

# MARITIME COMMUNICATIONS PRACTICE TEST (SAMPLE)

STUDY GUIDE



**SAMPLE STUDY GUIDE  
WITH LIMITED QUESTIONS**

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THE FULL VERSION STUDY GUIDE**

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# Introduction

Preparing for a certification exam can feel overwhelming, but with the right tools, it becomes an opportunity to build confidence, sharpen your skills, and move one step closer to your goals. At Examzify, we believe that effective exam preparation isn't just about memorization, it's about understanding the material, identifying knowledge gaps, and building the test-taking strategies that lead to success.

This guide was designed to help you do exactly that.

Whether you're preparing for a licensing exam, professional certification, or entry-level qualification, this book offers structured practice to reinforce key concepts. You'll find a wide range of multiple-choice questions, each followed by clear explanations to help you understand not just the right answer, but why it's correct.

The content in this guide is based on real-world exam objectives and aligned with the types of questions and topics commonly found on official tests. It's ideal for learners who want to:

- Practice answering questions under realistic conditions,
- Improve accuracy and speed,
- Review explanations to strengthen weak areas, and
- Approach the exam with greater confidence.

We recommend using this book not as a stand-alone study tool, but alongside other resources like flashcards, textbooks, or hands-on training. For best results, we recommend working through each question, reflecting on the explanation provided, and revisiting the topics that challenge you most.

Remember: successful test preparation isn't about getting every question right the first time, it's about learning from your mistakes and improving over time. Stay focused, trust the process, and know that every page you turn brings you closer to success.

Let's begin.

# How to Use This Guide

This guide is designed to help you study more effectively and approach your exam with confidence. Whether you're reviewing for the first time or doing a final refresh, here's how to get the most out of your Examzify study guide:

## 1. Start with a Diagnostic Review

Skim through the questions to get a sense of what you know and what you need to focus on. Your goal is to identify knowledge gaps early.

## 2. Study in Short, Focused Sessions

Break your study time into manageable blocks (e.g. 30 – 45 minutes). Review a handful of questions, reflect on the explanations.

## 3. Learn from the Explanations

After answering a question, always read the explanation, even if you got it right. It reinforces key points, corrects misunderstandings, and teaches subtle distinctions between similar answers.

## 4. Track Your Progress

Use bookmarks or notes (if reading digitally) to mark difficult questions. Revisit these regularly and track improvements over time.

## 5. Simulate the Real Exam

Once you're comfortable, try taking a full set of questions without pausing. Set a timer and simulate test-day conditions to build confidence and time management skills.

## 6. Repeat and Review

Don't just study once, repetition builds retention. Re-attempt questions after a few days and revisit explanations to reinforce learning. Pair this guide with other Examzify tools like flashcards, and digital practice tests to strengthen your preparation across formats.

There's no single right way to study, but consistent, thoughtful effort always wins. Use this guide flexibly, adapt the tips above to fit your pace and learning style. You've got this!

## Questions

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**1. What does RCC stand for in SAR operations?**

- A. Rescue Control Center: a unit dedicated to coordinating SAR operations
- B. Rescue Coordination Center: a unit responsible for promoting efficient organization of SAR services and coordinating SAR operations within a search and rescue region
- C. Regional Communications Center for maritime safety
- D. Rescue Command Center

**2. Which system automatically identifies vessels and exchanges position data for collision avoidance?**

- A. AIS is used to broadcast vessel identity and position
- B. AIS is a weather reporting system
- C. AIS is an emergency beacon
- D. AIS is a satellite navigation mode

**3. In flag signaling, what does 'At the dip' mean?**

- A. The flag is halfway up the halyard
- B. The flag is fully hoisted
- C. The flag is at the top of the halyard
- D. The flag is just below the yardarm

**4. NBDP is associated with which service when written in full?**

- A. National Broadcast Data Protocol
- B. Narrow-Band Data Printing
- C. Narrow-Band Printing Direct
- D. Narrow-Band Direct Printing

