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United States
Coast Guard



Radiotelephone Handbook



Force Readiness Command
(FORCECOM)

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COAST GUARD TACTICS, TECHNIQUES, AND PROCEDURES
6-01.1A

Subj: RADIOTELEPHONE HANDBOOK

Ref: (a) Communication Instructions Radiotelephone Procedures, Allied Communications Publication (ACP) 125 (series)
(b) Naval Communications, Naval Telecommunications Procedures (NTP) 4 (series)
(c) International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Radio Regulations (series)
(d) Telecommunication Manual, COMDTINST M2000.3 (series)
(e) U.S. Coast Guard Addendum to the United States National Search and Rescue Supplement (NSS) to the International Aeronautical and Maritime Search and Rescue Manual (IAMSAR), COMDTINST M16130.2 (series)

1. PURPOSE. To provide communications personnel with Coast Guard tactics, techniques, and procedures (CGTTP) for using the radiotelephone.
2. ACTION. The provisions of this CGTTP apply to all Coast Guard personnel conducting voice telecommunications by radiotelephone. Internet release is authorized.
3. DIRECTIVES/TTP AFFECTED. This publication supersedes the Radiotelephone Handbook, CGTTP 6-01.1.
4. DISCUSSION. The Radiotelephone Handbook is a user's guide addressing proper radiotelephone procedures. It consolidates portions of International Telecommunication Union (ITU) radio regulations and various allied communications publications (ACPs) into a single source reference for field use.

5. MAJOR CHANGES. This revision includes clarification regarding use of the term “MAYDAY” during distress communications, provides an example of a “MAYDAY RELAY” transmission, and also specifies when and how to include maritime mobile service identity (MMSI) information. This revision includes the following changes:
 - a. In Section 8: Distress, Urgent, and Safety Communications:
 - 1.) 8.a. Distress Communications, revised and added new text in #4 and #5.
 - 2.) 8.a.1 Receipt of Distress Messages, revised text in #1, #5, and the note after #9.
 - 3.) 8.a.2. MAYDAY Relay Procedures, revised and added new text in #6 and #7.
 - 4.) 8.a.4. Imposing Radio Silence during SAR Operations, deleted the note.
 - 5.) 8.b.1. Urgent Message Details, amended text in the preliminary announcement and message text.
 - 6.) 8.b.2. Cancellation of Urgent Message, revised the example.
 - 7.) 8.c. Safety Communications, revised the preliminary announcement and message text.
 - b. In Appendix A: Glossary and Acronyms, added an entry for “MMSI.”
6. PROCEDURE. An electronic version of this publication will be posted in the Coast Guard TTP library at:
<https://cgportal.uscg.mil/units/forcecom/ttp>
7. REQUEST FOR CHANGES. Submit recommendations for TTP improvements or corrections by e-mail to:
FORCECOM-PI@uscg.mil

Info COMCOGARD FORCECOM NORFOLK VA//FC-P// on message traffic containing lessons learned applicable to this TTP.

8. RECORDS MANAGEMENT CONSIDERATIONS. This publication has been thoroughly reviewed during the TTP coordinated approval process. It has been determined there are no further records scheduling requirements in accordance with Federal Records Act, 44 U.S.C. 3101 et seq., NARA requirements, and Information and Life Cycle Management Manual, COMDTINST M5212.12 (series). This publication does not have any significant or substantial change to existing records management requirements.

9. ENVIRONMENTAL ASPECT AND IMPACT CONSIDERATIONS. Environmental considerations under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) were examined in the development of this document and have been determined to not be applicable.

10. FORMS/REPORTS. None.

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By Direction of Commander,
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1. Introduction This handbook gives general, unclassified radiotelephone tactics, techniques, and procedures (TTP) for U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) use. See [reference \(a\)](#) for tactical military procedures.

Radiotelephone is telecommunication by voice radio. It is one of the most common forms of communication between USCG, federal, state, and local authorities and the maritime public.

Appendix A has a list of common radiotelephone terms and definitions.

The maritime public might not understand strict military procedures, so you might have to use international radiotelephone procedures when communicating with non-military vessels or aircraft.

**2. Notes,
Cautions,
Warnings**

The following definitions apply to notes, cautions, and warnings found in this TTP.

NOTE:

An emphasized statement, procedure, or technique.

CAUTION:

A procedure, technique, or action which, if not followed, carries the risk of equipment damage.

WARNING:

A procedure, technique, or action which, if not followed, carries the risk of injury or loss of life.

**3. Basic
Operating
Rules**

Radiotelephone users speak for, and with the authority of, their command. Always follow established procedures to maintain circuit discipline. Sectors and communication stations monitor radiotelephone circuits to ensure compliance with professional standards.

