Marine Radio Community,

I would like to start the new year of 2016 by updating you on recent changes that are occurring at the Office of Maritime Communications (OMC). This year has already seen a change in Manager and will possibly see changes to the assessment criteria and recognition of equivalent qualifications as required by the Australian Communications and Media Authority (ACMA).

As mentioned above I have been appointed as the Manager of the OMC and would like to introduce myself. My name is Sam Potts, that's right another Sam, and have a background in electrical/electronic engineering, radio and have experience from service in the military and recreational boating. I am excited about this appointment and keen to get involved, changing what does not work well and keeping that which does. I see my role is to meet the needs of government and customers by implementing ideas and feedback from stakeholders including: invigilators, applicants, national and state authorities and marine organisations.

I would like to thank and recognise Sam Yousofi for his efforts at the OMC and his continual push to ensure marine radio operators are competent. Sam's view on the marine radio as safety equipment will be maintained as many of you would agree. Unfortunately, many accidents on the water could have been reduced by people knowing how to use their equipment correctly, including their marine radio. Our job at the OMC, as the Australian examiners, is to maintain the required standard and hopefully ensure our customers are competent to operate their marine radio.

The OMC team, Suzanne, Liz and Sheree, also deserve thanks for their efforts in regards to administration of certification, customer service and ensuring the ACMA’s requirements are met. The team are continually working on improving our work processes, keeping the handbooks up to date and finding efficiencies in time and costs, not just for the office staff, but for invigilators and customers as well.

I would like to remind all that the OMC provides a service to the public, as a delegate for the federal government. The OMC acts on behalf of the Australian Maritime College, which is an institute of the University of Tasmania. The University of Tasmania has been delegated authority by nature of a Deed in relation to marine radio certificates of proficiency. The OMC receives direction from ACMA through various acts and policies and is required to provide information, products and certification services to members of the public.

I am keen to collect input from all stakeholders in regards to improving our products and services. This means I want your feedback. However, your feedback must be useful, specific and positive. Please remember that not just one idea will fix everything nor will negativity. If you identify problems, provide solutions. The OMC are in the process of reviewing assessment criteria and developing an online assessment tool. The handbooks will be due for reprint at the end of 2016 and we are looking for your input. You can forward your feedback using one of our contact details on page 2. Keep up the great work and maintain the standards to ensure our customers are competent to operate their marine radio.

Regards, Sam Potts

Update to MSCE (SATCOM)

There has been a recent change to Inmarsat-C equipment procedures in relation to position updating.

IMO ruling on GMDSS matters of position updates for Inmarsat-C equipment (if GPS fails) has been increased from 2 hours to 4 hours.

We are endeavoring to update the Maritime Communications and Satellite Systems and Equipment handbook and the MSCE Revision questions on the web. However, staff are away on leave and when the updates will occur is not yet known.

Please let your students know of the change!
Invigilator Contact Details
If changing your contact details, sponsor organisation, going overseas for a while or resigning as an invigilator, please let the office know so that our database can be updated.

Feedback
The OMC welcomes any feedback or comments regarding the content of this newsletter, our exams, the Marine Radio Operators Handbooks, and any other aspect or our service.

BOM – news
To help boaters understand and plan for current and approaching weather, wave and tidal conditions, the Bureau has developed the Five Vital Weather Safety Checks. These are the questions you need to ask before you head out about the weather and how your boat will perform and react in those conditions. The Bureau has produced two new videos to explain how to use the right weather products for your checks. Watch the Five Vital Weather Safety Checks videos on the BOM website.

Frequently asked Questions (FAQ’s)
Q What is the best way to order examination papers?
A. online at: Marine Radio Exam Order Form

OMC FEES as of 01 January 2016
As per our arrangement with ACMA our expenses and revenues are reviewed each year to establish our fees for the coming year. Even though we have kept our costs down, our sales of handbooks are down and it is estimated that the number of applications will not meet the forecast for 2015. Based on these predictions we have had to revise the fees for 2016. ACMA have approved the following fees to be introduced 01/01/2016.

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New Certificate Names 1.9.2015
Equivalent:-
MROCP = LROCP (Long Range Operator Certificate of Proficiency)
MROVCP = SROCP (Short Range Operator Certificate of proficiency)
MSCCE = MSCE (Maritime Satellite Communications Endorsement)

Not equivalent but still valid:-
RROCP and ROCP

Thank you!
Once again we have had great support from our invigilators. Thank you very much, OMC Staff would like to wish you all the best for 2016.

Results Letters will now just be emailed, together with the Tax Invoice/ Receipt – so check the attachments.

Don’t forget to return expired exams!!