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Maritime education

E-Learning system for GMDSS VET

Final Report Public Part

Project information

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Executive Summary

Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) has been fully implemented worldwide since February 1999, specifying the GMDSS communication equipment for marine vessels, and rescue procedures for vessels and humans at sea with the objective to maximise safety at sea. People working in marine areas – mariners, i.e. seafarers, fishermen, yacht captains, sailing boat skippers, marina workers, nautical science students/cadets, etc. must be qualified through different VET to operate the specified equipment.

All mariners must obtain the appropriate type of GMDSS certificate, however, the access to the required knowledge is limited (traditional VET is expensive and distance learning is not feasible) which doesn't encourage regular refreshing of knowledge – lifelong learning even when it is crucial to ensure safety of the crew, passengers and freight (even though this is not a legal requirement).

The objective of the project was to offer online the most requested GMDSS courses (Short Range Certificate-SRC and Long Range Certificate-LRC course in several languages) to mariners and to offer GMDSS E-learning system to GMDSS VET providers to be able to maintain such courses. GMDSS E-learning system is available on www.egmdss.com.

The aims of the project was to encourage GMDSS life-long learning and knowledge updating to maintain the level of professional knowledge and skills of mariners, to facilitate do-it-yourself learning as well as tutoring and to facilitate distance learning.

GMDSS E-learning system available on www.egmdss.com is complete in terms of providing:

- Short Range Certificate course in 12 languages,
- Long Range Certificate course in 10 languages,
- Services for supporting GMDSS VET providers to use existing or build new GMDSS courses using also copyrighted material available on www.egmdss.com.

It is connected also with egmdss facebook page <http://www.facebook.com/egmdss>.

Any GMDSS VET provider may start to use www.egmdss.com services professionally after signing the copyright licence: they are able to use existing or build new GMDSS courses using also copyrighted material available on www.egmdss.com.

The GMDSS E-learning system should improve safety at sea resulting in lower loss of human lives and material damages.

The project has been carried out by consortium members that have many years of experience in GMDSS VET and accompanying issues. The partnership comprises 12 members from 10 countries including educational bodies providing the GMDSS VET, enterprises providing maritime services and consultancy, enterprise providing software development and universities providing seafarer training including the GMDSS VET.

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1. Project Objectives

The aims of the project were:

- to offer dedicated e-learning system to GMDSS VET providers,
- to enable them to deliver all GMDSS courses online,
- to offer online GMDSS courses to mariners,
- to encourage GMDSS life-long learning and knowledge updating to maintain the level of professional knowledge and skills of mariners,
- to facilitate do-it-yourself learning as well as tutoring,
- to facilitate distance learning,
- to improve safety at sea due to better vocational training/qualification of mariners resulting in lower loss of human lives and material damages.

The objective of the project considering all above was to offer online the most requested GMDSS courses (Short Range Certificate-SRC and Long Range Certificate-LRC course in several languages) to mariners and to offer GMDSS E-learning system to GMDSS VET providers to be able to maintain such courses; both on www.egmdss.com.

A target group of mariners is very large. There are several million of mariners in EU alone. They are either starting their nautical VET or have to refresh their knowledge and skills at least once a year (so seafarers ranging from amateurs to professionals). They have a high demand for the opportunity to gain the access to the GMDSS knowledge anytime from anywhere. That is a common and well known demand and expectation of all people who are aware of their formal and informal education. Their demand can be fulfilled only by the GMDSS e-learning system available for free on the internet. Mariners are also involved in the quality assurance process as they are using already available GMDSS courses to obtain the certificates. In case of any complain they are able to send us an email or to post their message to the forum.

A target group of GMDSS VET providers is much smaller than the first one (several hundreds only in EU), but at least of the same importance. They are invited to sign a copyright licence that enables them to use existing or build new GMDSS courses using also copyrighted material available on www.egmdss.com. GMDSS VET providers contributing in the content development on GMDSS E-learning system are obviously involved in the improvement process of the system.

2. Project Approach

The consortium have many years of experience in GMDSS VET to be able to produce excellent product, but the consortium members were aware of the fact that their activities should be well managed because almost all of them were distributed among them. They were aware also of the fact that distribution of the activities is causing different levels of quality. So, the consortium has developed a special quality assurance plan. The sustainability of the project is strongly dependent on valorisation activities, so the valorisation plan was prepared with a special attention based on previous research outcomes.

