

Email response received 3 May 2005 from the Maritime and Coastguard Agency:

Consultation responses from Maritime and Coastguard Agency (MCA) – the UK Maritime Administration:

Question 1: *Do you agree with the proposal to introduce a lighter, electronic licensing process? If not, please explain why.*

Yes.

Question 2: *Do you agree with the proposal to issue licences which remain valid for the life of the vessel? If not, please explain why.*

Yes – but MCA is concerned that a relaxation from annual licence renewal to an indefinite period may result in inaccurate, outdated information being held on the Ships Radio Licensing (SRL) database and will seek reassurances that Ofcom would review its enforcement activity. The ship's licence also records safety radio equipment – this record is needed (and used) by radio surveyors both in the UK and abroad. We will also need to resolve the issues as set out in Paul Jackson's letter dated 29 April 2005.

Question 3: *Do you agree with the proposal to issue electronic ship radio licences free of charge? If not, please explain why?*

Yes – for a long-term licence, but see answer to Q 2.

Question 4: *Do you agree with the proposal to apply an administrative charge when processing postal applications for ship radio licences? If not, please explain why.*

Yes.

Question 5: *Do you agree that the transfer of licensing to the MCA would not offer any significant advantage over the existing licensing system?*

Yes.

Question 6: *Do you agree that WT Act licence exemption for vessels that remain within UK territorial waters is not currently practical?*

Yes.

Question 7: *Do you agree that WT Act licence exemption remains a worthwhile long term objective? If not, please explain why.*

No – for the majority of commercial and a significant number of leisure vessels which leave UK waters, this would be impractical unless de-regulation was harmonized world-wide.

Question 8: *Do you believe that WT Act licence exemption would have an impact on maritime safety? If so, please explain why.*

Yes – see answer to Q 2. Ships radio licence information assists with statutory surveys and also is of value for search and rescue (SAR) co-ordination.

Question 9: *Would you prefer to see the current licensing system maintained without change? If so, please explain why.*

See answer to Question 2 – we concerned that any change should not lead to a degradation in the accuracy of the SLR database.