

# AMERC News

Issue 78 – Incorporates Circular 298

January 2021

## **Editorial**

Welcome to issue 78 of AMERC News - which doubles as **Circular 298** and, as such, must be circulated to all GMDSS instructors / examiners by their AMERC centre contact.

I hope this newsletter finds everyone healthy and happy. As we continue through the pandemic, it's been great hearing about how people are adapting to practical restrictions in order to keep the world turning. This newsletter is the first from me, and I look forward to hearing about and reporting on your industry news and stories.

On page 2 we have a report from the latest Executive Committee/MCG meetings held in December. These meetings are still being held via Zoom, and the format is proving to work very well.

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

**GMDSS Criss-Cross** returns on page 5. Answers will be given in the next edition.

**'Maritime Miscellaneous'** (page 3) Here you'll find an update on Iridium GMDSS stations from Steve Howard, including some information about discounts for AMERC members.

**'Tales from the Key-Side, 'Member Profile(s)'** is again taking a break for this edition. 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!

Are there any new features you would like to see in this newsletter? Please let me know.

As ever, 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.

- Prue

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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 December 2020. The following items reflect discussions at MCG and/or associated items that may be of interest to Members and training centres.

## The EC met on a Zoom meeting in December 2020 for both open and closed sessions.

### Chief Examiner Reports

The Chief Examiner has been conducting remote interim audits. Currently most centres are performing very well.

### Inmarsat Update

John Dodd of Inmarsat gave the MCG an excellent presentation detailing updates on the structure and future of satellite communications from Inmarsat’s POV, and how these changes might affect AMERC.

Fleet Safety is due online in Q2 of 2021, with the introduction of the Maritime Safety Terminal (MST). Transmissions will only take 2 seconds to be sent and received.

MSTs new innovations include a Distress Instant chat service, ECG pull, Dynamic message routing, automatic reception of NAV/METAREA from every global authority, and vessel tracking by MRCC from the push of the distress button.

MST software is standard across all manufacturers, and all GMDSS messages are free of cost.

Video and training manuals will be provided free to training providers of the MST.

AMERC would once again like to thank John for his time and his presentation.

## NAC Statistics Report

**GOC** - exam numbers are down 40% from the same period last year and overseas exams have decreased by 30%. First time pass rates have remained mostly the same.

**ROC** - exam numbers have decreased by 36% for the UK and 21% for overseas. Whilst the first-time pass rate for the UK has decreased by 5% the overseas rate has remained the same.

**LRC** - exams have decreased by 58% in the UK and 64% overseas.

There have been 1166 GMDSS certificates issued for this year against 1365 last year.

The impact of Covid-19 must be taken into account when considering these figures.

### 2021-2022 Exams

All examination centres should now be using the new exam papers, available on our website (via secure access). AMERC would like to thank all centres for a smooth transition onto the new papers, and the exam board and Chief Examiner for their hard work producing the documents.

There will be an update to our security system to access these papers coming soon – details will be distributed in due course.

**GMDSS Examination Statistics – rolling annual report:** National Administration Centre (NAC) examination statistics for the period **1<sup>st</sup> October 2019 – 30<sup>th</sup> September 2020** are shown below:

EXAMINATION	ENTERED (1 <sup>st</sup> time)	PASSED (1 <sup>st</sup> attempt)	% PASSED 1 <sup>ST</sup> ATTEMPT
UK GOC	518 (470)	468 (427)	427/470 (90.85%)
ALL GOC	1111 (1019)	1011 (932)	932/1019 (91.46%)
UK ROC	73 (66)	62 (59)	59/66 (89.39%)
ALL ROC	116 (106)	102 (96)	102/106 (90.57%)
LRC	51 (51)	50 (50)	50/51 (98.04%)

## Maritime Miscellaneous

### Wartsila (formerly Transas) future developments



The introduction of Iridium onto the GMDSS market and the new developments in Inmarsat will add new equipment to the teaching schedule of our AMERC GOC courses.

As Iridium have only test radios in circulation with full systems coming online very soon, it will be very difficult to purchase sets adapted for training. The Inmarsat Maritime Safety Terminal (MST) which can be added to any Inmarsat terminal, will give us GMDSS capability and currently is also still at the testbed stage. Whilst we lost Fleet77 in December without a timely replacement, we still have to teach our GOC and LRC Sat Mod courses.

All this was taken into account when the exam group wrote the 2021 exam package and limited it to one year, hopefully the world can catch up before the next set of exams in 2022-23. There were other small reasons like Covid delaying the Exam panel meeting at the AGM as well and hopefully we will all be together again in June this year; the EC do have a contingency plan if not.

Part of my workload each year and the reason for this little ditty, includes teaching Simulation Instructors how to use the Wartsila TGS5000 simulator.

Wartsila have the plans and the design capabilities of the Iridium LT3100S and are in discussions with Inmarsat to include the MST equipment for the next version of the TGS5000 which may be called TGS6000.

The next version will lose the Sailor 2000 equipment as it is unsupported and this will make room for the two new satellite equipment's.

