9. Distress

Casting off
Survival in a life raft

A Read the text and answer the questions.

You are alone on a boat 150 NM from land. There is an accident and your boat begins to sink. You send an all stations May-day message. There is no response. All you can do now is load the life raft.

What should you take? Should you plan for long-term survival or early rescue?

B Choose from the lists of items below. Each item ‘costs’ points as shown. You have no more than 15 points. Use the glossary on page 91 to check any words you don’t know. Explain your choices.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Personal</th>
<th>Equipment</th>
<th>Electronic devices</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>drinking water</td>
<td>life jacket 1</td>
<td>mobile phone 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extra food 4</td>
<td>medical kit 3</td>
<td>distress radio beacon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>extra clothing 3</td>
<td>emergency food 2</td>
<td>(EPIRB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fishing line 1</td>
<td>flares 3</td>
<td>VHF radio 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bailer 1</td>
<td>fire extinguisher 3</td>
<td>GPS 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sewing kit 1</td>
<td>whistle 1</td>
<td>batteries 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>matches 1</td>
<td>chart 1</td>
<td>laptop computer 4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mirror 1</td>
<td>compass 1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>passport 1</td>
<td>sea anchor 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>torch 1</td>
<td>outboard engine 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knife 1</td>
<td>can of petrol 3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

C Discuss how, in a life raft, you can keep warm, keep clean, keep dry, get drinking water and get food.

SMCPs

Distress and urgency
A Read these two definitions, then study situations 1-3 and decide if each is a May-day or a Pan-pan situation.

May day: Great danger, help me!
Pan-pan: I’ve got a problem, stand by.

1 A family is on a small yacht with a sail and an engine. The propeller is fouled and the engine fails.
2 A crew member falls overboard. He is wearing a life jacket but you can’t see where he is. The water is very cold.
3 A coastguard sends a ship a warning of icebergs but later loses contact. The ship is missing. The coastguard needs help to find her.

B Listen to a May-day call and complete this record.

1 Call sign of vessel in distress: __________
2 Position of vessel in distress: __________
3 Nature of the emergency: __________
4 Type of assistance required: __________
5 Action being taken by crew: __________
6 Call sign of coastguard: ______________

C Read the exchange with a partner.

Vessel: May-day, May-day, May-day.

This is Alpha Quebec Papa three nine. Alpha Quebec Papa three nine. Alpha Quebec Papa three nine.

May-day.

Our position is: five-five degrees north, zero-four degrees east. Our vessel is sinking. We require immediate rescue. We have nine persons on board. We are taking a lifeboat. Over.

Coastguard: May-day Alpha Quebec Papa three nine. This is Hotel Lima Charlie one zero five. Received your May-day. Over.
D Put the sections of this Pan-Pan call into the correct order. Section number 1 is numbered for you.

a We have an injured man on board. ___

b Pan-pan, Pan-pan, Pan-pan. ___

c My position is: three-seven degrees north, one-four degrees west. ___

d This is MV Suraya, MV Suraya, MV Suraya. ___

e This is MV Suraya listening on channel one six. Over. ___

f We are proceeding to Lisbon and require medical assistance ashore. ___

E ✚ Listen and check your answers.

F Practise distress calls with a partner.

1 Student A: Use this information and add your own ideas to make a call.
You are master of a cruise ship. Pirates in a small boat are attacking your cruise ship.
Student B: Respond.

2 Student B: Use this information and add your own ideas to make a call.
You are a coastguard. There is a report of an overturned vessel with two people in the water. Request help from vessels in the area.
Student A: Respond

Vocabulary
Maritime emergencies

A Have you ever been in any of these emergency situations? Describe the experience to other students.

- A collision (ˈkəˈlizən)
- An allision (əˈlaɪzən)
- A man overboard
- A medical emergency
- A fire
- An explosion (ɪkˈspləʊzən)

B Describe what is happening in this picture. Then read the account below.