3.a. Prohibited Practices

[Reference \(a\)](#) prohibits the following radiotelephone practices:

- Violating radio silence.
 - Unofficial conversation between operators.
 - Transmitting on a directed net without permission (except for flash or immediate precedence traffic).
 - Excessive tuning or testing for more than 10 seconds.
 - Failure to listen before transmitting.
 - Transmitting the operator's personal sign or name.
 - Using other than authorized procedure words (prowords). (Appendix B of this handbook is a quick reference guide).
 - Unauthorized use of plain language in place of applicable prowords or operating signals (OPSIGs).
 - Any other unauthorized use of plain language.
 - Linkage or compromise of classified call signs and address groups by plain language disclosures or association with unclassified call signs.
 - Profane language or loss of temper.
-

3.b. Operating the Radiotelephone Set

Make all radiotelephone transmissions as clear and concise as possible:

- Refer to standard operating procedures (SOPs) or manufacturer guidelines.
 - Know the equipment.
 - Be alert.
 - Speak in a confident tone of voice.
 - Release the push-to-talk button after each phrase or two to allow another station to break-in, if necessary.
 - Ensure receiver volume is turned up enough to detect weak signals, but not so loud as to damage your hearing.
-

3.c. Phonetic
Alphabet

Use the phonetic alphabet to identify letters, or spell a word or group of letters. The underlined portion of the spoken word is the emphasized letter or syllable:

Letter	Phonetic	Spoken As:
A	ALFA	<u>AL</u> -FAH
B	BRAVO	<u>BRAH</u> -VOH
C	CHARLIE	<u>CHAR</u> -LEE
D	DELTA	<u>DELL</u> -TAH
E	ECHO	<u>ECK</u> -OH
F	FOXTROT	<u>FOKS</u> -TROT
G	GOLF	GOLF
H	HOTEL	HOH- <u>TELL</u>
I	INDIA	<u>IN</u> -DEE-AH
J	JULIETT	<u>JEW</u> -LEE-ETT
K	KILO	<u>KEY</u> -LOH
L	LIMA	<u>LEE</u> -MAH
M	MIKE	MIKE
N	NOVEMBER	NO- <u>VEM</u> -BER
O	OSCAR	<u>OSS</u> -CAH
P	PAPA	PAH- <u>PAH</u>
Q	QUEBEC	KEH- <u>BECK</u>
R	ROMEO	<u>ROW</u> -ME-OH
S	SIERRA	SEE- <u>AIR</u> -RAH
T	TANGO	<u>TANG</u> -GO
U	UNIFORM	<u>YOU</u> -NEE-FORM or <u>OO</u> -NEE-FORM
V	VICTOR	<u>VIK</u> -TAH
W	WHISKEY	<u>WISS</u> -KEY
X	X-RAY	<u>ECKS</u> -RAY
Y	YANKEE	<u>YANG</u> -KEY
Z	ZULU	<u>ZOO</u> -LOO

3.d. Pronouncing Figures

Speak numerals in single digits using the proword FIGURES before each number. The underlined portion indicates the emphasized letter or syllable:

Figure	Spoken As:	Figure	Spoken As:
0	<u>ZE</u> -ROH	5	FIFE
1	WUN	6	SIX
2	TOO	7	<u>SEV</u> -UN
3	TREE	8	AIT
4	<u>FOW</u> -ER	9	<u>NINE</u> -ER

Figure Spoken As:

44	<u>FOW</u> -ER <u>FOW</u> -ER
500	FIFE <u>ZE</u> -ROH <u>ZE</u> -ROH
7000	<u>SEV</u> -UN <u>ZE</u> -ROH <u>ZE</u> -ROH <u>ZE</u> -ROH
16,000	WUN SIX <u>ZE</u> -ROH <u>ZE</u> -ROH <u>ZE</u> -ROH
14,899	WUN <u>FOW</u> -ER AIT <u>NINE</u> -ER <u>NINE</u> -ER

Always send date time groups (DTGs) digit-by-digit, preceded by the proword TIME:

081400Z JUN 12 TIME - ZE-ROH AIT WON
FOW-ER ZE-ROH ZE-ROH
ZOO-LOO JUNE WUN TOO

3.e. Decimal Points

Speak 123.6 as:

FIGURES - WUN TOO TREE DAY-SEE-MAL SIX

NOTE:

Do not use the proword FIGURES when transmitting message headings.

3.f. Spelling

Use the phonetic alphabet to spell out difficult words (or groups) within the message text, preceded by the proword I SPELL. If the word in question can be pronounced, do so before and after spelling it:

CENTENARY - I SPELL - CHAR-LEE ECK-OH
NO-VEM-BER TANG-GO ECK-OH NO-VEM-BER
AL-FAH ROW-ME-OH YANG-KEY - CENTENARY

NOTE:

Say it - spell it - say it again.

Follow the same I SPELL procedure for words that sound the same, but have different meanings (e.g., “to” versus “too” versus “two”).

If a message contains coded groups or other words that cannot be pronounced, transmit the letters’ phonetic equivalents and precede each with the proword I SPELL.

Example: Transmit LOZWT in a message as:

I SPELL - LEE-MAH OSS-CAH ZOO-LOO WISS-KEY
TANG-GO

3.g. Mixed
Letters and
Numbers

Messages containing a combination of letters and numbers in the text use two different prowords.

