

AMERC News



Issue 68 – Incorporates Circular 288

January 2019

Editorial

Welcome to issue 67 of AMERC News - which doubles as **Circular 288** and, as such, must be circulated to all GMDSS instructors/examiners by their AMERC centre contact.

In this issue we also have our usual brief on the most recent **Maritime Consultation Group** (MCG – Page 2), and which includes the group thoughts on Brexit; findings from Chief Examiner visit(s); an update on the 2019-2020 exam series; and a note about the upcoming AGM/Examiners' Panel.

There's also a reminder about the availability of a **range of training videos provided by Kevin Walsh** on the AMERC 'resources' area of our closed website.

Reporting of NAC **quarterly statistics for GMDSS examinations** has been replaced by an **annual rolling report** on exam statistics – this edition of the News showing the second table using the new format.

The '**GMDSS Criss-Crossword**' – included in the News to help stretch delegates' knowledge of **international geography** and the use of **Admiralty Digital Radio Signals (ADRS)** and **Admiralty List of Radio Signals (ALRS)** publications, returns (Page 3) after a brief absence, along with a repeat of the answers to Criss-crossword number 65 (the most recent one published).

'**Maritime Miscellaneous**' (Pages 4-6) has an item from the RYA about **SRC Assessor revalidation requirements**; a note about the **closure of Mobile Radio/WLO**; a press release from **Inmarsat on cyber security**; and another about a McMurdo **EPIRB that includes AIS as an additional facility for local homing**.

'**Tales from the Key-Side** and '**Member Profile(s)**' are again taking a rest – if any new member, or member/centre not previously featured (or who has had significant changes since any previous entry) would like to feature in future editions – get in touch!

Your submissions are always welcome for **Explanation Please? Member Profile, Maritime Misc'** and **Tales from the Key-Side** - and/or anything else you think would be of interest to readers. Further suggestions to help delegates develop their knowledge of international geography would also be welcome. When it comes to **Explanation Please?** always remember – if YOU have an issue then someone else probably has that issue too ... **don't be shy!**

As usual – my sincere thanks to those of you who've provided feedback, questions, tales and other information for your newsletter.

Sláinte! *Ian W*

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Kevin Walsh, formerly of Mill Street, Westport, Co Mayo and Southampton, England passed away peacefully on 18th January 2019 aged 61 years.

Predeceased by his father Pdraig. Kevin will be sorely missed by his wife Valerie, son Alan, daughter Claire and her fiance Nick, mother Bridie, his three brothers Declan, Cyril and Justin as well as other friends and family.

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; the NAC and other AMERC/industry specialists.

The latest meeting was held in London in December 2018. The following items reflect discussions at MCG (full minutes will be circulated appropriately) - and/or associated items that may be of interest to Members and training centres. The items are placed according to size - not in any ‘priority’ order.

‘Brexit’: Despite a huge level of activity on the political front in the UK, with regard to ‘Brexit’ – it is still not clear whether and/or how, its implementation might affect AMERC operations across the EU. The situation will be kept under continuous review, and any developments that might affect AMERC operations will be reported to ECC’s as appropriate.

Kevin Walsh ‘Resources’ on AMERC website: Over the years, Kevin added some excellent resources to the member-only section of our website. Practical demonstrations of Sailor 6000 series VHF & MF/HF radio for all the tasks on our OPT; Same for Fleet 77, Inmarsat-C; and for NAVTEX (Sailor and ICS Nav 5). The demo’s are described verbally by Kevin, with sub-titles where appropriate - and broken-down into easily manageable and viewable tasks (e.g. Distress Alert; Urgency Call; setting-up SafetyNET and etc etc). All developed for his own classroom use but willingly shared with us all.

Most recently he added the demo for the updated RT log-keeping exercise – again with verbal and subtitle descriptions.

There’s a ‘Quick guide to using Admiralty Digital Radio Signals’ (ADRS) - downloadable as a PDF file; and links to various video demo’s on the ‘Ship Wonders’ website.

Other ‘resources’ include the Transas ‘live signal mod’; on-line Software Defined Radios (SDRs); HF propagation prediction tools and a ‘Quiz’ poster.

Kevin’s clear-thinking input and support for many things AMERC will be sorely missed. As will his feedback on some draft News items - that were all the better for his input prior to publication.

