

# AMERC News

Issue 86 – Incorporates Circular 306

November 2022

## **Editorial**

Welcome to issue 86 of AMERC News - which doubles as **Circular 306** and, as such, must be circulated to all GMDSS instructors / examiners by their AMERC centre contact.

I hope all readers are keeping well, and are having a busy and successful Autumn term.

This edition of the newsletter is a little later than planned, pushed back due to the rescheduling of the AMERC quarterly meeting.

On page 2, you'll find our regular features: Updates from the latest **MCG open session meeting**, and the quarterly **NAC Statistics Report** for GMDSS examinations.

Please note, this continues onto page 3, with more updates regarding the Handbook and AMERC policy on new centre approval process.

Also on page 3, **Member Profile** this issue is a little different. We introduce the latest UKSA cadet to be sponsored by AMERC, as approved by membership vote at this year's AGM.

**Maritime Misc.** returns on page 4, featuring material from a recently published ITU News article: 'The Role of the ITU in Maritime Radio Safety Communications.' Thank you to Graham Lees for submitting this information for inclusion in this issue.

On page 6, readers will find a note on the sad recent passing of Cecil Clark.

**GMDSS Criss-Cross** has made a return and is on page 7. Answers will be given in the next edition.

*As always, your submissions very 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.*

Thanks for reading! Please get in touch if you have anything to add to next quarter's newsletter.

*Prue*

Mail: [amercsecretary@gmail.com](mailto:amercsecretary@gmail.com)

The **Maritime Consultation Group (MCG)** meets regularly - 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 October 2022. The following items reflect discussions at MCG and/or associated items that may be of interest to Members and training centres.

### Exam Documents 2023/2024

Thanks to the hard work and dedication of our Exam Panel team, (Keith Mitchell, Steve Howard, Graham Lees and Michael Moir) the new exam documents for 2023/2024 are nearly ready. All ECC coordinators please await further updates in due course.

### New AMERC AEV

Following the Chief Examiner's final report and recommendation, the MCG voted unanimously in favour to approve Chieftain Training as an AMERC AEV. The centre has undergone the extensive approval process over the last months and has met all requirements very well. Congratulations, Chieftain Training!

### Single Touchscreen

The MCG voted to approve the Chief Examiner's suggestion to continue allowing candidates to "toggle-through" different training systems on one screen. This measure was initially brought in as a Covid-19 precaution, but has proven to be effective and efficient in GMDSS training.

### New Examiner approvals

T.P.T Saravanan and Bibhas Mitra were approved as full examiners for AMET. Matthew Tucker was approved as a full examiner for Tyne Coast College. Rhys Newnes was approved as a probationary examiner for Warsash Maritime School). Congratulations to all!

### Chief Examiner Reports

Keith gave his reports from the full, in person audits conducted at: Blackpool & Fylde College, Tyne Coast College, East Coast College, THESI, Bluewater Palma, as well as Maritime Radio School Koblmiller's remote interim audit. Dep. Chief Examiner delivered his reports for AMET's full audit, and Anglo-Eastern's new premises approval audit. Each report shows the centres are operating well and continue to uphold high standards. CAC renewals have been requested from the MCA. Congratulations to all centres!

**NAC Statistics Report** (*Editor's note: As with all NAC statistics at the moment, Covid-19 must be taken into consideration when looking at these numbers.*)

**GOC** - UK exam numbers have increased by 34% from the same period last year and overseas exams have increased by 48%.  
UK and overseas first-time pass rate remains largely the same.

**ROC** - ROC exam numbers have increased by 143% for the UK and overseas have increased by 108% compared to last year.  
UK first-time pass rate has decreased by 15%, while overseas has increased by 5%

**LRC** - UK exams have increased by a massive 243%, and overseas exams have increased by 114%

There have been 1591 GMDSS certificates issued for this year against 1074 last year.

**GMDSS Examination Statistics – rolling annual report:** National Administration Centre (NAC) examination statistics for the period **1<sup>st</sup> July 2021 – 30<sup>th</sup> June 2022** are shown below:

EXAMINATION	ENTERED (1 <sup>st</sup> time)	PASSED (1 <sup>st</sup> attempt)	% PASSED 1 <sup>ST</sup> ATTEMPT
UK GOC	795 (737)	728 (674)	674/737 (91.45%)
ALL GOC	1434 (1347)	1332 (1251)	1251/1347 (92.87%)
UK ROC	107 (96)	90 (82)	82/96 (85.42%)
ALL ROC	161 (148)	142 (132)	132/148 (89.19%)
LRC	72 (72)	72 (72)	72/72 (100%)
ALL LRC	119 (117)	115 (115)	115/117 (98.29%)

### ***Meeting report continued:***

At the latest quarterly meeting, the Executive Committee discussed how AMERC can further our charitable works. In order to encourage the uptake of GMDSS, a suggestion was made that new centres applying for AEV or ECC status should not be charged for the first three visits by the Chief Examiner. The EC voted unanimously in favour of this, and the Handbook has been updated accordingly to reflect this new policy going forward.

