

AMERC News

Issue 77 – Incorporates Circular 296

October 2020

Editorial

Welcome to issue 77 of AMERC News - which doubles as **Circular 296** and, as such, must be circulated to all GMDSS instructors / examiners by their AMERC centre contact.

Hope everyone is getting used to these changing times? I believe a lot of centres are operating within the local guidelines and progressing well.

There are still a few who are working from home amidst hard restrictions; fingers crossed things will settle again soon.

However when that will be is anyone's guess...

The AMERC family are all here for each other as always.

In this issue we have a report from the latest Executive committee meeting held in September.

The **NAC Statistics Report** for GMDSS examinations is on page 2

There is no report from the **Maritime Consultation Group** as they have been unable to hold a meeting.

GMDSS Criss-Cross has made a return and is on page 4. Answers will be given in the next edition.

'Maritime Miscellaneous' (page 3) We have another article from Graham Lees. This is an interesting piece on the Fleet Safety Service which will affect us all. Thank you, Graham. for your news.

'Tales from the Key-Side, 'Member Profile(s)' is again taking a break for this edition. If anyone wishes for a feature please let us know. This is open to anyone – whether a new member, a member/centre not previously featured, or anyone with any notable changes. If you 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 other items that were likely to be of interest to others.*

Barrie

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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 online in March 2020. 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.

The EC and MCG met via Zoom in September 2020 for both open and closed sessions.

Reported that there has been no ENEM / ETO, MNTB or external meetings due to the COVID restrictions. There is no date for them to be reinstated as yet and we will be kept informed as and when that changes.

The MCA has updated **MGN 384 (M+F) Amendment 1 Training in the maintenance of electronic navigational equipment.** Centres to be aware of the contents.

Chief Examiner Reports

The Chief Examiner has been conducting remote interim audits. Currently they are performing well.

Exam Series 2021/22

There has been a lot of work behind the scenes for the Examiners Panel for the next series of exams. But centres advised to continue with the current series of paper (2019/20) until further notice.

Chairman’s Report

The period has been quiet, and we will update as and when things start to happen again.

NAC Statistics Report

GOC - exam numbers are down 26% from the same period last year and overseas exams have decreased by 22%. First time pass rates have remained mostly the same.

ROC - exam numbers have decreased by 13% for the UK and 38% for overseas. Whilst the first-time pass rate for the UK has decreased by 8% the overseas rate has remained the same.

LRC - exams have decreased by 51% in the UK and 76% overseas.

There have been 1365 GMDSS certificates issued for this year against 1783 last year.

GMDSS Qualifications, Handbook wording.

The AMERC handbook GMDSS qualifications wording has been changed to reflect the requirement for examiners to hold a UK GOC qualification and not just a GOC qualification

GMDSS Examination Statistics – rolling annual report: National Administration Centre (NAC) examination statistics for the period **1st July 2019 – 30th June 2020** are shown below:

EXAMINATION	ENTERED (1st time)	PASSED (1st attempt)	% PASSED 1ST ATTEMPT
UK GOC	627 (566)	562 (509)	509/627 (89.93%)
ALL GOC	1308 (1192)	1181 (1079)	1079/1198 (90.52%)
UK ROC	104 (95)	95 (85)	85/95 (89.47%)
ALL ROC	144 (132)	132 (119)	119/132 (90.15%)
LRC	49 (49)	48 (48)	48/49 (98.25%)

Maritime Miscellaneous

MARITIME SAFETY TERMINAL (MST): PRODUCED FOR AMERC NEWS BY GD Lees

Until May 2018 when the IMO approved Inmarsat's Fleet Safety Service, Fleet Broadband (FBB) was not compliant with GMDSS. However, with the addition of a Maritime Safety Terminal (MST) existing FBB equipment may now be accepted as part of an approved GMDSS installation. This will initially appear as an add-on facility, although it is envisaged that as new FBB models emerge, they will include all the MST facilities rather than being stand-alone.

The add on equipment will comprise a panel with a distress button, a keyboard, VDU and cable to interface with the main FBB below-deck equipment. FBB without an MST does NOT have an approved distress alerting function, although many may have a red 'emergency' button which, although not GMDSS compliant, effectively sends a '505' call which is routed to one of three RCCs to handle the emergency. MST enables access to high speed voice and data communications in one terminal and its functions include:

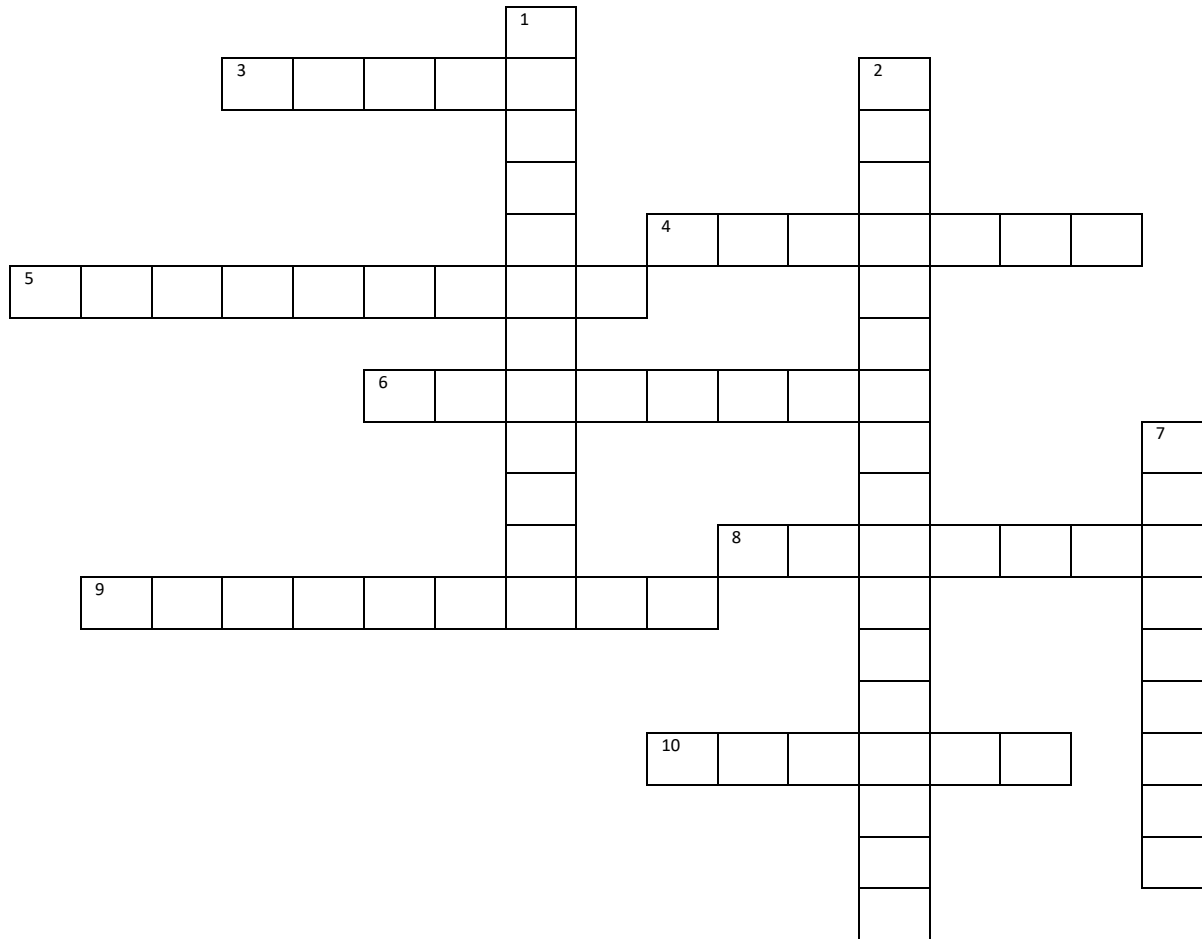
1. The inclusion of a 'distress' button which enables a vessel to contact RCCs with full distress priority. This can then be followed up with voice distress with the same RCC.
2. The MST also has the ability to receive maritime safety information (MSI) employing the web-based SafetyNet II which is an enhanced version of the original SafetyNet system which we are all familiar with and typically receive via Inmarsat-C. Operators now have the ability to search for and download current and historic MSI broadcasts.
3. Access to the Global Integrated Shipping Information System (GISIS) - which replaces the former GMDSS Master Plan. All Inmarsat Safety systems are registered on the IMO GISIS.
4. Prioritisation of all Distress, urgency and safety traffic guaranteeing a connection.
5. The inclusion of RescueNet a chatroom facility which enables real time communications between SAR authorities and vessel in distress. The RCC can also invite other RescueNet RCCs and FBB MST users helping the distressed vessel to join the chatroom.
6. Automatically routed distress traffic meaning that the closest RCC will receive and handle the distress message.
7. The facility to allow the distress vessel to choose a particular RCC if required.



Figure 1: Generic Maritime Safety Terminal Prototype.

The operating system for an MST will be identical irrespective of manufacturer, although the hardware may be different.

GMDSS Criss-Cross Edition 77 - 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-quiz) website (where you might also find one or more of the answers required below).



Across:

- 3. Country that's 3rd largest in Asia by surface area
- 4. Capital of Libya
- 5. Nickname of Scotland
- 6. River that flows through Brazil, Colombia, Ecuador and Peru
- 8. Largest port in Northern China
- 9. The Old region of West New Guinea
- 10. Rwanda is on this continent

Down:

- 1. Largest lake by surface area in Africa
- 2. Circle that's approx. 23 degrees south
- 7. Second busiest port in USA

Issue 74 answers

Across – 3 – Miyazaki, 6 – Fes, 7- Can Ranh, 8 – Over, 10 – Grindavik, 11 – Jeddah
 Down – 1 – Malabo, 2 – Rio Negro, 4 – Atlantic, 5 – Ayora, 9 - Titanic