Chief Examiner visits: Recent centre inspections had gone well overall, though some discrepancies in programmed hours had been identified. Centres are reminded that classroom **contact time for GOC training** should be not-less than 57.5 hours (plus 2.5 for exam); ROC not less than 18.5 (plus 1.5 hours for the exam).

New Series (2019-2020) Exam series update: The 2019-2020 series examination papers were made available to all ECCs in November 2018. Some minor amendments were subsequently made to the ‘Modular Resit’ papers for GOC, ROC and LRC practical exams. Centres are therefore expected to have had enough time to prepare for their introduction on 1st January 2019.

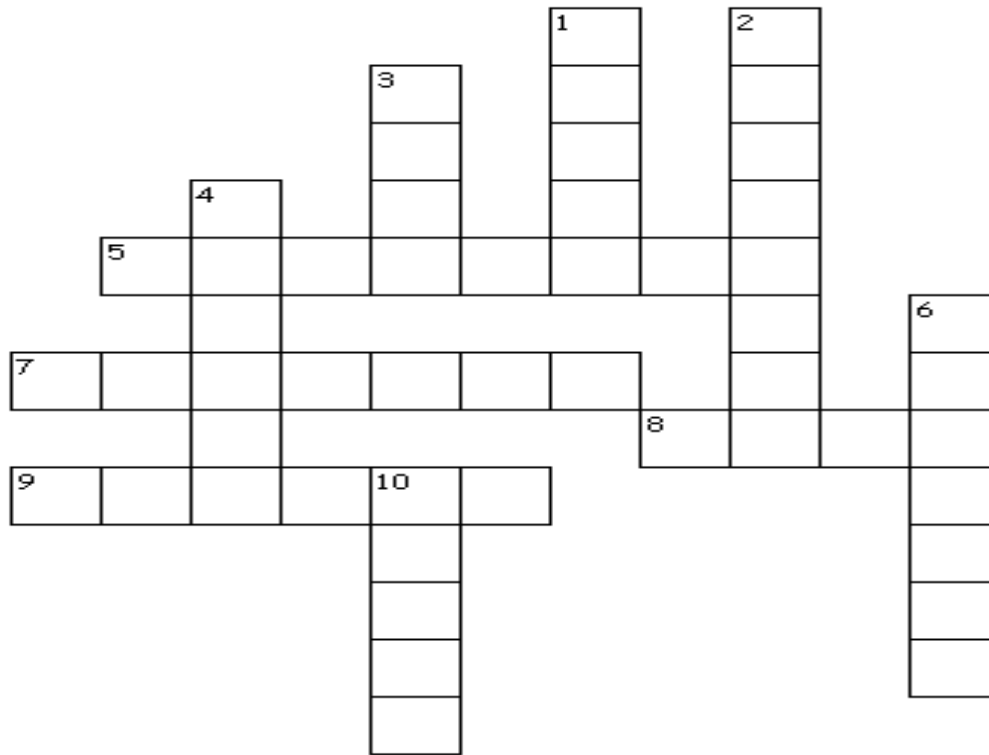
As before, a number of items for classroom use are posted in the ‘e-clear’ section of the secure website, to allow downloading and printing without the need for a separate document password.

AGM 2019 and Examiners’ Panel: Our upcoming AGM & Examiner’s Panel will be held in Liverpool on Wednesday May 22nd, – followed by the AGM dinner. More detail on venue will be provided direct to Members in the (soon to be released) pre-AGM notice.

GMDSS Examination Statistics – rolling annual report: National Administration Centre (NAC) examination statistics for the period **1st October 2017 – 30th September 2018** are shown below:

EXAMINATION	ENTERED (1 st time)	PASSED (1 st attempt)	% PASSED 1 ST ATTEMPT
UK GOC	994 (872)	859 (758)	758/872 (>86%)
ALL GOC	1870 (1689)	1674 (1517)	1517/1689 (>89%)
UK ROC	135 (124)	124 (114)	114/124 (>91%)
ALL ROC	181 (166)	166 (152)	152/166 (>91%)
LRC	115 (111)	112 (108)	108/111 (>97%)

GMDSS Criss-Crossword Number 68 - answers should be researched and/or confirmed by reference to ALRS/ADRS, *where appropriate*. Readers might also like to test their knowledge of international geography by using the ['Triviaplaza geography quizzes'](http://www.triviaplaza.com/geography-quizzes/) website (where you might also find one or more of the answers required below).