If the letter/number combination starts with a number, use the proword FIGURES:

12A9B Spoken as: FIGURES - WUN TOO
AL-FAH NINE-ER BRAH-VOH

If the combination starts with a letter, use the proword I SPELL:

TS67R Spoken as: I SPELL - TANG-GO
SEE-~~AIR~~-RAH SIX SEV-UN
ROW-ME-OH

- 3.h. Abbreviations Use abbreviations when radio conditions are satisfactory and the abbreviations are sufficiently well known to avoid any confusion.
- Speak common abbreviations as in normal speech (e.g., speak ETA as “ETA,” speak NATO as “NATO”).
- In difficult radio conditions, it might be best to spell the abbreviations phonetically to ensure they are understood on the first transmission (e.g., speak ETA as I SPELL - ECK-OH TANG-GO AL-FAH).
- Notable exceptions to abbreviation use are uncommon abbreviations, initials used alone, or initials used in conjunction with short titles. In these cases, use the phonetic alphabet preceded by the proword I SPELL (e.g., ACP 125 is spoken as I SPELL - AL-FAH CHAR-LEE PAH-PAH FIGURES WUN TOO FIFE).
-
- 3.i. Dates Speak dates digit-by-digit using the month’s full name:
- 20 AUG Spoken as: FIGURES TOO ZE-ROH
AUGUST
-
- 3.j. Initials Use the phonetic alphabet for personal initials, preceded by the word INITIALS.
- Example: W.E. Lewis is spoken as INITIALS - WISS-KEY ECK-OH LEWIS
-
- 3.k. Roman Numerals Precede roman numerals by the phrase ROMAN NUMERALS, then transmit as the corresponding Arabic numerals.
-

- 3.1. Punctuation Do not use punctuation unless necessary for message clarity. Punctuation can be repetitive, consume valuable time, and increase the chance for errors. When using punctuation, speak it as stated below.

NOTE:

Do not use “Symbol For ...” when referring to punctuation marks.

Punctuation Mark	Spoken As:
Colon (:)	COLON
Comma (,)	COMMA
Decimal point (.)	DAY-SEE-MAL
Hyphen (-)	HYPHEN
Oblique stroke (/)	SLANT
Parenthesis (())	BRACKETS ON/BRACKETS OFF
Period (.)	PERIOD or FULL STOP
Question mark (?)	QUESTION MARK
Semicolon (;)	SEMI-COLON

3.m. How to
Call and Reply

Transmit and receive on voice circuits as follows (always keep proper circuit discipline in mind):

Step	Action
1.	Check transmitter/receiver settings and verify the proper frequencies are dialed in.
2.	Listen carefully to the frequency to ensure no other transmissions are in progress.
3.	Speak clearly in a normal tone of voice and hold the microphone about two inches from your mouth.
4.	Avoid excessive calling and unofficial transmissions. Transmit call signs only once when radio conditions are favorable.

NOTE:

Imposing or lifting radio silence (see paragraph 7 of this handbook) or responding to distress or urgent communications (see paragraph 8) are exceptions to the “transmit call signs only once” rule.

5. After three unsuccessful attempts to contact a station, transmit the proword NOTHING HEARD. Establish communications with another station and request assistance in contacting the original unit. Continue contact attempts at reasonable intervals.
6. Send transmissions at a speed that allows accurate message copying by the recipient. Transmit the message phrase-by-phrase, unkeying the microphone at regular intervals.

7. End every transmission with one of the following prowords:

OVER Recipient response required.

OUT No response required.

WAIT Use for pauses that require only a few seconds.

WAIT OUT Use for pauses that require more than a few seconds.

3.n. Coast
Guard Voice
Call Signs

The unit type and/or geographic area determine plain voice call signs for Coast Guard units.

3.n.1. Land
Units

Transmit COAST GUARD followed by a brief description of the type of unit and geographic area:

COAST GUARD SECTOR SAN FRANCISCO

COAST GUARD AIRSTA KODIAK

COAST GUARD CAMSLANT CHESAPEAKE

COAST GUARD ATLANTIC AREA

3.n.2. Vessels

Transmit COAST GUARD followed by the vessel's name:

COAST GUARD CUTTER BERTHOLF

3.n.3. Aircraft
and Small Boats

Transmit COAST GUARD followed by the aircraft or small boat number:

COAST GUARD 2001

COAST GUARD 41203

3.n.4. Search
and Rescue
(SAR)

For aircraft engaged in SAR operations, insert RESCUE as part of the call sign:

COAST GUARD RESCUE 2001

NOTE:

You can drop the phrase COAST GUARD once you have established reliable communications (e.g., CUTTER BERTHOLF, SECTOR SAN FRANCISCO, 41203, RESCUE 2001).

**4. Message
Fundamentals**

The sections below address basic message composition and transmission via voice communication circuits per [reference \(a\)](#).

