



What is a MMSI number and why do I need it?

A Maritime Mobile Service Identity (MMSI) number functions much like a phone number and allows boaters with DSC-VHF radios to make a touch-of-a-button emergency call that automatically transmits vital information to all other DSC-VHF radios within the caller's area.

Every fixed mount VHF radio manufactured after 1999 has digital selective calling (DSC) capability. DSC-VHF radios require the implementation of a new system of identification called the MMSI numbers in order to take advantage of their full capabilities.



How does it work?

When connected to a Global Positioning System (GPS) the radio will transmit the caller's position and type of distress and display it as an icon on the chart plotters of boats that receive the call. The system then determines the distance and heading to the distressed vessel, thus allowing nearby boaters to assist in cases where they are closer than the U.S. Coast Guard (please follow the instructions of the U.S. Coast Guard in all emergency situations.). Additionally, MMSI numbers allow boaters to connect directly to other boaters and marine assistance dispatchers with DSC-VHF radios, which will decrease the amount of traffic on commonly used radio channels.



UNFORTUNATELY, MOST DIGITAL SELECTIVE CALLING (DSC) RADIOS IN USE DO NOT HAVE AN MMSI NUMBER.

The DSC radio "distress alert" transmit features will not work without the MMSI number properly programmed into the radio

WHEN YOU SELL YOUR DSC RADIO OR BOAT:

You cannot remove the MMSI number from the radio's memory. The new owner **MUST** update the MMSI information. Incorrect information will be transmitted during a distress alert and delay rescue.

Help the Coast Guard to help you...

REGISTER YOUR RADIO FOR AN MMSI TODAY!!

How to obtain an MMSI

BoatUS: <http://www.boatus.com/mmsi/instruct.htm>

Seatow: http://seatow.com/boating_safety/mmsi.asp

U.S. Power Squadrons:
www.usps4mmsi.com

FCC Online Licensing System:
<https://wireless2.fcc.gov/UlsEntry/licManager/login.jsp>

U.S. Coast Guard Background on MMSI numbers: <http://www.navcen.uscg.gov/marcomms/Gmdss/mmsi.htm>



To contact the USCG SAR Program Office:

Commandant (CG-534)
United States Coast Guard
2100 Second Street SW
Washington DC 20593-0001

Phone: (202)372-2075
Facsimile: (202)372-2912

<http://www.uscg.mil/hq/g-o/g-opr/g-opr.htm>

**United States
Coast Guard**

**Maritime
Mobile
Service
Identity
(MMSI)
Number**



U.S. Department of
Homeland Security
**United States
Coast Guard**

MMSI

WARNING!

1. After you have obtained your **MMSI** number, you should read your manual carefully before you try to program your number. On most models you have only two opportunities to program **MMSI**. If you fail to program the **MMSI** number within two tries, you will have to send the radio back to the factory for reset.
2. With your **MMSI** programmed, all the **DSC** functions will work. Never test your radio by pushing the (distress) red button. When you send a **MAY DAY** you will lift the flap and hold the button for 5 seconds. On some models nothing will happen until you push the **SEND** button. You **MUST** read your manual.
3. We strongly suggest that you interface your radio with a **GPS**. When you send a distress call, other **DSC** radios will display your **MMSI** number and your latitude and longitude. After you have sent your **DSC** distress alert, use your radio microphone and announce details about your distress on channel 16.

4. Other features your radio may have:

- Individual call
- Group calling
- Polling
- All stations
- Position request
- Position send

EMERGENCY ALERT

*The digital **DSC** Emergency Alert will not function without the **MMSI** number. You must obtain and program your **MMSI** number into the radio.

EMERGENCY POSITION

*Connect your **GPS** to the **DSC** radio for the digital Emergency Alert function to provide an accurate **LAT** and **LONG** position in the event of a distress.

WHEN YOU BUY OR SELL A BOAT:

- PRINT OUT THE OWNER'S MANUAL INSTRUCTIONS THAT TELL YOU HOW TO CHANGE THE **MMSI** INFORMATION AND PROVIDE THEM TO THE BUYER WHEN YOU SELL YOUR BOAT
- IF YOU BUY A **DSC** RADIO EQUIPPED VESSEL, ASK FOR THE MANUAL OR MANUFACTURER'S INSTRUCTION MANUAL AND IMMEDIATELY UPDATE THE **MMSI** WITH YOUR INFORMATION

*In order to obtain maximum use of your **DSC** radio:

READ THE OWNER'S MANUAL