Down

- 1. NAVTEX ID for station at (5-across).
- 2. Most northerly of Japan's four primary islands.
- 3. NAVTEX station ID at (7-across).
- 4. Largest of Japan's four main islands
- 6. Smallest of Japan's four primary islands
- 10. NAVTEX ID for station at (8-across).

Across

- 5. Major port on (4-down) situated south of the capital of Japan.
- 7. Cruise port and NAVTEX station on (2-down).
- 8. Port city on (9-CROSS) and location of NAVTEX station.
- 9. Third largest of Japan's primary islands.

Issue 65 answers – with hyperlinks:

DOWN: 1. [Thiruvananthapuram](#); 2 [MuaraAngke](#); 3. [Jakarta](#) 4. [BarentSea](#); 6. [005250000](#).

ACROSS: 5. [Kilo](#); 7. [Valiathura](#); 8. [Eight](#); 9. [Murmansk](#); 10. [Echo](#).

(Criss-cross was missing from News 66/67 – now returned but retaining normal 'News' numbering)

Maritime Miscellaneous 1: Marine Radio/SRC Assessor Revalidation – RYA Training Notice TN28-19.

SRC Assessors should have received notice from the RYA about the introduction of a five-year assessor revalidation programme, which will come into effect in April 2019.

Any SRC Assessor who qualified more than five years before the implementation date shown above will be invited to undertake the online revalidation course. SRC Assessors who qualified fewer than five years ago won't be contacted until shortly before the five year anniversary of their qualification. Assessors who do not complete the revalidation within the specified time period, which will be advised in the invitation, will no longer be able to teach the RYA Marine Radio (SRC) course or conduct SRC assessments.

The revalidation process is online and free of charge. Assessors who are due to revalidate will be sent a link to the registration page and, once registered, given access to the revalidation course. The initial invitations to Assessors qualified more than five years ago will be sent by post and email.

The revalidation comprises two elements:

1. An update on any recent changes to the Marine Radio course, changes to guidance for Assessors and relevant subject-specific updates. This is followed by a brief series of knowledge-check questions.
2. A more general Shorebased Instructor Update covering developments within RYA Training, including information regarding the new Teaching in the Classroom course being implemented in early 2019.

Instructor Certificate: Once both elements are complete, Assessors will need to submit a passport photo and RYA membership number in order to receive their new instructor certificate which will detail the validity of their qualification for the next five years.

Preparing for the revalidation: Assessors should ensure that their email and postal addresses are up-to-date as soon as possible by signing into the RYA website and going to 'Your Account'. For help with signing in, see www.rya.org.uk/go/signup-help Any Assessors wishing to retire from running the RYA Marine Radio SRC course should email training@rya.org.uk including their name and RYA membership number.

Maritime Miscellaneous 2: Mobile Radio/WLO closure

We hear from colleagues in Florida that Mobile Radio/WLO – which was the last remaining US Coastal Radio Station providing long range commercial service – closed during 2018.

Maritime Miscellaneous 3: Inmarsat enhances cyber security offering for Maritime industry

Mobile training app for crew and intelligent endpoint security for onboard computers strengthen Inmarsat's Fleet Secure portfolio of products

15 November 2018: Inmarsat has introduced two new components to its maritime cyber security service, Fleet Secure, as it continues to develop solutions that combat ever-increasing cyber threats faced by ship owners and ship managers.

Vessel operators will benefit from a powerful, multi-layered endpoint security solution, Fleet Secure Endpoint, which is based on industry leading technology from ESET, a world leader in digital security, and powered by Port-IT and protects desktop computers and other systems connected to a vessel's network.

Fleet Secure Endpoint has been developed to remove infections and thwart hackers before damage occurs to onboard endpoints and connected systems. The solution will be available for commercial use from January 2019 and is compatible across Inmarsat's maritime portfolio of services, including Fleet Xpress, FleetBroadband and Fleet One. It also complements the resilience of Inmarsat's own satellite and ground network enabling consistent cybersecurity standards to be maintained.