4.a. Message
Elements

Transmit messages in the following order:

(CALL SIGN) - THIS IS (CALL SIGN) - (ANNOUNCE TRAFFIC) - OVER

(CALL SIGN) - THIS IS (CALL SIGN) - OVER

(CALL SIGN) - THIS IS (CALL SIGN)

(message precedence)

TIME (date time group)

FROM

TO

INFO

BREAK

CLASSIFICATION LINE

TEXT

BREAK

OVER

NOTE:

You can read all plain language addresses (PLAs) as abbreviated call signs (e.g., speak COMCOGARD SECTOR SAN FRANCISCO CA as SECTOR SAN FRANCISCO).

4.b. Announc-
ing Message
Traffic

COAST GUARD CUTTER MUNRO - THIS IS COAST
GUARD SECTOR SAN FRANCISCO - ROUTINE -
OVER

COAST GUARD SECTOR SAN FRANCISCO - THIS IS
COAST GUARD CUTTER MUNRO - OVER

4.c. Sending
Message Traffic

CUTTER MUNRO - THIS IS SECTOR SAN
FRANCISCO

ROUTINE
TIME 120810Z APR 12
FROM SECTOR SAN FRANCISCO
TO CUTTER MUNRO
INFO DISTRICT ELEVEN
BREAK
UNCLAS
(text)
BREAK
(ending proword)

NOTE:

**If you make a transmission error, transmit the
proword CORRECTION followed by the last word,
group, proword, or phrase that was correctly sent.**

4.d. Asking for
Repetitions

... UNCLAS - CONDUCT SEA TRIALS
IMMEDIATELY - OVER

SECTOR SAN FRANCISCO - THIS IS CUTTER
MUNRO - SAY AGAIN WORD AFTER SEA - OVER

CUTTER MUNRO - THIS IS SECTOR SAN
FRANCISCO - I SAY AGAIN WORD AFTER SEA -
TRIALS - OVER

4.d.1. Portions
of a Message
Not Received

SECTOR SAN FRANCISCO - THIS IS CUTTER
MUNRO - SAY AGAIN ALL AFTER CONDUCT -
OVER; or

SECTOR SAN FRANCISCO - THIS IS CUTTER
MUNRO - SAY AGAIN ALL BEFORE TRIALS - OVER

-
- 4.d.2. Portions Between Two Words Not Received
- SECTOR SAN FRANCISCO - THIS IS CUTTER
MUNRO - SAY AGAIN UNCLAS TO TRIALS - OVER
-
- 4.e. Receipt of Messages
- Record messages in communication logs to document their delivery. Do not ROGER for a message until certain it was received correctly and completely.
-
- 4.f. Canceling a Transmission
- Cancel transmissions in progress with the proword DISREGARD THIS TRANSMISSION. Messages sent in error that have already been received for require a separate cancellation message.
-
- 4.g. Keeping the Originator Informed
- Keep originators informed about message traffic non-delivery using unit SOPs.
-

5. BEAD-WINDOW Procedures

Per reference (b), BEADWINDOW is a real-time procedure to help enforce security on unsecure military voice circuits. It immediately alerts voice circuit operators that an essential element of friendly information (EEFI) disclosure has (or might have) occurred. Any net member can immediately transmit the BEADWINDOW code word and an EEFI key name or number (see appendix C) to the unit disclosing the EEFI. Never discuss the validity of the BEADWINDOW on the net. The only response allowed from a net member receiving a BEADWINDOW is ROGER OUT, using proper net call signs.

NOTE:

BEADWINDOW procedures are ONLY used during military operations and are generally unknown to the maritime public.

6. Radio Checks

Conduct radio checks to test equipment or when communication with another unit is doubtful. Make radio checks on Coast Guard working frequencies (see appendix D). Radio checks on VHF channel 16 are discouraged.

COAST GUARD CUTTER BERTHOLF - THIS IS
COAST GUARD SECTOR SAN FRANCISCO - RADIO
CHECK - OVER

COAST GUARD SECTOR SAN FRANCISCO - THIS IS
COAST GUARD CUTTER BERTHOLF - ROGER -
OVER

CUTTER BERTHOLF - THIS IS SECTOR SAN
FRANCISCO - ROGER - OUT

Other possible replies include:

Signal Strength

Readability

Loud: Strong signal.

Clear: Excellent quality.

Good: Good signal.

Readable: Good quality.

Weak: Can hear, but
with difficulty.

Distorted: Trouble copying.

Very weak: Can hear,
but with great
difficulty.

With interference: Trouble
copying due to interference.

Fading: Signal
alternates between
strong and weak.

Intermittent: Signal
alternates between readable
and unreadable.

Unreadable: Quality is so
bad transmission cannot be
understood.

NOTE:

**Do not exchange signal strength and readability
unless you cannot clearly hear another station.**

**7. Radio
Silence on
Directed Nets**

At times, a net control station (NCS) might impose or lift radio silence on a directed net for which it is responsible. Use secure means to impose, lift, or break radio silence whenever possible.

