For the past two years, in addition to my academic workload at the AMC, I have carried out the duties of the Manager of the OMC. In reality, Suzanne Whitemore, Elizabeth Johnston, and Sheree Campton carried out all the work while I contributed here and there when called upon to respond to technical question. They have my gratitude.

I did manage to develop, in my spare time and free of charge, an e-learning package for recreational mariners who wish to obtain the new Australian Waters Qualification (AWQ) for Marine Radio. Hopefully, the industry will find it useful.

Due to increased academic workload I have asked to be relieved from OMC management duties at the end of 2015.

Please let me share with you my last thoughts on the subject of Marine Radio training and certification, and wish you all the best in promoting a better understanding of the most important safety device on board any vessel, namely the marine radio. In my classes, often one or two students raise their hand at the beginning of the course and ask two silly questions:  
1. Do I have to learn this?  
2. What time will we finish on Friday afternoon?

While such individuals are usually not the sharpest tool in the shed, there is a general misunderstanding among many students (and alas some trainers) that radio training is about learning how to ask for help in an emergency. During their lives mariners will come across many emergencies where they are obligated by the law, and their conscious, to help rescue others. These mariners usually find themselves in only one distress situation and may or may not survive the ordeal. Therefore, we must all learn radio in order to rescue others in the hope that one day others would rescue us. The attitude that other people (usually volunteers) owe us the obligation to put their lives in danger to come to our rescue must change. When I start my lectures by presenting the students with a scenario in which they receive a MAYDAY or DSC distress call and ask them “how would you respond to this call and what are your legal obligations in such a situation?” I usually get a better learning outcome. It is worth a try. Live long and prosper...

Regards Sam

Invigilators are responsible for examination papers.
As per the Invigilator Guidelines the invigilator is responsible for examination papers.

Do not:-
Give them to a candidate to post (or anyone else)!

If you have a staff member who is ordering and managing the examination papers for you, they should be registered as an invigilator (they do not have to invigilate), but it means we will have their details on our system should we have an administration question. Also if a person other than the invigilator orders and requires the papers sent to a different address other than the one we have on the system for the invigilator – we will not send them.

Register your staff member as an invigilator to manage your examination papers and avoid delays and questions from us.

Photos
Once again the quality of the candidate’s photos is becoming poor, which means it is hard to get a good quality scan for the ID card. Do not send photos printed on normal paper. Our preferred method, if unable to supply a proper hard copy photo, is as a JPEG file attached to an email. These days this can be easily done using a phone (beware of the background). The email must be sent by the invigilator this informs us the photo has been verified.
We’re on the Web!
See us at:
www.amc.edu.au/marineradio
Have a look at AMC on Facebook and Twitter
www.amc.edu.au

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
The Bureau of Meteorology has recently upgraded the MetEye map display to provide discrete information on the height and direction of different swell conditions—as well as wind waves and total wave height. The new MetEye wave forecasts will enable skippers and crews to study how different swells and wind waves are likely to affect their vessels at different times along their voyage. They will help mariners determine whether they’ll be facing a rolling swell or choppy sea—or a combination of the two—and to evaluate the capability of their vessel to safely navigate these conditions. An important note is for mariners to be aware that maximum wave heights may be up to twice the significant wave heights presented on MetEye and marine text forecasts. This applies to the Total wave height, Swell1, Swell2, and Wind wave height maps.
Further information:

Training – courses
If your organisation only conducts LROCP courses we urge you to consider offering SROCP courses. Our office regularly gets queries about SROCP courses. Many of the queries reveal that the local training organisation does not offer the SROCP only the LROCP course. The person feels frustrated that they cannot do a shorter, simpler course for just the SROCP. If possible the SROCP could be part of a course run in conjunction with a LROCP course.

Frequently asked Questions (FAQ’s)
Q. What distance does the AWQ apply to?
A. 12 nautical miles within Australian territorial waters.

ACMA – news
1. The Maritime Radio Class Licence has been remade and is now: Radiocommunications (Maritime Ship Station – 27 MHz and VHF) Class Licence 2015
2. We have completed a new Qualifications video which you may wish to reference: Marine radio qualifications
3. AMSA has introduced changes in EPIRB registration: Registration – Mobile optimised

AWQ
The AWQ qualification does not come under OMC’s responsibilities. The responsibility comes under the RTO providing the training (as per MARC019 training package), examination, certification and record keeping. Including verification and replacements in future years. AMC Search (AMC’s commercial arm) in agreement with ACMA have developed a training package - AWQ Training Package available online from: Australia and New Zealand Safe Boating Education Group website

You may notice that the training package has been developed by our Manager Sam Yousofi. Sam wears many hats – OMC Manager and AMC Lecturer are just two. The AWQ software was not developed as the OMC Manager consequently our office staff are unable to assist with queries. Please contact ACMA.

Name Changes
We started issuing certificates with the new names from 1 September 2015. Just remember it is only a name change, not a new certificate.

MROCP = LROCP (Long Range Operator Certificate of Proficiency)
MROVCP = SROCP (Short Range Operator Certificate of Proficiency)
MSCCE = MSCE (Maritime Satellite Communications Endorsement)