Cargo ship Green Goblin is carrying a dangerous cargo. As she approaches port the cargo explodes. The crew activate emergency procedures and deploy fire fighting equipment but they cannot extinguish the fire. The captain alerts the coastguard. The crew muster on deck and the first officer holds a roll call. They prepare to abandon ship. Emergency teams arrive and try to stabilize the situation. A helicopter air lifts the crew. The fire injures two crew but everyone survives.

C Find words in the account that match the definitions 1-10.
1 Hurt someone: _______
2 Put out a fire: _______
3 Call out names: _______
4 Tell others of an emergency: ______
5 Meet at an arranged place: ______
6 Rescue by helicopter: ______
7 Put into action: ______
8 Use: _______
9 Does not die: ______
10 Stop things from getting worse: ______

D Complete these sentences with verbs from the account. All the verbs are regular. Put them all into the Simple Past tense. The first is done for you.

1 Fuel on the tanker exploded.
2 The captain _______the emergency services.
3 The crew _______fire fighting equipment.
4 One man fell into the sea but he ______.
5 All hands _______on deck for a roll call.
6 The crew _______ship.
7 Air sea rescue _______the crew to safety.
8 No one died but the accident ______two hands.
Pronunciation
Consonant groups

A lot of English words contain groups of two or more consonants. Here are some examples: stabilize (ˈsteɪbləz), activate (ˈæktaɪvɪtɪ) and establish (ɪˈstæbiʃ).

Listen to the three examples and repeat.

To pronounce difficult consonant groups, it helps to split words into parts; for example: ac-ti-vate. Stress the first part and say the word slowly: ac-ti-vate then gradually faster and faster until you can run the parts into each other.

Here are some common consonant groups:
pl - st – bl – br – ts – nd - sc

Listen to them and repeat.

The consonant groups above are in the following words. Practise speaking them aloud with a partner.

Listen to them and repeat.
deploy, explode, explosion, destroy, distress, must, test, muster, able, stable, disable, possible, visible, break, broken, bridge, shots, float, tests, manned, abandon, hands, under, land rescue, escape, screw

Listen to these sentences and repeat.
1 (st) In distress establish a muster station fast at the destroyed mast.
2 (nd) The MV Andrew is under-manned and abandoned by the hands on land.
3 (bl) She is visible but in trouble; disabled and unstable and unable to secure her cable.

Structures
Instructions for emergency situations

A Study the wording of this notice.

Another way to say it is: If there is a fire, break the glass.
You can reverse the sentence: Break the glass if there is a fire.
You can also say: In the event of a collision

Which tense is used in the sentences above?

B Match the halves of the sentences. The first is done for you.

1 If there is a fire          a the event of a fire.
2 In case of               b if you abandon ship.
3 The medical kit is       c alert the coastguard.
4 In the event of a collision d wear it.
5 Activate your EPIRB e close all the doors.
6 Close all the doors in f in case of emergency.
7 If you have a life jacket,     g emergency, push here.

C Note two different meanings of fire.
1 To fire at/on; to shoot. The pirates fired shots at the ship.
2 To be on fire; to be burning. The ship is on fire.
To set fire to something means to start a fire. The pirates set fire to the tanker.

Complete this message.
We are under attack. Armed men are _____ rockets at us. They have _____ _____ to our vessel. I repeat: our vessel is _____ fire.

D Complete the instructions that go with the emergency signs. The first is done for you.

1. If there is a________
   If there is a fire activate the alarm.

2. In the event ____________ deploy _____.

3. ________________in an emergency.