The quality assurance plan has been in charge from the beginning of the project. It has been covering mostly the development of the LRC course as one of the main project outcomes. The LRC course has been evaluated internally and externally on testing groups formed by end users. Also EDEXCEL certification was started.

GMDSS E-learning system as another main project outcome has been improved upon request of its end users (by email, forum, by direct contact), i.e. considering their needs.

We are very proud of the fact, that consortium members were able to evaluate and follow the development of all project outcomes over online GMDSS E-learning system as they have been produced right there – online. All improvements, changes, new learning material, etc. were confidential until they were evaluated, i.e. protected with a password and accessible only by the consortium members. They were published just after being evaluated and improved considering the evaluation outcomes.

The project has two different target groups.

A target group of mariners is very large. There are several million of mariners in EU alone. They are either starting their nautical VET or have to refresh their knowledge and skills at least once a year (so seafarers ranging from amateurs to professionals). We addressed them through web advertising and we published some general articles in nautical magazines also.

A target group of GMDSS VET providers is much smaller than the first one (several hundreds only in EU), but at least of the same importance. We addressed them through presentations on maritime conferences, by mailing and emailing them and just indirectly through web advertising. We have been offering them to sign a copyright licence that enables them to use existing or build new GMDSS courses using also copyrighted material available on www.egmdss.com.

3. Project Outcomes & Results



All public project outcomes and results of the project are available on GMDSS E-learning system which runs on www.egmdss.com website and on egmdss facebook page <http://www.facebook.com/egmdss>.

GMDSS E-learning system features (www.egmdss.com):

- it runs on customized well known Moodle Learning Management System platform that is used by 50.000+ registered sites,

- it is multilingual,
- it comprises Short Range Certificate course in 12 languages,
- it comprises Long Range Certificate course in 10 languages,
- it is offering full services for supporting GMDSS VET providers to use existing or build new GMDSS courses using also copyrighted material (user manuals, email, phone etc),
- it has online chat feature,
- it has support for simple printing and forwarding the content through emails, facebook, twitter etc,
- it is connected with egmdss facebook page,
- etc.

The Long Range Certificate course which has been developed within this project includes the following chapters:

- Global Maritime Distress and Safety System,
- Radio communication,
- VHF radio,
- MF/HF radio,
- INMARSAT communications,
- MSI,
- Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon,
- Search And Rescue [Radar] Transponder,
- Technique,
- Appendix,
- Glossary

and beside VHF radio simulator and NAVTEX receiver simulator includes also MF/HF DSC radio simulator and Inmarsat C system simulator (which were developed within this project).

Egmdss facebook page features (<http://www.facebook.com/egmdss>):

- it is connected with GMDSS E-learning system,
- it is collecting and referencing to the latest maritime and shipping news on gmdss from different sources through RSS,
- it comprises a full description of www.egmdss.com website services.

End users are able to enter the system after creating a user account and after that they can take available online course in any available language for free.

GMDSS VET providers have also the possibility to build their own courses in which our copyrighted material may be used. But they should first sign the copyright licence which is available at chapter 7 (it may change).

All public project outcomes and results have been disseminated and exploited through:

- web advertisement,
- few radio broadcasts,
- a TV broadcast,
- articles in maritime and educational magazines,
- maritime web pages,
- several international maritime conferences (BRIDGE, IMEC, IMLA, KNLIT etc),
- a brochure about the GMDSS E-learning system which has been used in the above activity,
- etc.

