. The ‘X’ beside ‘SafetyNET’ on the same screen – which cannot be removed - ensures reception of MSI for the current and additional NAVAREA(s) (excluding Coastal Warning areas).

**Examination Candidate Photographs:**

Examiners are reminded that they are responsible for checking that photographs provided by examination candidates meet the requirements of the UK Identity and Passport Service. [There is a link to that specification on the AMERC website ‘FAQ’ section - where you can download a PDF document for classroom use.](#) NAC will reject any photographs that do not meet the requirement – which will delay the issue of certificate(s).

**GMDSS Examination Statistics:** National Administration Centre (NAC) examination statistics for the period **1 October 2011 – 31 December 2011** are shown below:

EXAMINATION	ENTERED (1 <sup>st</sup> time)	PASSED (1 <sup>st</sup> attempt)	% PASSED 1 <sup>ST</sup> ATTEMPT
UK GOC	306 (250)	245 (197)	197/250 (>78%)
ALL GOC	666 (567)	558 (469)	469/567 (>82%)
UK ROC	34	32 (31)	
ALL ROC	37	35 (34)	
LRC	60 (60)	60 (60)	60/60 (100%)

## Member Profile(s)

This area is for you to tell us who you are and what you do.

For new members, we'd like to know more about you.

For existing members: the others - new and long established alike – would like to hear about your own operation. The entry below from member The Western Training Association shows the type of information that you may want to include – but, as it's your own area, you can say what you like (omitting, of course, profane, indecent and obscene language ;-))

**Member Name:** The Western Training Association

**Centre Location:** Crownhill Fort  
Crownhill Road  
Plymouth  
PL6 5BX

**Contact:** Hazel Bennett  
**Phone:** +44 (0) 1752 770 589  
**email:** [enquiries@swta.co.uk](mailto:enquiries@swta.co.uk)  
[www.swta.co.uk](http://www.swta.co.uk)

### Radio/Electronics Courses Offered:

GMDSS GOC; ROC; LRC; and SRC.

### Other Courses Offered for Fishing (F) and Maritime (M):

STCW'95 Medical Care Aboard Ship (F/M); STCW'95 Medical First Aid Aboard Ship (F/M); Engineering Test (F); Fire Fighting At Sea (1 Day) (F/M); Health and Safety (F); Intermediate vessel stability awareness (F); MCA Approved Diesel Engine Course (30 Hour) (F/M); Personal Survival Techniques (Fishing) (F); Safety Awareness (F); STCW'95 Fire Fighting (Basic - 2 Day) (F/M); STCW'95 First Aid At Sea (F/M); STCW'95 Personal Survival Techniques (F/M); STCW'95 Personal Safety and Social Responsibilities (PSSR) (M); Watchkeeping and Navigation (F); Combined STWC' 95 and Ship Security Officer course (M); RYA Basic Navigation (M); RYA Day Skipper Shorebased (M); RYA Diesel Engine (M); RYA First Aid STCW'95 (M); Ship Security Officer (SSO) (M); Bridge Mgt (M); ECDIS (F/M); NARAS O and M (F/M); ARPA (F/M); Small Ships Nav & Radar (F/M).

### About The Western Training Association:

The Western Training Association (WTA) is a not-for-profit training company working for the benefit of the commercial, fishing and marine sectors. The WTA exists to assist in the training of Fishermen,