**Please download the updated copy of the AMERC Administration Handbook 12<sup>th</sup> Edition (Revision 2) from the member's area of our website.**

### ***Member Profile: AMERC-sponsored UKSA Cadet***



My name is Brooke Hastings, I am 18 years old, and I live in a little town called Brightlingsea in Essex. I was brought up around the beach and started sailing at age 7, and instantly found that was my passion.

Since finishing college, I decided to live out my dreams of working on a super yacht, and I am now going to do the Super Yacht Cadetship at UKSA.

The Cadetship is 4 years long, and will qualify me to be an Officer of the Watch, on up to a 3000GT yacht. I will gain up to 36 months work experience in these 4 years. So far in my sailing experience, I have done dinghy and cruiser sailing.

After my years of training, I hope to be working abroad on a private yacht in the Mediterranean. I feel like there will be lots of opportunities in this area to enable me to further my passion for the industry. Later down the line after a lot of hard work, I hope to go into the sale and marketing side of super yachts. I believe my sailing experience and A level in Business Studies will help me to achieve this.

I am so thrilled to be given this amazing opportunity, and proud to be supported by AMERC through my journey.

*- Brooke Hastings, UKSA Cadet*

## ***Maritime Miscellaneous: The Role of the ITU in Maritime Radio Safety Communications*** (Extracted from ITU News by Graham Lees)

ITU's involvement began in the early 1900s. In 1906, the first International Radiotelegraph Conference established "SOS" in Morse code as the international maritime distress signal.

That same year, the maritime service regulations, annexed to the proceedings of the International Radiotelegraph Conference held in Berlin, instructed the International Radiotelegraphic Bureau to establish a list of radiotelegraphy stations, including coast stations and ship stations.

Then, in 1909, came the publication of the first volumes dedicated to maritime radiocommunications: the Official List of Radiotelegraph Stations, and Coast stations and ship stations.

In 1912, in response to the sinking of the Titanic, the International Radiotelegraph Conference agreed on a common frequency for ships' radio distress signals. The conference also established regulations for ship radio operators to keep watch for distress calls – another major step forward for seafarer safety.

In 1927, the International Radiotelegraph Conference held in Washington, DC introduced the first provisions related to maritime publications into the Radio Regulations – the global treaty maintained by ITU to govern the use of radio frequencies globally. Shortly after, ITU began publishing its List of Ship Stations and List of Callsigns, also known as "List V."

The publication now known as the List of Ship Stations and Maritime Mobile Service Identity Assignments contains crucial contact information and other administrative and operational data on over 900,000 shipborne radio stations around the world.

Today, List V remains the go-to maritime resource recognized by all 193 ITU Member States. Issued annually, it is widely used for day-to-day vessel operations, including ship-to-shore and ship-to-ship communications.

In 1967, the World Administrative Radio Conference adopted a resolution establishing a manual on mobile services and operations on the high seas. The first edition of the Manual for Use by the Maritime Mobile and Maritime Mobile-Satellite Services – commonly known as "the Maritime Manual" – was published in December 1968.

Volume 1 provides a comprehensive overview of maritime radio technologies, describes the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) and other maritime operational procedures. In Volume 2, readers will find regulatory, technical, and operational texts related to maritime communications.

### Modern Maritime Safety

Today, seafarers depend on terrestrial and satellite communications to carry out their responsibilities safely and effectively. These systems form the basis of the GMDSS which was jointly developed by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and ITU. The GMDSS enables seafarers in distress to quickly alert search and rescue authorities ashore and nearby vessels, who can then co-ordinate assistance.

At successive World Radiocommunication Conferences, ITU Member States have taken important decisions to enhance safety at sea by improving the efficacy of spectrum use for maritime communication.

At WRC-07, for instance, Member States decided to consolidate and update some of the maritime service publications to ensure their quality and accuracy, keeping pace with evolving maritime technologies and enhanced safety protocols. Administrations are also obliged to notify ITU of any changes to their information contained in the publications on a regular basis.

The ship station and callsign lists were consolidated into a single List V publication, the first edition of which was issued in March 2011. Additionally, the List of Coast Stations and Special Service Stations, commonly known as List IV, is issued biannually. List IV and List V contain information that aims to help Seafarers worldwide to carry out general and emergency radiocommunications.

More recently, WRC-19 allocated additional spectrum to the GMDSS, allowing expanded coverage and enhanced technical capabilities. Among these was the addition of a non-geostationary satellite system, which significantly improves satellite distress and safety communications for seafarers in polar regions.

ITU also maintains the Maritime Mobile Access and Retrieval System (MARS), which is updated daily. MARS, created in 1994, includes information on more than 900,000 vessels and over 2,000 coast stations. Search and rescue authorities worldwide rely on the MARS database to resolve seaborne distress and safety alerts.