**5. Which of the following is not a DSC category?**

- A. Distress
- B. Information
- C. Urgency
- D. Safety

- 6. The international NAVTEX frequency is broadcast in which language?**
- A. Spanish
  - B. English
  - C. French
  - D. German
- 7. In SAR operations, what is the role of the Aircraft Coordinator (ACO)?**
- A. Aircraft Coordinator
  - B. Airspace Controller
  - C. Aerial Communications Officer
  - D. Aircraft Safety Officer
- 8. On VHF, which channel is typically used for DSC distress calls?**
- A. Channel 70
  - B. Channel 16
  - C. Channel 13
  - D. Channel 22
- 9. GMDSS is an international system designed to ensure rapid, automated alerting for marine distress using which technologies?**
- A. It relies only on manual signaling from ships
  - B. It uses ground-based radio beacons exclusively
  - C. It uses land-based and satellite technology to ensure rapid, automated alerting for marine distress
  - D. It collects weather data for navigational safety
- 10. What is the SART radar response pattern?**
- A. A solid circle around the vessel
  - B. A zigzag line of light dashes
  - C. A single dot
  - D. A line of 12 dots extending 8 nautical miles outward on a radar screen

## **Answers**

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1. B
2. A
3. A
4. D
5. B
6. B
7. A
8. A
9. C
10. D

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## **Explanations**

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## 1. What does RCC stand for in SAR operations?

- A. Rescue Control Center: a unit dedicated to coordinating SAR operations
- B. Rescue Coordination Center: a unit responsible for promoting efficient organization of SAR services and coordinating SAR operations within a search and rescue region**
- C. Regional Communications Center for maritime safety
- D. Rescue Command Center

*In search and rescue practice, the central idea is to have a single hub that coordinates all resources and actions within a defined area. Rescue Coordination Center is the term for that hub. It is the unit responsible for promoting an efficient organization of SAR services and for coordinating SAR operations within a search and rescue region. This center receives distress alerts, directs assets like ships and aircraft, and communicates with other centers and responders to ensure a unified response. The other names described don't reflect the established coordinating role within a SAR region, so they aren't used in this context.*

## 2. Which system automatically identifies vessels and exchanges position data for collision avoidance?

- A. AIS is used to broadcast vessel identity and position**
- B. AIS is a weather reporting system
- C. AIS is an emergency beacon
- D. AIS is a satellite navigation mode

*Automatic Identification System (AIS) automatically identifies vessels and exchanges position data to help avoid collisions. AIS transponders broadcast a vessel's identity, position, speed, course, and other navigational details to nearby ships and shore stations. This creates a shared, real-time picture of traffic, so mariners can see where other vessels are headed, assess potential collision risk, and take early action, even if they can't rely on visual contact or radar alone. The system operates primarily on VHF frequencies and is used by both large commercial ships and smaller ones, with different class designs to suit vessel size and capability. It's not a weather reporting system, nor an emergency beacon system, and it isn't a satellite navigation mode—the latter would be about determining the receiver's own position via satellites, whereas AIS focuses on identifying vessels and sharing their position data for safer navigation.*

## 3. In flag signaling, what does 'At the dip' mean?

- A. The flag is halfway up the halyard**
- B. The flag is fully hoisted
- C. The flag is at the top of the halyard
- D. The flag is just below the yardarm

*In flag signaling, the term "dip" refers to lowering the flag a short distance as a courtesy or acknowledgement. The position that represents this dip is described as the flag being halfway up the halyard—lowered from the top but not completely down. That halfway-down look is the conventional way to show a greeting or acknowledgment without fully lowering the flag. So the best description is that the flag is halfway up the halyard, distinguishing it from being fully hoisted at the top, or being just below the yardarm in a different position. The other positions describe different signaling postures, not the dipped gesture.*

#### 4. NBDP is associated with which service when written in full?

- A. National Broadcast Data Protocol
- B. Narrow-Band Data Printing
- C. Narrow-Band Printing Direct
- D. Narrow-Band Direct Printing**

NBDP stands for Narrow-Band Direct Printing. This refers to a telex-like radio service where received text is printed directly at the receiving station, using a narrow bandwidth suitable for low-rate data transmission. The term specifically describes a direct printing output rather than display or storage. Why this is the best fit: the standard expansion of the acronym NBDP in maritime and radio communications is Narrow-Band Direct Printing, highlighting both the limited data rate (narrow-band) and the output method (direct printing on paper). Why the other options don't fit: the first option suggests a National Broadcast Data Protocol, which isn't a recognized maritime telex service. The second option swaps printing with data printing, which isn't the established term. The third option uses an odd word order that isn't the standard designation.

