

Communications at sea

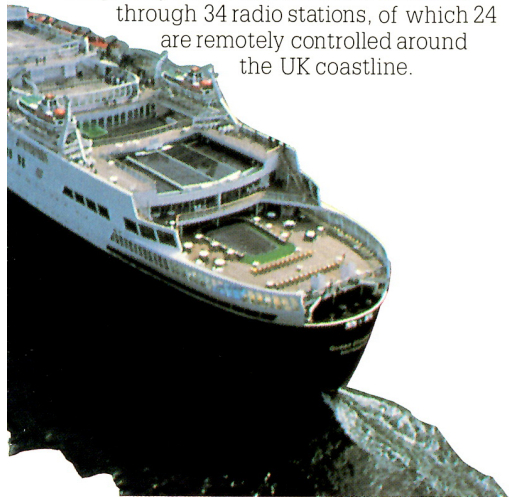
British Telecom International's Maritime Radio division is a unique organisation undertaking the whole range of remote communications services – mainly for shipping, but also for aircraft, North Sea offshore exploration and supply vessels, and some remote land stations. Maritime Radio's operations extend right through from the initial planning of a communications system to its installation, operation and maintenance.

Communication with those at sea, anywhere in the world, is provided by means of radio links via our long-range Portishead Radio Station, near Burnham-on-Sea in Somerset, or by means of satellite via the INMARSAT system received and transmitted by our Coast Earth Station at Goonhilly.

Morse, radiotelephone, radiotelex, facsimile and low-speed data are all available through Portishead on high frequency (HF) bands.

Our INMARSAT maritime communications are provided through Goonhilly to the Atlantic Ocean, and to the Pacific and Indian Ocean regions through Coast Earth Stations at Singapore and Eik in Norway. Telephony, telex and data services – including access to international databases via British Telecom International's IPSS (International Packet Switching Service) – are all available via satellite link.

Eleven coastal radio stations provide further links by morse, radiotelephone, radiotelex and facsimile on medium frequency (MF) bands. Radiotelephone service on very high frequency (VHF) bands is also available through 34 radio stations, of which 24 are remotely controlled around the UK coastline.



A range of services

The prime users of Maritime Radio's services are the deepsea vessels operating throughout the world, and the smaller craft which sail around the coast of the UK. However, in addition to providing communications for ships and smaller boats, Maritime Radio also helps aircraft, oil rigs and remote land stations to keep in touch.

Our Portishead station provides long-range HF telephone services to aircraft equipped to operate on maritime channels; and we are continually seeking ways of expanding our aeronautical service.

Four coastal radio stations on the north eastern coast of the UK provide multichannel radiotelex and shared direct access radiotelephone channels to oil exploration rigs, and to their support vessels, in the North Sea.

We also provide vital support to HM Coastguard and other search-and-rescue organisations, in addition to our public correspondence services. We broadcast meteorological and navigational information on behalf of the Meteorological Department and the Hydrographer's Office – including broadcasting the NAVTEX service which is co-ordinated through selected coastal stations in northern Europe.



A wealth of experience

Maritime Radio's advanced knowledge and sophisticated range of products is continually being expanded. We should be pleased to offer advice on any communications problem; and our staff are well used to working on projects requiring maximum confidentiality.

Aerial construction and maintenance

Our experienced and well-equipped aerial construction and repair teams have responsibility for aerial systems throughout the UK, ranging from very low frequency (VLF) to ultra-high frequency (UHF).

These teams are also highly skilled in the assembly of small and medium-sized satellite dish aerials for commercial communications and broadcasting systems, such as the satellite dishes at London Teleport, British Telecom International's newest earth station.



Coast Radio Station maintenance

Mobile teams of experienced radio engineers and technicians are permanently on call for on-site maintenance of attended coastal radio stations. Equipment can also be tested and repaired at the workshops and repair centres where these teams are based.