Thanks to these publications, seafarers can sail confidently knowing they have all the necessary guidance to correctly apply relevant radiocommunication procedures. Many of these are mandatory and must be followed to the letter – especially in distress situations.

### Updates Expected After WRC-23

The Maritime Manual is updated after the release of each new edition of the Radio Regulations, which happens after each World Radiocommunication Conference (WRC). The manual contains the most up to date information on new maritime radiocommunication, including the latest technological developments.

The upcoming WRC-23 will consider possible regulatory actions to support the further modernization of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) and the implementation of e-navigation. Those WRC-23 updates to the Radio Regulations will be reflected in the subsequent edition of the Maritime Manual.

***Editor's Note: If any readers would like a copy of the WRC-23 agenda, please let me know by email, I will ask Graham to send this on to you.***

### ***Notice: Cecil Clark***

I am sad to report the passing away of Cecil Clark. Cecil passed away recently after a long struggle with illness.

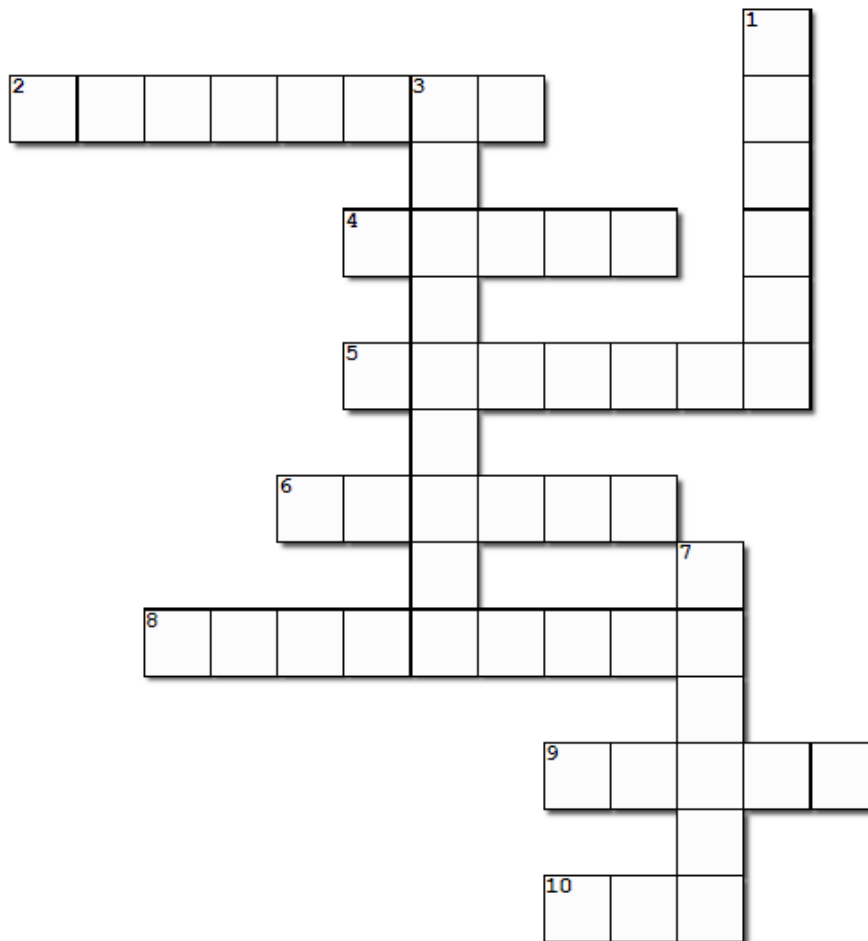
He was a founding member of AMERC, having been a Radio Officer then a Senior Manager at the (then) BT Coast Radio Stations for many years.

On his retirement from the Coast Radio Service, he became an ordained minister of the Church.

He will be sadly missed.

- *Paul Martin, AMERC Chairman*

**GMDSS Criss-Cross Edition 86** - answers should be researched and/or confirmed by reference to ALRS / ADRS, *where appropriate*.



**Down:**

- 1: MRSC and major port city in Cameroon
- 3: Port city on the northern coast of Columbia, also found in Spain
- 7: NAVAREA V Coordinator

**Across:**

- 2: Mexico's most southerly MRCC; and VHF/DSC station
- 4: Large island to the south of Athens
- 5: Northern Syrian port, VHF/MF/HF/RT station
- 6: Issuing authority for METAREA III weather information
- 8: Strait of \_\_\_\_\_, north of Tangier
- 9: Largest island in the Philippines
- 10: Q Code for asking "are you busy?"

**Issue 85 answers**

Down: 1= Australia 3= Wiluna 5= Sihanoukville 7= Stornoway  
 Across: 2= Zulu 4= Ushaia 6= Intracoastal 8= Bulgaria 9= Sulphuric 10= Over 11= Camel