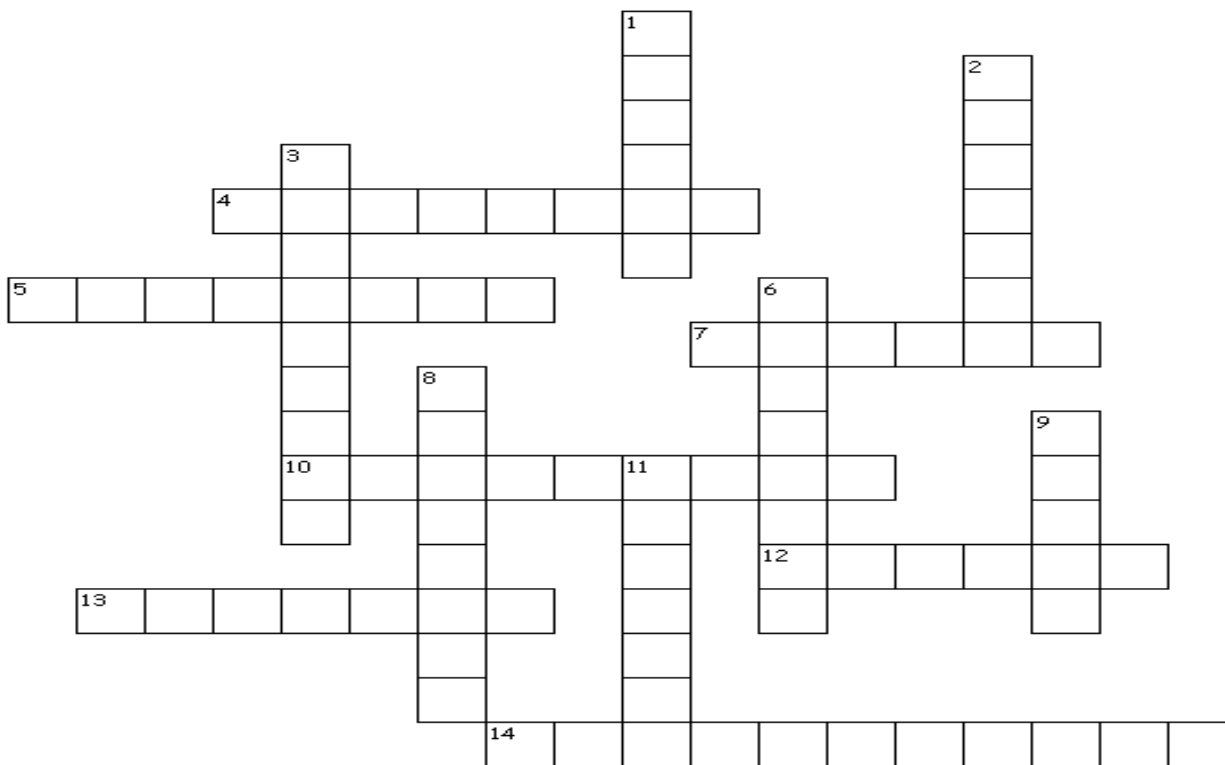
Mariners and the associated onshore sectors and have been incorporated for over 20 years. We cover an area from Lands End to Bristol and Dorset. We are based in Plymouth, central to the region, and easily accessible by rail, road and air.

Our training is derived from a close partnership with the [Maritime and Coastguard Agency](#) and other bodies such as AMERC and the [Seafish Authority](#). This ensures that whatever your training needs, we can deliver your requirements in a flexible and cost-efficient way, with care and quality. Our training will result in certification by an awarding body such as [STCW'95](#), or [AMERC](#) and others are fully recognised by the [MCA](#) as required by legislation.



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**GMDSS Criss-Crossword Number 41** - all answers should be researched and/or confirmed by reference to ALRS, *where appropriate*



**Across**

4. **VHF, MF and HF DSC station** and **MRSC**, in the Indian state of Tamil Nadu.  
 5. ....Bay; the only deep-water **port** on California's North coast; and **MF DSC station**.  
 7. **Port** city and capital of Mozambique; **MRCC**; and **MF DSC Station**.  
 10. **Port** of .....; Australia's Victoria state capital.  
 12. Punta .....; Chilean **HF DSC Station** operating on 4 & 8MHz only; and **port**.  
 13. **Port** location of Malaysia's first Special Economic zone; **MRSC**; and **MF DSC Station**  
 14. Russia's most SE'ly **seaport**; **MRCC**; and **VHF/MF DSC station**.

**Down**

1. Inmarsat **LES** in South Korea.  
 2. Canadian **port** situated 90NM inland, at the head of the Douglas Channel, British Columbia  
 3. Japan's most southerly **MF DSC station**; **port** on the coast of Kinko Bay; and **MRCC**.  
 6. USA's fourth busiest container **port**, situated 20 miles inland on the river of the same name.  
 8. Puerto .....; Southern Chilean **MRSC**; **port**; and **VHF/MF DSC station**.  
 9. South Korean **port**; and **VHF, MF and HF DSC station**.  
 11. Chile's most southerly **NAVTEX station** and **RCC**, north of 8 down.