Imposing silence:

ALL STATIONS (repeat three times) - THIS IS (repeat voice call sign three times) - SILENCE (repeat three times) - 2670 kHz - I SAY AGAIN - ALL STATIONS (repeat three times) - THIS IS (repeat voice call sign three times) - SILENCE (repeat three times) - 2670 kHz - OUT

Lifting silence:

ALL STATIONS (three times) - THIS IS (voice call sign three times) - SILENCE LIFTED (three times) - 2670 kHz - OUT

**8. Distress,
Urgent, and
Safety Comm-
unications**

Handling distress, urgent, and safety related situations is one of the Coast Guard's primary functions. This paragraph addresses the communication procedures for each.

8.a. Distress
Communica-
tions

The various methods people in distress use for alerting others range from sophisticated electronic devices to waving a piece of cloth. The following is a "text book" example of handling distress communications, using procedures detailed in International Telecommunication Union (ITU) radio regulations (reference (c)).

NOTE:

Distress communications have absolute priority over all other transmissions.

NOTE:

Casual boaters will probably not use prescribed procedures during a distress to their vessel. They might not even be familiar with the term MAYDAY.

Step	Action
1.	The distress signal MAYDAY indicates a ship, aircraft, or other vehicle is threatened by grave and imminent danger, and requires immediate assistance.
2.	Per reference (d), all stations hearing a distress call shall immediately cease transmissions that might interfere with the distress traffic and shall continue to monitor the frequency on which the call was heard until satisfied that assistance is being rendered.
3.	Distress calls can be heard on any channel or frequency, but are normally made on frequencies 156.8 MHz (channel 16), 2182 kHz upper side band (USB), 4125 kHz USB (most commonly used in Alaska), and by means of digital selective calling (DSC) on 156.525 MHz (channel 70). A list of commonly used frequencies is provided in appendix D.

NOTE:

Per reference (d), a VHF DSC call requires a voice follow-up on 156.8 MHz (channel 16).

4. Per reference (c), a properly transmitted distress **call** consists of:
 - a. The distress signal MAYDAY, spoken three times.
 - b. The proword THIS IS.
 - c. The distressed unit's name, spoken three times.
 - d. The distressed unit's call sign or other identification, spoken once.
 - e. The distressed unit's maritime mobile service identity (MMSI), spoken once (if the initial alert is sent by DSC).

Example: MAYDAY (three times) - THIS IS SWAMPER (three times) - I'M A 46 FOOT CABIN CRUISER, WHITE HULL WITH BLUE TRIM - MMSI 366123456 - OVER

NOTE:

Be prepared to copy the distress message, which normally immediately follows a distress call.

5. A properly transmitted distress message consists of:
 - a. The distress signal MAYDAY, spoken three times.
 - b. The proword THIS IS.
 - c. The distressed unit's name, spoken three times.
 - d. The distressed unit's call sign or other identification, spoken once.
 - e. The distressed unit's MMSI, spoken once (if the initial alert is sent by DSC).
 - f. The distressed unit's position, number of persons on board (POB), nature of distress, type of assistance required, vessel description, and any additional information that might facilitate its rescue.

Example: MAYDAY (three times) - THIS IS SWAMPER (three times) - I'M A 46 FOOT CABIN CRUISER, WHITE HULL WITH BLUE TRIM - MMSI 366123456 - MY POSITION IS TWO MILES 126 DEGREES TRUE FROM WINDY POINT - THREE PERSONS ONBOARD - I LOST POWER AND THE SEAS ARE GETTING ROUGH - REQUEST ASSISTANCE - OVER

NOTE:

Mariners in distress will probably make as many calls as necessary until they receive acknowledgment that their transmission was heard. They might also use a variety of frequencies or any other means available to attract attention to their situation. In all probability, the general boating community WILL NOT use the proper procedures outlined above, so be flexible.

8.a.1. Receipt of
Distress
Messages

Immediately receipt for the message when near a distressed unit. If the distressed unit is some distance from your position, pause a few moments to allow ships or stations nearer the scene to answer.

Step

Action

1. Transmit the following:
 - a. Distress signal MAYDAY, spoken once.
 - b. The distressed unit's name, call sign, and/or MMSI (if the initial alert was sent by DSC), spoken once.
 - c. The proword THIS IS.
 - d. The call sign of the unit acknowledging receipt.
 - e. The words RECEIVED MAYDAY.
2. Request essential information (position, number of persons on board, nature of distress, type of assistance required, vessel description) to effect a successful rescue.
3. Complete initial SAR check sheet (per appendix G of reference (e)).
4. When directed by your supervisor, inform the distressed unit of any Coast Guard assistance being dispatched.

5. Vessels and shore stations receiving distress message traffic should forward the distress information (including MMSI, if known) to the appropriate USCG command center (CC) by the most rapid means available.
6. Set a communication schedule (COMM-SKED) with the distressed unit. The CC determines the time interval between communication checks, and when communication checks can cease.
7. Record distress communications in your unit's communication log.
8. Keep the CC informed of any new developments.
9. If necessary, place additional people on watch. Obtain the distressed unit's radio direction finder bearing if equipment and conditions permit.

NOTE:

MAYDAY, spoken once, precedes initial traffic between the distressed and assisting units upon establishing communications. Omit the term MAYDAY after reliable communications have been confirmed.