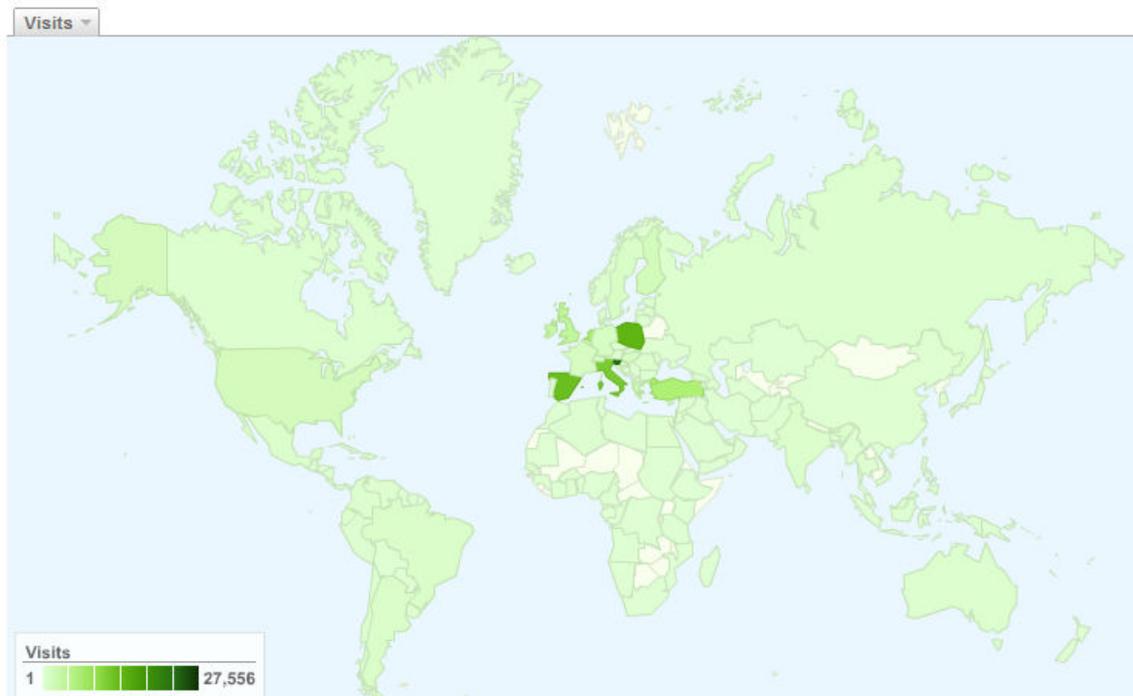
All press articles, broadcasts and most important articles presented at the international maritime conferences are available chronologically at <http://www.egmdss.com/press.htm>

The results of the above activities are impact on end users is visible through the following statistics.

- the copyright licence has been already signed with many GMDSS VET providers and the system is used by 30+ GMDSS providers,
- the GMDSS E-learning system has 28.000+ registered users from all over the world but mostly from Europe and Turkey,

Map Overlay

Dec 1, 2008 - Nov 30, 2010 ▾



128,119 visits came from 177 countries/territories

- the traffic at GMDSS E-learning system has been increasing significantly after launching the LRC course and few major changes on SEO,

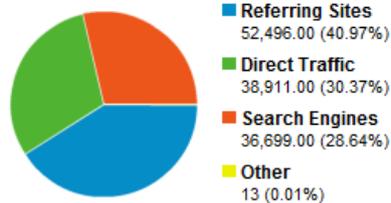
Traffic Sources Overview

Dec 1, 2008 - Nov 30, 2010



All traffic sources sent a total of 128,119 visits

- 30.37% Direct Traffic
- 40.97% Referring Sites
- 28.64% Search Engines



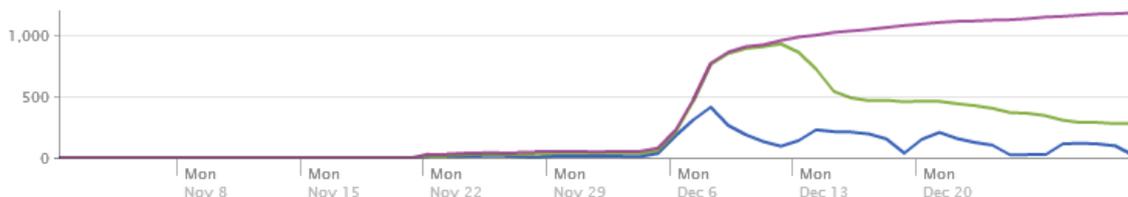
- number of fans at egmdss facebook page has been increasing since it was launched and connected with GMDSS E-learning system.

Users [See details](#)

New likes² **640** ↑ 63,900% Lifetime likes² **642**

Active Users²

Daily Active Users Weekly Active Users Monthly Active Users



Interactions [See details](#)

Post views² **32,462** Post feedback² **34**

4. Partnerships

The formal consortium members have many years of experience in GMDSS VET and accompanying issues. The partnership comprises 12 members from 10 countries:

- 2 educational bodies providing the GMDSS VET and some other maritime adult education,
- 2 enterprises providing maritime services and consultancy including on the GMDSS,
- 1 enterprise developing maritime education and training programmes of study including the GMDSS,
- 1 educational body providing maritime VET including the GMDSS VET,
- 1 enterprise providing software development including the GMDSS simulators and simulations and LMS (Learning Management System),
- 5 universities providing seafarer training including the GMDSS VET.