**Issue 40 answers: DOWN:** 1. Sicily; 2. Xiamen; 3. Bremen; 4. Douala; 5. Taiwan; 7. Halifax; 8. Two; 9. Augusta; 11. Marseille. **ACROSS:** 6. Palermo; 8. Transmitter; 9. Acapulco; 10. Base; 12. Cameroon; 13. Cuxhaven.

## Explanation Please?

This is the area for questions that may puzzle you - because it's not particularly clear why a specific answer is necessary when it seems that other answers may also appear to be appropriate – or - even if you as an instructor are satisfied with the question, you may want to know why the candidate should have to produce the level of detail being asked.

Recent AMERC News items concerning the use of Fleet 77 in the TRANSAS simulator has raised some questions which are addressed below.

Also addressed is the facility to generate a good voice signal for the SSB simulation, to allow demonstration of the 'Gain' and 'Fine-Tune' controls.,

**Question:** I understand that the TRANSAS simulator programme has a facility for generating a very basic 'noise' signal - do you know whether it is possible to improve on this to have a more realistic demonstration of '*gain*' and '*clarify/fine-tune*' controls for the SSB Radio?

**Answer:** The simulator's standard noise is a single tone, on 2191kHz. Steve Howard of the RNLI has developed a much improved version of this – a simulated 'Mayday' message on 'continuous loop' on 2191kHz. Being an MF signal, Steve has configured it so that you have to move the vessel on the simulator chart, to within MF range of the vessel transmitting the 'Mayday' message. He has, additionally, developed an HF message on 5505kHz, simulating the Shannon Airport met broadcast. Being HF, the signal can be picked-up by having your vessel in the NE Atlantic; Western Med; or North Sea area of the chart. Your Ed. has loaded Steve's changes onto his own simulator and can confirm that the process is not difficult, and the effect is excellent!

**Question:** Can you explain how to change the 'priority' on our TRANSAS GMDSS simulator, when making a Fleet 77 telephone call to one of the 'Urgency/Safety' 2-digit codes?

**Answer:** Instead of dialling, for example, 41# (for met report) or 42# (to connect with the Nav Co-ordinator) - as you'd do with Inmarsat-B – you need to dial the 2-digit code and then 'OK' .. that will open the priority selection and you can scroll down to 'Safety' (or Urgency for 32, 38 and 39 codes) – you then generate the call at the correct priority by pressing the 'OK' (which allows you also to change the LES, if required) or '#' button (to connect through your pre-programmed LES). If you don't change priority the call will still be connected to the correct shore authority - but will go through the Inmarsat system as 'routine' priority.

**Question:** When using Fleet 77 on the TRANSAS simulator we pre-programme a default LES for routine traffic, but not for Distress. Should we re-programme the default (routine) LES before generating the Distress Call - or use some other method?

**Answer:** When you press the Distress Button for 5 seconds then take your finger (mouse!) off the button, the screen will display 'Select LES' - you then need to use the down/up arrow keys to open the list of LESs (as downloaded from the NCS) and should, ideally, select the LES associated with the MRCC you'd most like to handle your Distress Call. However – in the ultimate emergency – you can be assured that any RCC receiving your Distress Call will deal with it in the appropriate manner. That is to say that they will take your message and, if it is not within their own area of responsibility, they will forward it to the RCC best placed to deal with your emergency (or will deal with it themselves if no other RCC is better placed).

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## Tales from the Key-Side - by AnonyMouse ...

This is the page for your stories – whether from personal experience at sea, at work, in the classroom or life generally – recent past or distant past. Or it may be something you've heard. Doesn't matter – we're looking for interesting, funny or informative stories that may make us laugh, cry or look for someone to hit. Submissions may be edited, and the writer's name may, of course, be withheld on request ...

**Dateline:** North Atlantic Ocean – 15<sup>th</sup> April 1912.

**Time:** 00:15-09:00 GMT.

**Frequency:** 500 kc/s (500kHz)

The following compilation radio log is reproduced by kind permission of  
[The RMS Titanic Radio Page](#) owner.