Peter Broadhurst, SVP of Safety and Security for Inmarsat Maritime said: "It is a priority for every fleet operator and ship manager – shore-side and at sea – to ensure their systems are properly protected. As this enhancement to Fleet Secure demonstrates, Inmarsat is constantly monitoring the ever changing cyber security landscape and devising new tools and approaches for addressing potential problems; ensuring that ships and their crew remain safe –physically and virtually."

Inmarsat has also launched a training app for mobile devices, Fleet Secure Cyber Awareness. This enables seafarers to educate themselves on the tactics that cyber criminals might employ in attempting to infiltrate a company's IT infrastructure.

Addressing the human element is essential to maintaining a strong security posture, says Mr Broadhurst: "Many attempts to gain unauthorised access to IT infrastructure require some sort of activation by an end-user in order to infect a system and cause further damage. These attacks are often heavily disguised so as to trick and manipulate end-users into unwittingly granting permission.

"However, there are nearly always tell-tale signs that, if spotted in time, would prevent escalation. Crew education is therefore an indispensable component in realising a well-rounded security strategy and the reason behind teaming up with Stapleton International and Marine Learning Alliance to launch our Fleet Secure Cyber Awareness module."

Fleet Secure Endpoint

Fleet Secure Endpoint is powered by Port-IT who has fine-tuned ESET Endpoint Security, an award-winning cyber-resilience solution, which, by employing machine learning to detect unusual or suspicious behaviour, is engineered to defend against known and unknown threats at any point in the malware lifecycle.

In addition, ship owners and managers benefit from services such as two-way firewall, protection against botnets, built-in ransomware prevention, web-based remote monitoring of network traffic (with granular reporting down to individual PC), as well as proven anti-spyware and anti-phishing tools and support for virtualisation.

Fleet Secure Cyber Awareness

Fleet Secure Cyber Awareness delivers seafarers with effective cyber security training aimed at preventing threats from escalating into full-blown cyber-attacks.

Available through Google Play and Apple's App Store, the app can be downloaded and installed on seafarers' smartphones or tablet devices before they join a ship. It was purposely designed in partnership with Stapleton International, the University of Sunderland and the Marine Learning Alliance to be self-contained and work offline, removing the need to consume vessel bandwidth.

The app comprises three core modules that enlighten seafarers to digital threats from different perspectives. The first educates on cyber threats that involve taking advantage of personal information; the second focuses on cyber threats that exploit weaknesses in IT devices; while the third covers the physical and human dimension of more sophisticated cyber-attacks. In addition to the detailed training materials, the app includes a competency test to help seafarers consolidate and assess their understanding of the issue. On successful completion of the test seafarers will be eligible for CPD credits from IMarEST and a University certificate of completion.

Maritime Miscellaneous 4: The McMurdo SmartFind G8 AIS EPIRB -is the world's first distress beacon to support each of the four frequencies used in the search and rescue process: 406 MHz for global alert transmission, GNSS for location positioning and 121.5 MHz and AIS for localized tracking and recovery.

This multiple-frequency capability ensures a faster, more resilient search and rescue solution thanks to superior positioning accuracy, greater signal reliability and, ultimately, the accelerated rescue of people or vessels in distress.

These feature-rich beacons include a hidden hands-free carry strap, a ten-year battery, multiple GNSS sources, and multiple false activation protection measures. The McMurdo SmartFind G8 AIS comes either as a manual or auto variant that deploys automatically on a sinking vessel.

Mark Cianciolo, Orolia Vice President, Americas, said, "Regional approval for Orolia's latest maritime search and rescue technology follows our ongoing contract to supply Personal Locator Beacons to the U.S. Coast Guard. We're dedicated to developing state of the art technologies that help keep people safe while navigating our world's waterways, and with the introduction of this revolutionary product in North America, now is the time to ensure localized tracking and recovery are part of your maritime safety portfolio."

The McMurdo SmartFind G8 AIS was shortlisted in the highly prestigious DAME Awards, was awarded "Maritime Product of the Year" by the British Marine Electrical and Electronics Association (BMEEA) and won the safety category at the Pitman Innovation Awards, presented by U.S. magazine SAIL.

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