The consortium was not chosen accidentally but in accordance with:

- the skills required to undertake the project activities,
- interest in resulting GMDSS e-learning system (in its use in their own educational system)
- past experience in Leonardo da Vinci and other international projects,
- success in the past EGMDSS associated project.

Having a multi-country (10 countries) partnership has been a must for the project as the consortium wanted to build a GMDSS E-learning system that would:

- with its content fit to as many as possible national regulations on GMDSS certificates,
- provide GMDSS courses in many languages,
- consider the best GMDSS VET practices used by the partnership.

The consortium members has been working together on many projects (not just EU funded). They have been starting to work together on research and development projects in 2005. The consortium is changing from a project to project, because in different projects a different expertise is needed. That means we have a vast pool of potential project partners and we are aware of their strengths and weaknesses. Our project partnerships usually have 10+ members.

5. Plans for the Future

GMDSS E-learning system available on www.egmdss.com is complete in terms of providing:

- Short Range Certificate course in 12 languages,
- Long Range Certificate course in 10 languages,
- Services for supporting GMDSS VET providers to use existing or build new GMDSS courses using also copyrighted material available on www.egmdss.com.

But the development on www.egmdss.com will continue on many aspects considering end users needs:

- Improvements on the GMDSS E-learning system itself, e.g. improvements on printing format, navigation, language interface etc.
- Translations of Short Range Certificate course in other languages (provided by GMDSS VET providers as end users or by online Google translate services),
- Translations of Long Range Certificate course in other languages (provided by GMDSS VET providers as end users or by online Google translate services),
- Providing new GMDSS courses that could be used on the international level, e.g. ROC, GOC etc. (provided by GMDSS VET providers or as a result of a new development project),
- Dissemination and exploitation among new end users.

We will also support any initiative from other sectors interested to use our successful distance learning approach.

6. Contribution to EU policies

This project directly contributes to many key EU policies, objectives and priorities.

It addresses the following Objectives of the Lifelong Learning Programme:

- to support the development of innovative ICT-based content, services, pedagogies and practice for lifelong learning: GMDSS E-learning system available on www.egmdss.com is innovative ICT-based service for lifelong learning in VET in the GMDSS field. Already available SRC and LRC courses are innovative ICT-based content for lifelong learning.
- to contribute to the development of quality lifelong learning and to promote high performance, innovation and a European dimension in systems and practices in the field: Our GMDSS e-learning system is significantly improving VET in the GMDSS field. It is already used as a tool by many GMDSS VET providers (50+) and as a self-education tool (28000+ users).

and also programme specific and operational objectives.

It addresses Lisbon Education & Training Progress Indicators:

- Skills for the Knowledge Society: The target group includes also fisherman that are initially low qualified people. The LRC course as a result of this project is encouraging them to learn to enable them to obtain the LRC certificate that is becoming mandatory for fisherman.
- Open Learning Environment: Any course available on www.egmdss.com is free for anyone from the large target group of mariners. That is definitely encouraging lifelong learning.

It addresses also strategic objective 2 of the Education and Training 2010 Work Programme – facilitating the access to all of education and training systems. Any course available on www.egmdss.com is contributing to the open learning environment because they are all free for anyone from the large target group of mariners. That is definitely encouraging lifelong learning.

7. Copyright licence for GMDSS VET providers

Any GMDSS VET provider may start to use www.egmdss.com services professionally after signing the following copyright licence. They are able to use existing or build new GMDSS courses using also copyrighted material available on www.egmdss.com.

COPYRIGHT LICENCE

People involved

- »Us« Spinaker d.o.o., Sončna pot 8, 6320 Portorož, Slovenija, for and on behalf of the »E-learning system for GMDSS VET« project partnership (Project number: 142173-LPP-1-2008-1-SI-LEONARDO-LMP (2008-1933))
- »You« _____

Definitions

- 'copyright material' Any material available free of charge for individuals on the www.egmdss.com web site.
- 'reproduced material' The material you produce because of this agreement within the www.egmdss.com web site.