Note 'CQD' = Marconi 'All Ships Distress' call indicator; 'MGY' = RMS Titanic's radio callsign.

<i>Time</i>	<i>Message(s)</i>
00:15	CQD (6 times) DE ( <i>this is</i> ) MGY (6 times) position 41.44 N. 50.24 W La Provence and Frankfurt receive Titanic's first distress signals. Titanic sends position to Frankfurt. Frankfurt says "OK: stand by"
00:15	Mount Temple heard Titanic sending CQD Says require assistance. Gives position. Cannot hear me (sic). Advise my Captain (sic) his position at 41.46 N. 50.24 W.
00:15	Cape Race coast station hears Titanic giving position on CQD 41.44 N. 50.24 W.
00:18	Ypiranga hears CQD from Titanic. Titanic gives CQD here (sic). Position 41.44 N. 50.24 W. Require assistance (calls about 10 times).
00:25	Carpathia calls Titanic and says "do you know that Cape Cod is sending a batch of messages for you ?" Titanic says "Come at once. We have struck a berg. It's a CQD OM ( <i>it's a distress situation old man</i> ) Position 41.46 N. 50.14 W." Carpathia says "Shall I tell my Captain ?. Do you require assistance ?" Titanic says "yes, come quick"
00:25	Cape Race hears MGY ( <i>Titanic</i> ) give corrected position 41.46 N. 50.14 W. Calling him, no answer. ( <i>Titanic's 4<sup>th</sup> Officer Boxhall had just provided a corrected position to the radio room</i> )

00:25	MGY ( <i>Titanic</i> ) says CQD, Here ( <i>is my</i> ) corrected position 41.46 N. 50.14 W. Require immediate assistance. We have collision with iceberg. Sinking. Can hear nothing for noise of steam ( <i>engineers releasing excess steam pressure from boilers to minimise risk of explosion</i> ) Sent about 15 to 20 times to Ypiranga.
00:26	DKF (Prinz Friedrich Wilhelm) calls MGY ( <i>Titanic</i> ) and gives position at 12 am 39.47 N. 50.10 W. MGY ( <i>Titanic</i> ) says, "Are you coming to our ?" "We have collision with iceberg. Sinking. Please tell Captain to come." DKF says, "O.K. will tell"
00:27	Titanic sends following: "I require assistance immediately. Struck by iceberg in 41.46 N. 50.14W"
00:30	Caronia sent CQ message ( <i>message addressed to all ships</i> ) to MBC Baltic and CQD ( <i>ie: a distress relay message</i> ): MGY ( <i>Titanic</i> ) struck iceberg, require immediate assistance
00:30	Mount Temple hears MGY ( <i>Titanic</i> ) still calling CQD. Our (sic) Captain reverses ship. We are about 50 miles off.
00:34	Mount Temple hears Frankfurt give MGY ( <i>Titanic</i> ) his position 39.47 N. 52.10 W.  Titanic says (to Frankfurt) " are you coming to our assistance ?"  Frankfurt says : "what is the matter with you ?"  Titanic says "We have struck an iceberg and sinking. Please tell Captain to come"  Frankfurt replies "O.K. Will tell the bridge right away"  Titanic says "O.K., yes, quick."
00:45	Titanic calls Olympic ( <i>Olympic is Titanic's sister ship - 500 miles away en route to England</i> ) SOS - ( <i>first use of "SOS" by Titanic- Bride jokingly suggests to Phillips that it may be his last chance to use the new distress call</i> ).
00:50	Titanic calls CQD and says, "I require immediate assistance. Position 41.46 N. 50.14 W." Received by Celtic.
00:53	Caronia to MBC ( <i>Baltic</i> ) and SOS,"MGY ( <i>Titanic</i> ) CQD in 41.46 N. 40.14 W. Wants immediate assistance."
01:00	MGY gives distress signal. DDC (Cincinatti) replies. MGY's position 41.46 N. 50.14 W. Assistance from DDC (Cincinatti) not necessary as MKC (Olympic) shortly afterwards answers distress call.
01:00	Titanic replies to Olympic and gives his position as 41.46 N. 50.14 W., and says, "We have struck an iceberg."
01:02	Titanic calls Asian and said, "Want immediate assistance" Asian answered at once and received Titanic's position as 41.46 N. 50.14 W., which he immediately takes to the bridge. Captain instructs operator to have Titanic's position repeated.
01:02	Virginian calls Titanic but gets no response. Cape Race tells Virginian to report to his Captain the Titanic has struck iceberg and requires immediate assistance.
01:10	Titanic to MKC ( <i>Olympic</i> ), "We are in collision with berg. Sinking Head down. 41.46 N. 50.14 W. Come soon as possible."