8.a.2. MAY-
DAY Relay
Procedures

Stations made aware of a vessel in distress initiate and transmit a distress alert (indicating they are not the distressed unit) if the distressed vessel itself is unable to do so. A relayed message consists of:

Step	Action
1.	The distress signal MAYDAY RELAY, spoken three times.
2.	ALL STATIONS or coast station name, as appropriate, spoken three times.

3. The proword THIS IS.
4. The name of the relaying station, spoken three times.
5. The call sign or other identification of the relaying station.
6. The MMSI (if the initial alert is sent by DSC) of the relaying station (the vessel not in distress).
7. Transmit the original distress **message** as completely as possible, including the distressed vessel's MMSI if it was part of the original distress message.

Example: MAYDAY RELAY (three times) - ALL STATIONS (three times) - THIS IS COAST GUARD CUTTER BERTHOLF (three times) - MMSI 123456789 - MAYDAY (three times) - THIS IS SWAMPER (three times) - I'M A 46 FOOT CABIN CRUISER, WHITE HULL WITH BLUE TRIM - MMSI 366123456 - MY POSITION IS TWO MILES 126 DEGREES TRUE FROM WINDY POINT - THREE PERSONS ONBOARD - I LOST POWER AND THE SEAS ARE GETTING ROUGH - REQUEST ASSISTANCE - OVER

8.a.3. Responding Unit Actions

When dispatched in response to a distress message, Coast Guard vessels and aircraft transmit the following information to the distressed unit as soon as possible:

Step	Action
1.	Acknowledge unit's name and position.
2.	Assisting unit's speed of advance.
3.	Estimated time of arrival at scene.

4. Keep the distressed unit informed of any circumstances that might affect the assistance that can be rendered, such as speed, sea conditions, wind, etc. Speak in a tone of voice that expresses confidence.
5. If equipment-capable, set a continuous radio guard on the distressed unit's frequency, or set up a radio schedule if the distressed unit is unable to stand a continuous watch.

8.a.4. Imposing
Radio Silence
during SAR
Operations

If other stations are causing interference on the frequency being used for distress traffic, the controlling station can impose radio silence:

Step	Action
1.	Repeat the call sign(s) of interfering station(s) three times, or use the phrase ALL STATIONS, spoken three times.
2.	Use the proword THIS IS followed by the call sign of the station imposing radio silence, repeated three times.
3.	Transmit the distress signal SILENCE MAYDAY three times, pronounced as the French expression "SEE- <u>LONCE</u> MAY- <u>DAY</u> " (for "silence m'aider").
4.	End with the proword OUT.

Example: ALL STATIONS (three times) - THIS IS (voice call sign three times) - SEE-LONCE MAY-DAY (three times) - OUT

8.a.5. Lifting
Radio Silence
after SAR
Operations

When radio silence is no longer required, the controlling station transmits a message indicating all distress traffic has ceased:

- | Step | Action |
|-------------|--|
| 1. | Transmit the distress signal MAYDAY, spoken three times. |
| 2. | Address the message to ALL STATIONS, repeated three times. |
| 3. | Use the proword THIS IS followed by the call sign of the station lifting radio silence, repeated three times. |
| 4. | State the time radio silence is lifted in ZULU. |
| 5. | State the name & call sign of the distressed station. |
| 6. | Transmit the signal SILENCE FINISHED three times, pronounced as the French expression “SEE- <u>LONCE</u> FEE- <u>NEE</u> ” (for “silence fini”). |
| 7. | End with the proword OUT. |

Example: MAYDAY (three times) - ALL STATIONS (three times) - THIS IS (voice call sign three times) - 150800Z - SWAMPER WL333 - SEE-LONCE FEE-NEE (three times) - OUT

8.b. Urgent
Communica-
tions

The urgency signal PAN-PAN (pronounced “PAHN-PAHN”) indicates the calling station has an urgent message to transmit concerning the safety of a ship, aircraft, other vehicle, or the safety of a person.

NOTE:

Urgent communications have priority over all other transmissions except distress communications. Exercise care not to interfere with urgent traffic.

- Initiate urgent communications on one or more of the international distress frequencies: 156.8 MHz (channel 16), 2182 kHz USB, 4125 kHz USB (most commonly used in Alaska), by DSC on 156.525 MHz (channel 70), or on any other frequency that might be used in case of distress. See appendix D for a list of commonly used frequencies.

NOTE:

Per reference (d), a VHF DSC call requires a voice follow-up on 156.8 MHz (channel 16).

- Pass amplifying information on working frequencies identified in the urgent traffic preliminary announcement.
- If you hear an urgent signal, continue to monitor that frequency for at least three minutes. If you hear nothing further, resume normal communications on that frequency.

8.b.1. Urgent
Message Details

Urgent messages can be addressed to either a specific station or to ALL STATIONS, should contain all necessary details concerning a particular case, and be in plain language format. Unless broadcast by a Coast Guard communication station, any station receiving an urgent message should relay it by the most rapid means to the nearest Coast Guard CC.