Supply and licence

- In line with the conditions of this agreement, we give you a licence to reproduce, translate or adapt the copyright material to make the reproduced material during the licence period.
- This licence is valid for a period of five years beginning at the moment it enters in force.

Procedure

- We will create you new course/s within the www.egmdss.com web site on your request which will be able to contain the reproduced material and your own material.
- Your course/s may be an exact copy of any other course available free of charge for individuals on the www.egmdss.com website.
- We will give you an administrator access to your course/s.
- We will support you with user manuals for learning management platform and helpdesk.

Your rights

- You have met the qualifying conditions* to reproduce, translate or adapt the copyright material only within the www.egmdss.com web site for only yours education purposes. We reserve the right to verify that you have met our qualifying conditions. *Qualifying conditions refer to general trustability criteria established by who is offering to sign this contract

Your responsibilities

- You confirm that you are an educational institution, a maritime VET provider or a company that wishes to train their employee.
- You agree to make sure that your contractors do not use the reproduced material for their own purposes.

- You will not allow your contractors to allow their existing or new subcontractors to work on the reproduced material.
- You will not make, and you will not ask or allow others to make, any claims that we have approved your products or services.
- You will not make, and you will not ask or allow others to make, any inaccurate or misleading statement about us or our products and services.

Intellectual property rights

- The »E-learning system for GMDSS VET« project partnership (Project number: 142173-LPP-1-2008-1-SI-LEONARDO-LMP (2008-1933)) own or control the copyright and all other intellectual property rights in the copyright material, including where you have reproduced, translated or adapted it to make the reproduced material. You do not get ownership or control of this material because of this agreement.
- You agree that you (including your staff or any other person or organisation who works for you) will only use the copyright material for the purpose we have allowed. You will make sure that your staff, or any other person or organisation who works for you, also agree to this restriction.

Fees

- We are not charging you for this licence because all your reproduced material is used for only yours education purposes.
- You will tell us as soon as possible (in writing) if the reasons we are not charging you for this agreement are not true anymore.

Ending the agreement

- Except as shown below, either one of us can end this agreement by writing to the other if the other one breaks the agreement. If it is possible to correct the break, you or we will give the other 30 days from the date of the letter to correct it.
- We can end this agreement by writing to you at any time if the reasons we are not charging you for this agreement are not true anymore. If we end the agreement because of this, we will offer you a new agreement but you may have to pay us for this agreement.
- If either one of us ends this agreement (for any reason), this will not affect the other one's rights and liabilities that exist up to the date the agreement ends.

Promises

- We confirm that we can give you this licence.
- You take full responsibility for using and reproducing the copyright material to make the reproduced material.
- You will pay us for any damage we suffer during this agreement or for 12 years after this agreement ends because:
 - you break this agreement;
 - you, illegally or without our permission, supply other people or organisations with the copyright material or the reproduced material and they use or reproduce it, unless you have tried hard to tell others of the restrictions in this agreement and you have tried hard to make sure that they cannot use or reproduce it illegally or without our permission.

General

- You will try hard to tell anyone that uses the reproduced material of any condition in this agreement that could apply to them.

- You will not transfer your rights or responsibilities to another person or organisation without our permission, in writing. We can transfer or contract out our rights and responsibilities but we will tell you in writing if we do.
- If any part of this agreement is found to be illegal or cannot be enforced, the rest of the agreement will not be affected.
- No right is granted to any person who is not part of this agreement in their own right and the people involved in this agreement confirm that they have no intention of granting anyone this.
- This agreement replaces all other written or spoken agreements and working arrangements between us that are for the same or similar purposes to this agreement.
- You will tell us if you change your name, address or anything else that could affect this agreement within 10 working days of the change.
- Either one of us may suspend the other's responsibilities for a limited period if we both agree to it in writing. If either one of us decides not to take action against the other if they break the agreement, this will not prevent either one of us from taking action for any future break of the agreement (whether the break is the same or different).
- We may amend this agreement if we give you three months' notice in writing. Or, we may amend this agreement at any time if you agree to it.
- This agreement will be governed by Slovenian law and any disagreements will only be dealt with in the Slovenian courts.
- This agreement has been made out in two identical copies, one for each contracting party.
- This agreement shall enter in force upon signature by both parties.
- This agreement can be prolonged.

Done in Portorož on _____ and in _____ on _____

Spinaker d.o.o.
M.Sc. Tomaž Gregorič
director