01:10	Titanic to MKC ( <i>Olympic</i> ), Captain says, "Get your boats ready. What is your position?"
01:15	Baltic to Caronia, "Please tell Titanic we are making towards her."
01:20	Virginian hears MCE (Cape Race) inform MGY ( <i>Titanic</i> ) "that we are going to his assistance. Our position 170 miles N. of Titanic."
01:25	Caronia tells Titanic, "Baltic coming to your assistance"
01:25	Olympic sends position to Titanic 4-24 a.m. G.M.T. 40.52 N. 61.18 W, and asks "Are you steering southerly to meet us?" Titanic replies, "We are putting the women off in the boats."
01:27	Titanic says, "We are putting the women off in the boats."
01:30	Titanic tells Olympic, "We are putting passengers off in small boats." "Women and Children in boats, can not last much longer"
01:35	Olympic asks Titanic what weather he had. Titanic replies, "Clear and calm."
01:35	Baltic hears Titanic say "Engine room getting flooded." ( <i>Captain Smith had just visited the Titanic's radio room and advised this to Phillips and Bride</i> )
01:35	Mount Temple hears DFT ( <i>Frankfurt</i> ) ask "are there any boats around you already?" No reply
01:37	Baltic tells Titanic, "We are rushing to you."
01:40	Olympic to Titanic "Am lighting up all possible boilers as fast as ( <i>we</i> ) can."
01:40	Cape Race says to Virginia: "Please tell your Captain this: "The Olympic is making all speed for Titanic, but his (Olympic's) position is 40.32 N. 61.18 W. You are much nearer to Titanic. The Titanic is already putting women off in the boats, and he says the weather there is calm and clear. The Olympic is the only ship we have heard say, "Going to the assistance of Titanic. The others must be a long way from Titanic
01:45	<b>Last signals heard from Titanic by Carpathia, "Come as quickly as possible old man: the engine-room is filling up to the boilers"</b>
01:45	Mount Temple hears Frankfurt calling Titanic. No reply.
01:47	Caronia hears Titanic though signals unreadable still
	Virginian hears Titanic calling very faintly, his power being greatly reduced.  <i>(At 2-05 a.m. the Captain visits the wireless room for the last time and says: "Men, you have done your full duty. You can do no more. Abandon your cabin. Now it's every man for himself" Phillips looks up for a second, and then bends over the equipment once more. Captain Smith tries again "You look out for yourselves. I release you." A pause, then he adds softly "That's the way of it at this kind of time....every man for himself" He then leaves the wireless room. Phillips continues sending)</i>
01:48	Asian heard Titanic call SOS Asian answers Titanic but receives no answer.
01:50	DFT (Frankfurt) calls Titanic and says, "What is the matter with u ?" Titanic says to Frankfurt "You fool, stdbi and keep out"  Caronia hears Frankfurt working to Titanic. Frankfurt according to position 172 miles from MGY ( <i>Titanic</i> ) at time first SOS sent out.
01:55	Cape Race says to Virginian "we have not heard Titanic for about half an hour. His power may be gone."
	<i>During this period Phillips and Bride are struggling with a stoker who entered the wireless room and tried to steal Phillips life jacket. Bride holds the stoker, while Phillips punches him. The stoker is (presumably) knocked unconscious.</i>
02:10	Virginian hears 2 v's signalled faintly in spark similar to Titanic's ( <i>Most probably Phillips was transmitting a test signal whilst Bride adjusted the main transmitter motor-generator field regulators to compensate for the dying power supply from the engine room</i> ).