NOTE:

Per reference (d), precede all initial urgent marine information broadcasts (UMIBs) with a DSC call on the appropriate frequency/channel. Include the frequency/channel of the follow-on voice broadcast in this DSC call.

Transmit Coast Guard urgent broadcasts in the following format:

Preliminary Announcement (use channel 16/2182 kHz):
PAHN-PAHN (three times) - ALL STATIONS (three times) - THIS IS (voice call sign three times) - MMSI spoken once (if initial announcement is sent via DSC) - BREAK - (brief identifying data) - LISTEN (working channel frequency) - OUT

NOTE:

Per CFR 47 80.111(b) and CFR 47 80.116(f), no transmission on 156.8 MHz (channel 16) or 2182 kHz shall exceed one (1) minute in duration.

Message Text (passed on the designated working frequency): PAHN-PAHN (three times) - ALL STATIONS (three times) - THIS IS (voice call sign three times) - MMSI spoken once (if initial announcement was sent via DSC) - BREAK - (text of urgent message) - OUT

8.b.2. Cancellation of Urgent Message

Transmit cancellation messages on the same distress frequency used for the preliminary urgent announcement (e.g., channel 16, 2182 kHz):

PAHN-PAHN (three times) - ALL STATIONS (three times) - THIS IS (voice call sign three times) - MMSI spoken once (if initial announcement was sent via DSC) - BREAK - CANCEL URGENT MESSAGE OF 181520Z - (brief description) - BREAK - THIS IS (voice call sign spoken once) - OUT

8.c. Safety Communications

Safety broadcasts use the same frequency procedures as urgent communications (e.g., transmit the preliminary announcement on a distress frequency, then shift to a designated working frequency). Use the safety signal *SECURITE*, pronounced as the French word "SAY-CUR-I-TAY."

Preliminary Announcement (use channel 16/2182 kHz):
SAY-CUR-I-TAY (three times) - ALL STATIONS (three times) - THIS IS (voice call sign three times) - MMSI spoken once (if initial announcement is sent via DSC) - BREAK - (brief identifying data, such as hurricane advisory, storm warning, Coast Guard safety marine information broadcast (SMIB), etc.) - LISTEN (working channel frequency) - OUT

NOTE:

Per CFR 47 80.111(b) and CFR 47 80.116(f), no transmission on 156.8 MHz (channel 16) or 2182 kHz shall exceed one (1) minute in duration.

Message Text (passed on the designated working frequency): SAY-CUR-I-TAY (three times) - ALL STATIONS (three times) - THIS IS (voice call sign three times) - MMSI spoken once (if initial announcement was sent via DSC) - BREAK - (text of safety broadcast) - OUT

NOTE:

Exercise care not to interfere with safety traffic.

Appendix A: Glossary & Acronyms

Abbreviated Procedure	Once a radiotelephone net is established, it normally works using abbreviated procedures and call signs: the proword THIS IS can be omitted, call signs are abbreviated, and initial calls are optional.
Address Group	A unique, daily changing group of letters used to disguise a command, formation, unit, or sub-unit.
BEADWINDOW	Use this proword to police the security of unsecure voice networks. Used in conjunction with essential elements of friendly information (EEFIs) (see paragraph 5 and appendix C).
Bridge-to-Bridge Radiotelephone	Provides short-range, unsecure VHF voice communications. Primarily used to ensure safe navigation between maritime units operating close to each other.
Call Sign	A combination of letters and figures that identify a command, unit, or sub-unit. In some situations (e.g., bridge-to-bridge communications), plain language call signs can be used (see paragraph 3.n for Coast Guard voice call sign guidance).
CC	Command center.
CFR	Code of Federal Regulations.
COMMSKED	Communication schedule.
Coordinated Universal Time (UTC)	UTC is essentially equivalent to mean solar time at the prime meridian (0° longitude), formerly expressed as Greenwich mean time (GMT) or ZULU time. Indicated by the suffix “Z.”

Delayed Executive Method	Used with tactical signals, and preceded by the proword EXECUTE TO FOLLOW. Actual signal execution is sent later, using the prowords STANDBY - EXECUTE.
Digital Selective Calling (DSC)	A service that allows mariners to instantly send an automatically formatted distress alert to rescue authorities anywhere in the world. DSC also allows mariners to initiate or receive distress, urgency, safety, and routine radiotelephone calls to or from any similarly equipped vessel or shore station without requiring either party to be near a radio loudspeaker.
Directed Net	Stations must first receive permission from the net control station (NCS) before communicating with other stations in the net.
DTG	Date time group.
Essential Elements of Friendly Information (EEFIs)	Represented by a key word or key number, the disclosure of which could impede operating forces' security. Used with BEADWINDOW (see paragraph 5 and appendix C).
Flash Message Precedence	Reserved for initial enemy contact messages or operational messages of extreme urgency.
Free Net	The net control station (NCS) authorizes member stations to transmit messages without obtaining prior permission from the NCS.
Full Procedure	Indicates that previously optional prowords and call signs are now mandatory.
Greenwich Mean Time (GMT)	A time system originally referring to mean solar time at the royal observatory in Greenwich, England (located on the prime meridian (0° longitude)), and later adopted as a global time standard. Arguably the same as coordinated

universal time (UTC) and ZULU time, all of which are indicated by the suffix “Z.”

