



PUBLIC NOTICE

FEDERAL COMMUNICATIONS COMMISSION

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WIRELESS TELECOMMUNICATIONS BUREAU APPROVES NEW COMMERCIAL OPERATOR LICENSE EXAMINATION (COLE) QUESTION POOL FOR ELEMENT 7 (GLOBAL MARITIME DISTRESS AND SAFETY SYSTEM (GMDSS) RADIO OPERATING PROCEDURES)

On November 15, 2000, the Public Safety and Private Wireless Division, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau released a Public Notice inviting parties to file comments regarding a proposed revised model test pool for Element 7 (Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) radio operating procedures) of the Commercial Operator License Examination (COLE).¹ The new question pool was submitted by the GMDSS Task Force (Task Force),² as a replacement for the GMDSS question pool currently used to examine candidates for the Commission's GMDSS Operator Certificate (GOC). The Task Force proposed that we adopt it in its entirety. In addition, all of the commenters support adopting the proposed pool in its entirety.³ On July 12, 2001 the Task Force submitted an updated version of the proposed pool, including grammar corrections and minor changes to make the document more consistent internally. All of the comments we received on the updated version of the question pool were in support thereof.⁴ We have reviewed the record and find that the adoption of the new question pool is appropriate and would promote efficient and effective COLE administrations.

In this regard, we conclude that adoption of the new question pool for Element 7 is warranted because it eliminates questions involving implementation dates that have already passed, and reflects the current duties and responsibilities of commercial radio operator licensees. The new question pool draws heavily on the existing FCC GMDSS question pool used to examine candidates for the GOC. The new question pool consists of 600 multiple-choice questions regarding 100 key topics. Each of the key topics has six questions. Thus, we envision that a random selection of one question from each key topic should result in a well-balanced 100-question examination.

¹ Wireless Telecommunications Bureau Solicits Assistance in Updating Commercial Operator License Examination (COLE) Question Pool For Elements 1 & 7, and Seeks Comment on Development of Procedures to Update COLE Question Pools, *Public Notice*, 15 FCC Rcd 22274 (WTB PSPWD 2000).

² The GMDSS Task Force was chartered by the U.S. Coast Guard to supplement government functions in expediting the implementation of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) recently introduced by the International Maritime Organization (IMO). The Task Force membership includes nearly 1000 representatives of government agencies, commercial vessel owners and operators, recreational vessel interests, training institutions, service agents, manufacturers, trade associations and maritime labor organizations

³ Comments were received from NARTE, Inc., BFT Training Unlimited, Inc., Owen Anderson and ISCET COLEM.

⁴ Comments on the updated version were received from the Task Force and Owen Anderson.

Entities administering COLEs may begin using the new question pool immediately, or may continue to use the old questions for a period of six months following the release date of this Public Notice.⁵ However, the new questions **must** be used beginning six months from the release date of this Public Notice.

The new question pool can be obtained from the Commission's Web site, at <http://www.fcc.gov/Bureaus/Wireless/Informal>, and can be obtained from International Transcription Services, Inc., 1231 20th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036, (202) 857-3800. It also is available for inspection during normal business hours in the Public Safety and Private Wireless Division, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau, FCC, 445 12th St., S.W., Room 4-C330, Washington, D.C. 20554, (202) 418-0680., and can be purchased through the Commission's duplicating contractor, International Transcription Services, Inc., 1231 20th St., N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036, (202) 857-3800.

For further information, contact Ghassan Khalek of the Policy and Rules Branch, Public Safety and Private Wireless Division, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau at (202) 418-0680, TTY (202) 418-7233, or via email to gkhalek@fcc.gov.

By the Chief, Public Safety and Private Wireless Division, Wireless Telecommunications Bureau.

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⁵ In order to allow this six-month transition period, we hereby, on our own motion, waive Section 13.215 of the Commission's Rules, 47 C.F.R. § 13.215, which otherwise would require use of the new pool immediately. We believe that a waiver is in the public interest in order to accommodate applicants and instructors whose preparations relied on the existing question pool.