



Editorial

Welcome to issue 49 of AMERC News - which doubles as **Circular 264** and, as such, must be circulated to all GMDSS instructors/examiners by their AMERC centre contact.

In this issue we have a brief on the most recent **Maritime Consultation Group** (MCG - Page 2) - reflecting relevant items covered in the AMERC Executive Committee (EC) meeting earlier that day and including: a progress report on the **new examination series** due to start on 1st January 2015; a request from the National Administration Centre (NAC) on **how to prevent candidate photos being corrupted/ damaged**; updated **procedures for appointing probationer examiners**; a reminder about the requirement to have **Multiple copies of ALRS Vol 5 for training** – depending on the number of candidates; a note about **improved filtering on the GMDSS ‘Quiz’ on AMERC website**; a pointer to our **AGM Location and Travel information**; along with the latest **quarterly examination statistics** from the National Administration Centre (NAC).

We do have another **‘GMDSS Criss-Crossword’** (Page 3) to help stretch candidates’ knowledge of **international geography** and the use of **Admiralty List of Radio Signals** (ALRS) publications. The answers to puzzle 48 are also included – **again with hyperlinks** for those interested in learning more about the featured locations/stations.

We are (again) missing any **Member Profile** – if those of you who haven’t featured so far would like your centre to be ‘profiled’ – please let me know.

Explanation Please? (Page 4) Has a question on the **composition of the GMDSS Radio Log**; a question about **OPT Task 9** (set-up Sat-B and F77); and additional feedback on the subject of **DSC Test Calls**.

Tales from the Key-Side and **Maritime Miscellaneous** common with our ‘Member Profile’ page, are also taking a rest this issue – as we haven’t had any sea-stories (or classroom stories) - or just anything that might help brighten up our day .. contributions/suggestions welcome ...

As usual – my sincere thanks to those of you who’ve provided feedback, questions and other information for including in the News.

Sláinte!

Ian W

Executive Committee (EC) Maritime Consultancy Group (MCG) ‘Open’ Session

The Secretary has asked me to remind Members (Full and Associate) that they are invited to attend the Open Session of EC Maritime Consultancy Group meetings – anyone wishing to attend meeting(s) at AGM venue should contact [Terry Slack](#) in advance.

The **Maritime Consultation 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 latest meeting was held in Southampton, in March 2014. The following items reflect discussions at MCG (full minutes will be circulated appropriately) and/or associated items that are of interest to Members and training centres. The items are placed according to size - not in any ‘priority’ order!

Future Examination Paper update: The final drafts of the next series papers are ready to be presented to Examiner’s Panel, following AGM, in June 2014. The new series has standardised the format and question wording for GOC, ROC and LRC papers. The intention is to divide attending examiners into groups – each group taking one GK paper each - to identify any final issues with wording, timing etc. Don’t worry – if you ‘fail’ this exam the Chief Examiner won’t take your GMDSS certificate back ☺. RT Examination changes and OPT changes will also be presented to the Panel.

Examination Candidate Photos: The earlier recommended process of sending photo’s ‘face to face’ to the NAC has resulted in some photo’s being disfigured due to sticking together. The NAC has asked that, preferably, photo’s should be left connected in pairs (if possible) and paper-clipped face to the examination form. The new series application forms will be amended to reflect this change.

Probationer Examiner Appointments: A reminder that, to qualify for appointment as a probationer examiner, trainers must have delivered all aspects of not less than six GOC courses. After appointment they will be monitored by a full examiner in accordance with the procedure explained in the [AMERC Administration Handbook](#).

Publications requirements for examination centres: A reminder that publication requirements for examination centres were revised in 2012 and that, in addition to having one copy each of ALRS Vol. 1 (parts 1 and 2) and ALRS Vol. 6 (all parts) – centres must have **one copy of ALRS Vol. 5 for every two delegates**. A centre with course approvals for 8 delegates must, therefore, have four copies of ALRS Vol. 5. The full publications list is published in the [AMERC Administration Handbook](#).