#### 5. Which of the following is not a DSC category?

- A. Distress
- B. Information**
- C. Urgency
- D. Safety

DSC categories are the three priority levels used to signal the nature of safety communications: Distress, Urgency, and Safety. Distress indicates an immediate danger and a request for urgent help (Mayday), Urgency signals a situation that could become dangerous (Pan-Pan), and Safety is used for important safety information or instructions that should be broadcast to others (Sécurité). These categories drive how quickly and to whom the message is routed. Information is not a DSC category. There isn't a DSC label for "information" in the standard three-tier system; information-type messages are handled by other methods (such as routine voice calls or non-DSC transmissions) rather than a DSC category.

#### 6. The international NAVTEX frequency is broadcast in which language?

- A. Spanish
- B. English**
- C. French
- D. German

The messages sent as part of the international NAVTEX service are broadcast in English. This language choice ensures that ships from many nationalities can understand urgent navigational warnings and meteorological weather updates regardless of their country of origin. Local or national NAVTEX services may use other languages, but the internationally standardized broadcasts use English for universal comprehension.

**7. In SAR operations, what is the role of the Aircraft Coordinator (ACO)?**

- A. Aircraft Coordinator**
- B. Airspace Controller
- C. Aerial Communications Officer
- D. Aircraft Safety Officer

*Coordinating aircraft resources and directing search actions across the mission area is the core function of the Aircraft Coordinator in SAR. This person assigns search sectors, tracks each aircraft's position and progress, ensures complete coverage, and maintains liaison with the mission base and ground units so the air effort fits the overall plan. Other roles focus on different tasks—airspace controllers manage routing and separation in the airspace, an aerial communications officer handles communications, and an aircraft safety officer oversees safety concerns—none of which Centres on the day-to-day orchestration of airborne assets as the Aircraft Coordinator does.*

**8. On VHF, which channel is typically used for DSC distress calls?**

- A. Channel 70**
- B. Channel 16
- C. Channel 13
- D. Channel 22

*DSC on VHF uses the channel reserved for digital selective calling and distress alerts, which is channel 70. This channel is dedicated to transmitting digital distress signals that automatically alert other DSC-equipped vessels and shore stations, often including your vessel identity and position if GPS is linked. Channel 16, while important for voice hailing and traditional distress calls, is not used for DSC alerts. Channel 13 is typically for bridge-to-bridge safety communications, and channel 22 is used for public correspondence. So the DSC distress mechanism operates on channel 70, making it the correct choice.*

**9. GMDSS is an international system designed to ensure rapid, automated alerting for marine distress using which technologies?**

- A. It relies only on manual signaling from ships
- B. It uses ground-based radio beacons exclusively
- C. It uses land-based and satellite technology to ensure rapid, automated alerting for marine distress**
- D. It collects weather data for navigational safety

*GMDSS uses a network that combines land-based shore stations with satellite links to provide rapid, automated distress alerts. Ships equipped with DSC radios can initiate an emergency signal that is automatically routed to nearby coast stations and to a Maritime Rescue Coordination Center. That distress information is then carried by satellite systems to reach MRCCs quickly, often with the vessel's identity and position provided by GPS. This integration means alerts are sent and received without requiring manual signaling, greatly shortening response times. While safety information and weather updates are also part of GMDSS through SafetyNET and NAVTEX, the core mechanism for distress alerting relies on both land-based and satellite technology to ensure automated, global coverage.*

## 10. What is the SART radar response pattern?

- A. A solid circle around the vessel
- B. A zigzag line of light dashes
- C. A single dot
- D. A line of 12 dots extending 8 nautical miles outward on a radar screen**

*When a SART is interrogated by radar, it replies in a distinctive way that makes it easy to spot on the screen. The signal shows up as a line of evenly spaced dots that radiates outward from the vessel, typically forming about 12 dots and extending to roughly 8 nautical miles on the radar display. This pattern is specifically designed to be unmistakable against other radar echoes, so the operator can quickly locate the distress beacon. A solid circle would look like a single, steady echo around the ship and isn't how a SART is represented. A zigzag line isn't the standardized response pattern, and a single dot wouldn't provide enough information to identify and locate the beacon reliably.*

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## Next Steps

Congratulations on reaching the final section of this guide. You've taken a meaningful step toward passing your certification exam and advancing your career.

As you continue preparing, remember that consistent practice, review, and self-reflection are key to success. Make time to revisit difficult topics, simulate exam conditions, and track your progress along the way.

If you need help, have suggestions, or want to share feedback, we'd love to hear from you. Reach out to our team at [hello@examzify.com](mailto:hello@examzify.com).

Or visit your dedicated course page for more study tools and resources:

<https://marcom.examzify.com>

We wish you the very best on your exam journey. You've got this!

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