Before the new version comes out later in 2021 there is an updated patch (8.5.1134.12) that adds a Distress button to the FBB, updates the Inmarsat LES list, removes Inmarsat B and moves the Inmarsat satellites to their new footprints (migration of I3 to I4). In addition to these changes the TGS can now be run via a non-server host instead of a dedicated server computer.

Wartsila are also moving a lot of the simulators in their arsenal to a cloud-based approach for the purposes of training. I am currently teaching TGS Instructor courses online.



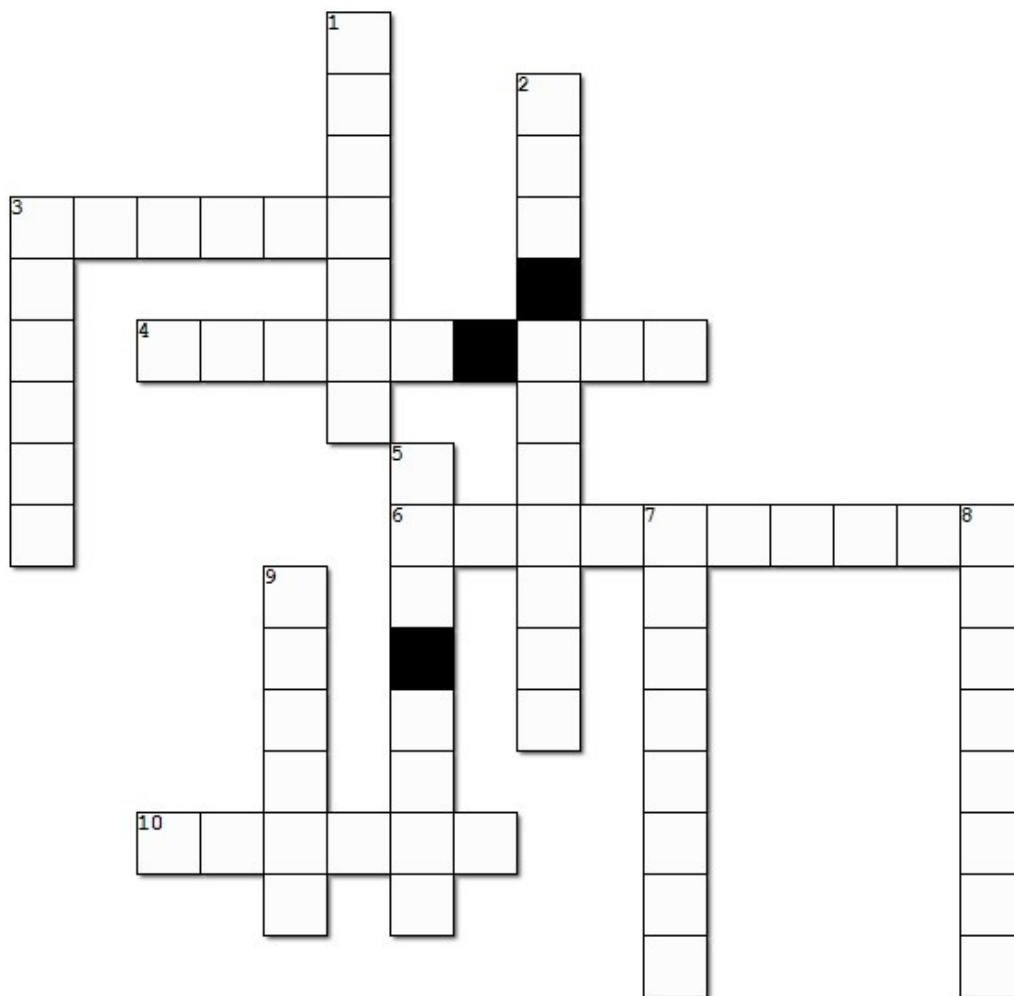
Wartsila have also confirmed that the long standing 10% discount offered by Transas will be continued on for AMERC members. Your entitlement will be checked against the list of members on the AMERC website

I hope this little addition to AMERC News helps out those with the TGS5000 simulator.

Should anyone with a full class TGS simulator require the patch please email me at [GMDSS.consultant@gmail.com](mailto:GMDSS.consultant@gmail.com)

- *Steve Howard*

**GMDSS Criss-Cross Edition 78** - answers should be researched and/or confirmed by reference to ALRS / ADRS, where appropriate.



**Across:**

- 3. World's oldest sea port (over 5000 years old)
- 4. World's largest man-made harbour
- 6. Egypt's second city and main port
- 10. Yellow Sea port; NAVTEX Station; VHF and MF DSC station location

**Down:**

- 1. Nautical Flag signifying "I require medical assistance"
- 2. US's busiest container port
- 3. Strait separating Russia's Chukotskiy Peninsula from Alaska
- 5. Bay situated on the south-eastern coast of Vietnam
- 7. Port city; state capital of South Australia
- 8. Iceland's second port, on the north coast
- 9. NAVAREA XVIII co-ordinator

**Issue 77 answers**

Across: 3 = India, 4 = Tripoli, 5 = Caledonia, 6 = Putumayo, 8 = Tianjin, 9 = Irainiaya, 10= Africa  
 Down: 1 = Lake Victoria, 2 = Tropic of Capricorn, 7 = Long Beach