	<b>Virginian hears Titanic call CQ (<i>call to all ships</i>) , but unable to read him. Titanic's signals end very abruptly as (if) power suddenly switched off. His spark rather blurred or ragged...</b>
<b>02:17</b>	<i>(Phillips had actually intended to send "CQD DE MGY", however at this point there is a loss of all power to the radio room - water can be heard flooding the wheelhouse - Phillips says to Bride "Come on, let's clear out". Bride climbs to the roof of the officer's quarters and assists with launching collapsible lifeboat B - Phillips disappears aft.)</i>
02:17	Virginian Called Titanic and suggested he should try emergency set, but heard no response
02:20	Virginian to Olympic, "have you heard anything about Titanic" Olympic says, "No. Keeping strict watch, but hear nothing more from Titanic. No reply from him"
<b>about 02:20</b>	<b>This was the official time the ship foundered in 41.46 N. 50.14 W. as given by the Carpathia in message to the Olympic.</b>
02:35	Mount Temple hears MPA ( <i>Carpathia</i> ) send, "If you are there we are firing rockets."
02:40	MPA ( <i>Carpathia</i> ) calling MGY ( <i>Titanic</i> ).
02:58	SBA (Birma) thinks he hears Titanic so sends, "Steaming full speed for you. Shall arrive you 6-0 in morning. Hope you are safe. We are only 50 miles now."
03:00	MPA ( <i>Carpathia</i> ) calling MGY ( <i>Titanic</i> )
03:28	La Provence to Celtic, "Nobody has heard the Titanic for about 2 hours."
04:24	SBA (Birma) says "we are 30 miles S.W. off Titanic".
06:40	Parisian hears weak signals from MPA ( <i>Carpathia</i> ) or some station saying Titanic struck iceberg. Carpathia has passengers from lifeboats
06:40	Asian, with German oil tank in tow for Halifax asked what news of MGY ( <i>Titanic</i> ). Sends service ( <i>message</i> ) later saying heard MGY ( <i>Titanic</i> ) v. faint working. C. Race up to 10.0 p.m., local time. Finished calling SOS midnight.
07:40	6-45 a.m. Mount Temple hears MPA ( <i>Carpathia</i> ) report rescued 20 boat loads.
08:07	Baltic sends following to Carpathia: "Can I be of any assistance to you as regards taking some of the passengers from you? Will be in position about 4-30. Let me know if you alter your position."
08:10	Baltic in communication with MPA. ( <i>Carpathia</i> ). Exchanged traffic re passengers, and get instructions to proceed to Liverpool
08:15	Baltic turns round for Liverpool, having steamed 134 miles W. towards Titanic
08:40	Mount Temple hears MPA ( <i>Carpathia</i> ) call CQ and say, no need to std. Bi (stand by) him. Advise my Captain (sic), who has been cruising round the icefield with no result. Ship reversed.
08:45	Olympic sent MSG ( <i>message</i> ) to Owners, New York via Sable Island saying, "Have not communicated with Titanic since midnight."
08:55	Carpathia replies to Baltic, "Am proceeding to Halifax or New York full speed. You had better proceed to Liverpool. Have about 800 passengers on board."
09:00	Carpathia to Virginian: "We are leaving here with all on board about 800 passengers. Please return to your Northern course."

[You can read more about the Titanic radio room; radio officers; and associated material on the RMS Titanic Radio Page by following this link](#)

***Maritime Miscellaneous: Notes on a meeting of IMO COMSAR - The 2012 World Radio Conference: held on 12 – 16 March 2012:***

***A. From Kim Fisher:***

COMSAR 12 was the first meeting of the Sub-committee on Communications and Search and Rescue to be held with the new Secretary-General, Koji Sekimizu, and there were some organisational changes in the Secretariat. A further change concerned the topic of Long Range Identification and Tracking (LRIT) which had been transferred to the COMSAR agenda from the Maritime Safety Committee.

In the event the COMSAR meeting was dominated by LRIT discussions largely concerning the financial burden on the member Governments for the maintenance, operation and audit of the LRIT Data Centres. The audit fee of £10,000 charged by the International Maritime Satellite Organization (IMSO) was reported to be a particular burden to developing countries with a small number of ships. No conclusion was reached and the issue will be discussed again at later meetings. The technical documentation for LRIT was revised particularly by adding provisions for security forces to poll for information. The meeting discussed recommending the use of dedicated LRIT shipborne equipment but did not agree to this as it was considered that Administrations could determine from the information recorded in the Data Centres whether the equipment on their own ships was working properly or not.