GMDSS Quiz: The [GMDSS quiz ‘front page’](#) has been amended to allow users to select questions specific to GOC, ROC, LRC or Satcom Module. This should allow users to avoid being presented with questions that are not relevant to their course of study. In the course of this upgrade, some questions were revised, added or deleted from the database.

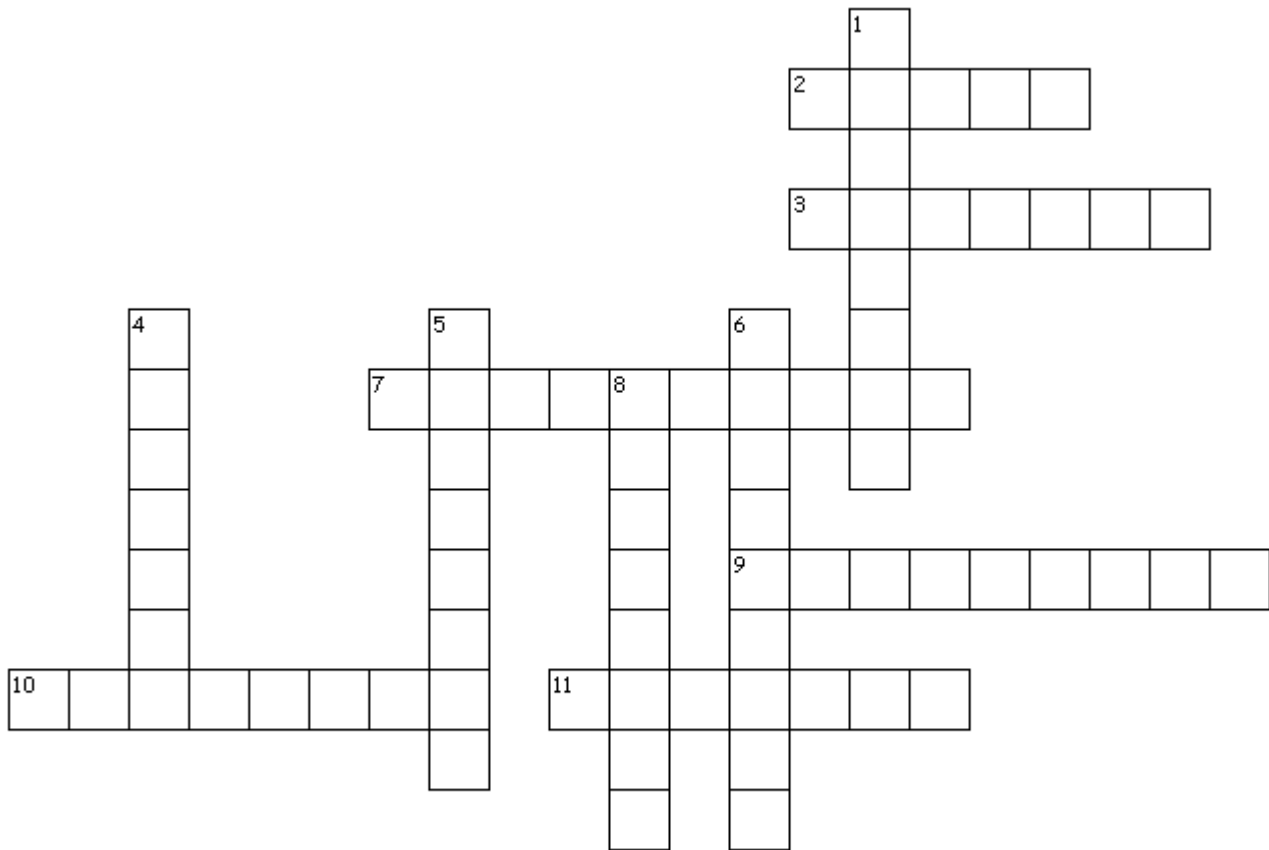
Inmarsat-C – Performance Verification testing: PV testing should be covered during the course, but is not being currently included in the practical examination.

AGM – location and travel information: Recent new members will find information on our AGM location and travel information in [AMERC News 45 – May 2013](#). Pre-AGM Notice was circulated in January, as Circular 263.

