Bord Iascaigh Mhara
Irish Sea Fisheries Board

Careers at Sea

A Guide to Training
GMDSS Radio Communications

GMDSS Radio Communications

What is GMDSS?

Global Maritime Distress and Safety System is a vessel-to-shore alerting system where Rescue Co-ordination Centres receive distress alerts and co-ordinate a rescue response.

What does GMDSS do?

GMDSS provides safety information broadcasts including navigation warnings, weather forecasts and search and rescue (SAR) messages.

How does GMDSS work?

GMDSS is designed to provide an automatic means of transmitting and receiving distress alerts either by using Digital Selective Calling (DSC) via conventional radio or via the Inmarsat satellite system.

Is GMDSS better?

DSC communication is much faster and has a greater probability of reception than the existing manually operated distress system.

What happens during an alert?

The transmission of a DSC alert provides the receiving stations with the identification of the vessel in distress. When the DSC equipment is interfaced with a position fixing system on board, for example Global Positioning Satellite (GPS), the position of the vessel in distress, is also included in the transmission.

Therefore the Rescue Co-ordination Centre (RCC) is almost immediately aware of “who you are” and more importantly, “where you are”.

Check List

- Check the Classification of Vessel
- Decide on the Area of Operation on the map of GMDSS Sea Areas (A1 to A3)
- Confirm Certification required

Entry Requirements for GMDSS Radio Training

- EU Citizen*
- Ability to use the English language, both written and spoken, for the satisfactory exchange of communications relevant to the safety of life at sea
- Basic keyboard skills

For further information on GMDSS equipment or Certification contact:

Maritime Radio Affairs Unit (MRAU) at the Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport,
Leeson Lane, Dublin 2.
Email: radiosurveyors@transport.ie Website: www.transport.ie

Commission for Communications Regulation (COMREG)
Block DEF, Abbey Court, Irish Life Centre, Lower Abbey Street, Dublin 1.
Telephone: 353 1 8049600 Fax: 353 1 8049680
Email: info@comreg.ie Website: www.comreg.ie

* In accordance with present legislation, priority is given to applicants who are EEA National sand those who have refugee status in Ireland. Non-EEA Nationals are welcome to apply. However they will be required to pay fees. Non-EEA Nationals will also be responsible for obtaining a visa and any other necessary documentation in advance of the course.

1. Classification of Vessel

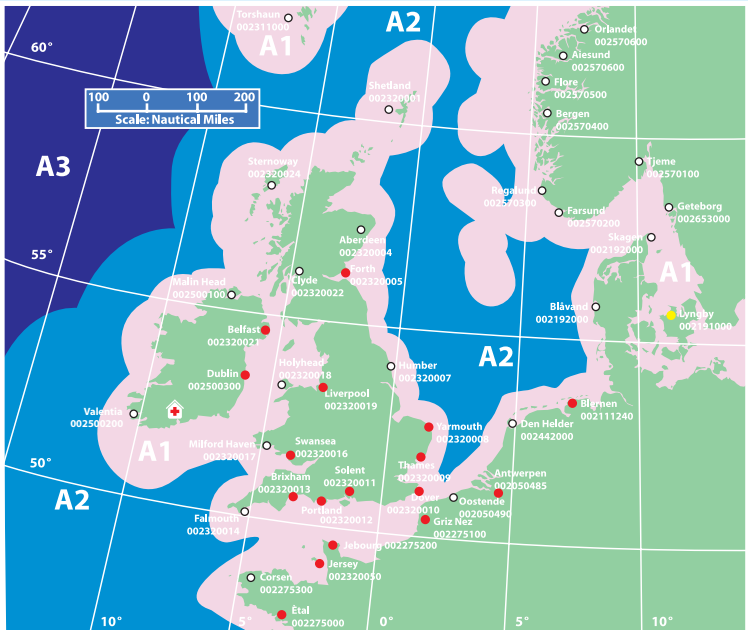
Classification	Registered Length
Class I	Greater than or equal to 24 metres
Class II	Greater than or equal to 17 metres and less than 24 metres
Class III	Greater than or equal to 12 metres and less than 17 metres
Class IV	Less than 12 metres

2. Area of Operation

Classification	Limits of Sea Areas
Area A1	Operates within range of a coast radio station fitted with VHF Digital Selective Calling (DSC) equipment, approximately 30 to 35 nautical miles.
Area A2	Operates within range of a coast radio station fitted with MF Digital Selective Calling equipment, approximately 100 to 150 nautical miles.
Area A3	Operates within range of the Inmarsat satellite system.
Area A4	Operates in the polar regions of 70 degrees North and South of 70 degrees.

3. Certification Required

Class of Vessel	Area of Operation	Certification required by GMDSS Radio Operators	Duration of training in Days
Class I	A1	GMDSS Restricted Operators Certificate	4
Class I	A2, A3, A4	GMDSS General Operators Certificate	10
Class II & III	A1	GMDSS Restricted Operators Certificate	4
Class II & III	A2, A3, A4	GMDSS Long Range Certificate	5
Class II & III	A1	GMDSS Short Range Certificate Module 1	2
Class IV	A1 and A2	GMDSS Long Range Certificate	5



GMDSS Sea Areas

- Medium Frequency (MF), High Frequency (HF), and Very High Frequency (VHF) Coast Radio Station.
- Medium Frequency (MF) and Very High Frequency (VHF) Coast Radio Station.
- Very High Frequency (VHF) Coast Radio Station.

Sea Area A1
The radiotelephone coverage of VHF coast stations in which continuous alerting by Digital Selective Calling (DSC) is available.

Sea Area A2
The radiotelephone coverage of MF coast stations in which continuous alerting by Digital Selective Calling is available.

Sea Area A3
The coverage of Inmarsat geostationary satellites.

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Who to contact at BIM

Fisheries Development and Training Division
Training Services Section
Bord Iascaigh Mhara,
Irish Sea Fisheries Board,
P.O. Box No. 12, Crofton Road,
Dun Laoghaire, Co. Dublin, Ireland.

Tel: +353 (0)1 2144 100
Fax: +353 (0)1 2144 254
Email: training@bim.ie
Website: www.bim.ie

Coastal Training Unit No. 1:
Tel: (087) 683 7134
Email: walshb@bim.ie

Coastal Training Unit No. 2:
Tel: (087) 233 4620
Email: donohoe@bim.ie

Seafood Development Centre (SDC)
Clonakilty, Co. Cork.
Tel: +353 (0)1 2144 100
Email: info@bim.ie

National Fisheries College of Ireland (NFCI)
Bord Iascaigh Mhara,
Irish Sea Fisheries Board,
Greencastle,
Co. Donegal, Ireland.

Tel: +353 (0)74 9381068/9381099
Fax: +353 (0)74 9381278
Email: nfcgreencastle@bim.ie

National Fisheries College of Ireland (NFCI)
Bord Iascaigh Mhara,
Irish Sea Fisheries Board,
The Pier, Castletownbere,
Co. Cork, Ireland.

Tel: +353 (0)27 71230
Fax: +353 (0)27 70858
Email: rfccastletownbere@bim.ie

QQI AWARD

An Roinn Iompair Turasóireachta agus Spóirt
Department of Transport, Tourism and Sport