A Guide for Cold Water Survival and amendments to Volume II of the IAMSAR Manual were developed. A guidance circular was completed warning that the use of Smart Phone type applications would not guarantee that an e-mail alert would reach appropriate authorities. The questionnaire used for obtaining SafetyNET information to be recorded in the GMDSS Master Plan was revised.

There was considerable discussion about the use of AIS-SART type devices for Man Overboard applications and by divers. There was uncertainty about how a ship receiving the information should react and the issue was forwarded to the next NAV Sub-committee meeting for further consideration.

Little time was available at the meeting to discuss the e-navigation project and several Administrations complained about the division of the meeting's work. The e-navigation gap analysis was studied and passed on to the NAV Sub-committee. However, Inmarsat gave a lunchtime presentation on Fleetbroadband, Kenta gave an evening presentation on NAVDAT, a system for transmitting maritime safety information at 500 kHz with more capacity than NAVTEX, and ExactEarth gave an evening presentation on the use of satellite AIS recordings.

Work was completed on a work plan proposing a review of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) developed since the last COMSAR meeting by a correspondence group and the IMO/ITU Joint Experts Group. This will now be submitted to the Maritime Safety Committee for agreement to start the work. A review in the period 2012 to 2015 is proposed followed by the drafting of a modernization plan in the period 2015 to 2017. A circular giving guidance to prospective GMDSS satellite service providers was also completed.

The next meeting of COMSAR is planned for 21 to 25 January 2013. A further meeting of the IMO/ITU Joint Experts Group is planned for 8 to 12 October 2012.

There will be a meeting of the Maritime Safety Committee (MSC) from the 16 to the 25 May and the Sub-committee on the Safety of Navigation (NAV) from 2 to 6 July.

## **B. And from Joe Hersey:**

Here is a brief review of WRC12 as it affects maritime community. The Provisional Final Acts are available on the ITU website to those having an ITU (TIES) account.

1. AIS satellite long range messaging on channels 75 and 76 was approved worldwide effective 1 JAN 2013. See 5.G110. Primary allocation in Reg 2(Americas), secondary elsewhere. Non-AIS operations will be limited to 1w on that 1 January date

2. AIS 1/2 was made exclusive in both Regions 2 (effective 2025) and 3 (Asian Pacific), but not Region 1 (Europe/Africa). AIS on search and rescue a/c primary in region 2, secondary in region 3, recognized by footnote in Europe.

3. VHF radar. "in Algeria, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, China, the Russian Federation, France, Iran (Islamic Republic of), Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Viet Nam, the frequency band 154-156 MHz is also allocated to the radiolocation service on a primary basis." - 5.A114. AIS would apparently NOT be protected from interference, to either SAR aircraft or satellites, in these areas.

4. VHF Appendix 18. digital systems on channels: 24, 84, 25, 85, 26 and 86 in Region 2 and 80, 21, 81, 22, 82, 23, 83, 24, 84, 25, 85, 26, 86 elsewhere. testing of future AIS applications on channels 27 and 28. A lot of other changes here.

5. HF Appendix 17. This Appendix is separated into two annexes:

Annex 1 contains the existing frequency and channeling arrangements in the high-frequency bands for the maritime mobile service, in force until 31 December 2016.

Annex 2 contains the future frequency and channeling arrangements in the high-frequency bands for the maritime mobile service, as revised by WRC-12, which enter into force on 1 January 2017.

6. Agenda for WRC15

a) regulatory provisions and spectrum allocations for enhanced Automatic Identification System technology applications and for enhanced maritime radiocommunication (Res Com 6/21)

b) improvement and expansion of on-board communication stations in the maritime mobile service in the UHF bands (Res Com 6/3 p312)

c) regulation of nano-satellites (Res Com 6/10)

d) satellite earth stations on vessels (Res Com 6/14), etc.)

7. WRC18 will consider regulatory provisions for modernization of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System and studies related to e-navigation (RES COM 6/9)

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