4. Throw ______________in the event __________overboard.

5. Deploy _________ if you ______ ship.

6. Wear __________in case ________

7. Open the __________in the ________.
## Listening

### Emergency procedures

#### A
What information do you find on a station bill? Add to this list.
- The meaning of different alarms
- Emergency duties
- _______________________
- _______________________
- _______________________

#### B
Look at this part of a station bill for an offshore oil rig. Make some guesses about the missing words 1-15.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alarm</th>
<th>Action</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>General Alarm</td>
<td>Intermittent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Stop all work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Proceed to 1 _____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Roll call taken by: 2 ________</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|    |    |
|    |    |

| Prepare to abandon platform | 3 |
|    | Order from OIM: ‘Prepare to abandon platform’ |
|    | Alert all personnel |
|    | Put on 4 _____ and 5 ________ |
|    | Location of extra life jackets: 6 ________ |
|    | Proceed to: 7 ________ |

| Fire |    |
|      | If you see a fire: |
|      | 8 ________ |
|      | Telephone: 9 _____ |
|      | Report: 10 _____ and 11 ________ of fire |

| Man overboard |    |
|               | Throw a lifebuoy |
|               | Shout ‘man overboard’ |
|               | Do not 12 ________ |
|               | 13 ________ at the man and keep him in sight |

#### C
Listen to the Offshore Installation Manager (OIM) talk about emergency procedures and complete the station bill. Use no more than three words for each gap.
### Reading
Attacks by pirates: questions and answers

**A** The men in the photograph on the right have guns. Imagine that they approach your ship. Discuss with another student possible answers to these questions.

1. What should we do if they fire at the ship?
2. What should we do if they get on board?
3. What should I do to survive as a prisoner?
4. What do pirates want?
5. Should I try to escape or fight back?

**B** Read the paragraphs a-e. They are answers to the questions 1-5 (above). Match each paragraph to a question. Do you agree with the answers?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Possible actions</th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pay the ransom money.</td>
<td>Will get quick release of vessel and crew.</td>
<td>May encourage more piracy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do not pay the ransom.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer less money.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wait and do nothing.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sink the cargo ship.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attack the pirates.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punish the arrested men.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Offer to exchange the arrested men for the ship.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Speaking
How should we deal with piracy?

**A** Do you agree or disagree with these statements?

1. Pirates should be punished by death. We should not arrest them, say, ‘naughty, naughty,’ and release them. We should sink their boats with all hands.

2. Violence only makes more violence and killing pirates increases the risk for seafarers who are held hostage.

**C** What do you think is the best thing to do? Explain your decision.
Sea Jargon
The International Code of Signals (Interco)

A List the different ways you can signal for help.

B Listen to the Interco transmissions 1-5 and write the code letters that you hear.
1 ____________
2 ____________
3 ____________
4 ____________
5 ____________

C Study the transmissions you have just recorded and try to work out which transmission is:
a an initial call __
b a request for help __
c a question __
d a response __
e a course and speed __

D Use the Interco table on the right to decode the transmissions in Exercise B and match them with the standard versions a-e.

a Question: Is there a danger of explosion? ___
b The vessel coming to your rescue is on course 140° at 19 knots. ___
c Calling all stations. This is Hai Peng on channel 16. If you respond, use the International Code of Signals. ___
d I acknowledge Hai Peng. This is Scorpios on channel 16. Over. ___
e I am on fire and sinking. I request urgent assistance. ___

E Work with another student.

Student A: Design an all-stations May-day or Pan-pan call using Interco. Use a call sign, give your position and state the emergency. Transmit the message.

Student B: Make an accurate record of the message and respond using Interco.

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The International Code of Signals (INTERCO)
Signalling flags mean the same in all languages. They are used singly, in pairs or in groups of three. You decode them by looking them up in a book.
Each flag stands for a letter, & you can use the NATO phonetic alphabet and transmit Interco messages by radio. You indicate that you intend to use the International Code of Signals by saying the word Interco first.

Interco table of codes
AE: I must abandon vessel
AR: End of transmission
C: Course
CB: Require immediate assistance
CB6: ...and I am on fire.
CQ: Calling all stations
CP: I am proceeding to your assistance.
DE: This is
DX: I am sinking
ED: Your distress signals are understood
EL: Repeat the distress position
GR: The vessel coming to your rescue
HW: I have collided with another vessel.
Interco: Use International Code of Signals
IT: I am on fire
JC1: Is there danger of explosion?
JD: Explosion
O: Man overboard
R: I acknowledge
RQ: Question
S: Speed (in knots)