GMDSS Examination Statistics – quarterly report: National Administration Centre (NAC) examination statistics for the period **1 October 2013 – 24 December 2013** are shown below:

EXAMINATION	ENTERED (1 st time)	PASSED (1 st attempt)	% PASSED 1 ST ATTEMPT
UK GOC	371 (326)	322 (283)	283/326 (>86%)
ALL GOC	685 (599)	590 (513)	513/599 (>85%)
UK ROC	85 (85)	83 (83)	83/85 (>97%)
ALL ROC	108 (108)	106 (106)	106/108 (>98%)
LRC	51 (50)	50 (49)	49/50 (98%)

GMDSS Criss-Crossword Number 49 - all answers should be researched and/or confirmed by reference to ALRS, *where appropriate*



Across

- 2. Black Sea port where Turkey's second nuclear power plant is expected to be built.
- 3. Bay situated on the south-eastern coast of Vietnam (3,4)
- 7. Bay on which 9-across is situated.
- 9. Port city at the mouth of the Severn River, Maryland, USA.
- 10. Inland port situated 75nm east of California's Golden Gate Bridge, on its own deep-water ship canal.
- 11. Tuscan port city; capital of the Italian province of the same name.

Down

- 1. Japanese cruise port; gateway to southern Kyushu.
- 4. Seaport on the Yellow Sea in the coastal province of Shandong, PRC.
- 5. NAVTEX station situated just north of 3-across
- 6. Northwest Florida's leading deep-water port?
- 8. Port city; state capital of South Australia.

Issue 48 answers – with hyperlinks:

DOWN: 1. [Flushing](#); 2. [Ceyhan](#); 3. [Chilung](#); 4. [Linyuan](#); 5. [Latakia](#); 6. [Djibouti](#); 8. [Nine](#); 9. [Mike](#) 10. [Cyprus](#).
ACROSS: 7. [Scheldt](#); 11. [Kaohsiung](#); 12. [Antwerp](#).

Explanation Please?

This is the area for questions that may puzzle you – whether you're a trainer without a specific 'radio' background; a seagoing operator who's finding that the 'real world' doesn't seem to be fully in tune with what you learned in the classroom (or with what you've read in publications – official or otherwise); or because it's not particularly clear why a specific answer to an examination question is necessary when it appears that other answers may also appear appropriate.

The exchanges below include a question about the content and format of the GMDSS Radio Log; and some follow-up about stations performing DSC Test Calls.

Question: We have been used to teaching that the GMDSS Radio Log has three sections – Section A having details about the ship (including method of ensuring availability of equipment); Section B being about the personnel; and Section C being the 'diary'. I have just bought a GMDSS Radio Log from Kelvin Hughes (their own log version) for classroom use and I see that it has four sections:

- Section A has details of the ship – but excluding availability of equipment;
- Section B has details of ensuring availability of equipment;
- Section C has details about radio personnel; and
- Section D is the diary.

My question: is there a radio regulation or recommendation that states what should be included in each section of the radio log?

Answer: The MCA Radio Log does have the three sections you mention – combining vessel information with the method of ensuring availability of equipment in the single Section A. However – international regulations/recommendations only state that the radio log should 'record information required by the administration' (which I take to mean the flag state) – but does not specify which sections the log should have.

OPT Task 9: OPT task 9 in the current examination series asks the candidate to set-up default LES for both Routine and Distress calls for Inmarsat-B; but only for default routine LES for Fleet 77. You can set-up a default Distress LES on F77 by going into 'super user' – why don't we ask the candidates to do this?

Answer: It was considered better to ask the delegates/candidates to select the F77 Distress LES when activating the Distress Call, rather than allowing them into the 'super user' area of the simulator as, to do that, they need to be given the password. Experience has shown that there's always a delegate who thinks it's fun to change the password once they get into 'super user' area – making life difficult for all!

Feedback: Regarding Q&A about DSC test calls – The following has been received from Glenn Dunstan, of Dunstan and Associates (who have been installing DSC equipment in coast stations over the years). *'The Australian and New Zealand stations provide auto test calls on all channels'*

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