

## Cover sheet for response to an Ofcom consultation

### BASIC DETAILS

**Consultation title:** Proposal to Reform Ships Radio Licensing

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**Name of respondent:** John Bowen. Chartered Engineer

**Representing (self or organisation/s):** Self & all the other boating people in the Chelmsford District who have not taken the trouble to reply!.

**Address (if not received by email):**

### CONFIDENTIALITY

**What do you want Ofcom to keep confidential?**

Nothing

Name/address/contact  
Details/job title

Whole response

Organisation

Part of the response

If there is no separate annex, which parts?

If you want part of your response, your name or your organisation to be confidential, can Ofcom still publish a reference to the contents of your response (including, for any confidential parts, a general summary that does not disclose the specific information or enable you to be identified)?

Yes

### DECLARATION

I confirm that the correspondence supplied with this cover sheet is a formal consultation response. It can be published in full on Ofcom's website, unless otherwise specified on this cover sheet, and I authorise Ofcom to make use of the information in this response to meet its legal requirements. If I have sent my response by email, Ofcom can disregard any standard e-mail text about not disclosing email contents and attachments.

Name John Bowen

Dear Ofcom,

I am a crewmember of a sailing boat for pleasure only.

My Captain has a Mate's Licence but no longer takes out big boats.

I have asked dozens of boating people what they think of these proposals.

Most were unaware of them. They then replied with a variation which basically included the following:- "No Government organisation would be so stupid to do what you are telling me they propose - Is it a wind-up".

I assured them that it was not - but they were again totally unconvinced.

Most were not E-Mail literate.

**Ofcom Consultation on a Proposal to Reform Ship Radio Licensing**  
**Consultation Questions and Answers**

**Question 1:**

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

Basically "yes" but with yet to be demonstrated procedures.

PDFs can be downloaded by anyone with an insight into electronics, so like the existing Voting fiasco, need more thought than Ofcom normally give it.

PDFs are almost too easy - not 100% forgery proof.

How would people be notified in the event of Rule changes - people change their E-Mail Address very often - I know I run a Database for a few hundred.

All boating people I have spoken with like the idea of not having a yearly Licence (and paying some £20 odd per year).

However Captain's maintain that if any of the existing Inspection Procedures are reduced, Owners would tend to allow equipment to fall into disrepair to save money.

**Question 2:**

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

No.

Suggest 5 years.

**Question 3:**

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

See answers to Q 1 & 2.

Initially it seems attractive but not if Ofcom are going to wash their hands of everything to do with ship's Databases & "Safety at Sea".

**Question 4:**

*Do you agree with the proposal to apply an administrative charge when processing postal applications for ships radio licences?*

*If not, please explain why.*

Why not?.

A moderate charge every 5 years would, I am sure, be acceptable.

**Question 5:**

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

Years ago someone came to my door when I was about 10 and said "is it not true that your Mother is not in?"

Your question smacks of something similar.

I think it would be a very good idea to transfer the whole responsibility of Ships Licensing to the MCA.

I also think "that bearing in mind Ofcoms wish to wash their hands of all work" that they should prepare a Bill on Parliament to give the MCA the legal responsibility to represent the UK Shipping Authority on all National & International bodies. They should also be charged with maintaining the Shipping Database which Ofcom seem to want to let slide.

**Question 6:**

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

*If not, please explain why.*

Should be maintained as it was before Ofcom came into being.

**Question 7:**

*Do you agree that WT Act licence exemption remains a worthwhile long term objective?*

*If not, please explain why.*

Another double negative - see answer to Q6.

**Question 8:**

*Do you believe that WT Act licence exemption would have an impact on maritime safety?*

*If not, please explain why.*

Nothing should impact of Safety at Sea except improvements.

I am told that at present if you are sailing from America and request assistance from the Irish Coastguards unless you can quote a current (MMSI) Shipping Number they can refuse to assist you. If the Database is not current how will they be able to look you up in the future?

**Question 9:**

*Would you prefer to see the current licensing system maintained without change?*

*If so, please explain why.*

No, there is always room for improvements but they must be thought out with ALL the current Authorities.

Give the whole job to the MCA - they are the shipping professionals - not Ofcom.

Give them the job to issue ships radio call-signs and MMSI's.

End of my Submission.