Immediate Executive Method

Used with tactical signals when execution is urgent. The signal is preceded by the proword IMMEDIATE EXECUTE, the signal’s text is transmitted twice, and is then immediately followed by the prowords STANDBY - EXECUTE.

Immediate Message Precedence

Reserved for very urgent record messages about situations which gravely affect the security of national/allied forces or populace.

kHz

Kilo hertz.

MAYDAY

A distress signal indicating a ship, aircraft, or other vehicle is threatened by grave and imminent danger, and requires immediate assistance.

MHz

Mega hertz.

MMSI

Maritime mobile service identity. A nine digit number used by maritime digital selective calling (DSC), automatic identification systems, and certain other equipment to uniquely identify a ship or a coast radio station.

Net Control Station (NCS)

The station responsible for proper communications net control. The NCS is also responsible for maintaining net security.

Operating Signal (OPSIG)

A standardized abbreviation often associated with procedure words (prowords) (see below).

PAN-PAN

An urgency signal indicating the calling station has an urgent message to transmit about the safety of a ship, aircraft or other vehicle, or the safety of a person. Pronounced “PAHN-PAHN.”

POB	Persons on board.
Priority Message Precedence	Reserved for record messages concerning the conduct of operations in progress, and for other important and urgent matters when routine precedence will not suffice.
Procedure Word (Proword)	A standardized word (or group of words) authorized for use on voice circuits.
Routine Message Precedence	Used for all types of record messages which justify transmission by rapid means, but are of insufficient urgency and importance to require a higher precedence.
SAR	Search and rescue.
SECURITE	Used to announce safety broadcasts. Pronounced as the French word “ <u>SAY</u> - <u>CUR</u> - <u>I</u> - <u>TAY</u> .”
SILENCE FINISHED	A distress signal used when lifting radio silence after SAR operations. Pronounced as the French expression “ <u>SEE</u> - <u>LONCE</u> <u>FEE</u> - <u>NEE</u> ” (for “silence fini”).
SILENCE MAYDAY	A distress signal used when imposing radio silence during SAR operations. Pronounced as the French expression “ <u>SEE</u> - <u>LONCE</u> <u>MAY</u> - <u>DAY</u> ” (for “silence m’aider”).
SMIB	Safety marine information broadcast.
SOP	Standard operating procedure.
TTP	Tactics, techniques, and procedures.

UMIB	Urgent marine information broadcast.
USB	Upper side band.
USCG	U.S. Coast Guard.
UTC (Coordinated Universal Time)	UTC is essentially equivalent to mean solar time at the prime meridian (0° longitude), formerly expressed as Greenwich mean time (GMT) or ZULU time. Indicated by the suffix "Z."
VHF	Very high frequency (30–300 MHz).
ZULU Time	The time zone at the prime meridian (0° longitude). Arguably the same as coordinated universal time (UTC) and Greenwich mean time (GMT), all of which are indicated by the suffix "Z."

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Appendix B: Authorized Procedure Words (Prowords)

Proword	Explanation
ACKNOWLEDGE	Instructs the addressee to acknowledge the message.
ALL AFTER	The portion of the message to which I refer is all that follows (word/number).
ALL BEFORE	The portion of the message to which I refer is all that precedes (word/number).
ANSWER AFTER	The station called is to answer after call sign (...) when answering transmissions.
ASSUME CONTROL	Assume control of this net until further notice.
AUTHENTICATE	The station called is to reply to the challenge that follows.
AUTHENTICATION IS (...)	The message's transmission authentication is (...).
BREAK	Indicates the separation of text from other portions of the message.
CALL SIGN	The group that follows is a call sign.
CLOSE DOWN	Stations are to close down when indicated. (<u>Note</u> : Requires acknowledgments.)

Proword	Explanation
CORRECT	<p>You are correct.</p> <p>What you have transmitted is correct.</p>
CORRECTION	<p>An error was made in this transmission. Transmission will continue with the last word correctly transmitted.</p> <p>An error was made in this transmission (or message indicated). The correct version is (...).</p> <p>In answer to your request for verification, that which follows is a corrected version.</p>
DISREGARD THIS TRANSMISSION - OUT	<p>This transmission is in error, disregard it. (<u>Note</u>: Per reference (a), this proword shall not be used to cancel any message that has been completely transmitted and received for.)</p>
DO NOT ANSWER	<p>Called stations are not to answer, receipt for, or otherwise transmit in connection with this transmission. (<u>Note</u>: When this proword is used, the transmission is ended with the proword OUT.)</p>
EXECUTE	<p>Carry out the intention of the message or signal to which this applies. (<u>Note</u>: Use only with the executive method.)</p>
EXECUTE TO FOLLOW	<p>Carry out the action on the following message or signal on receipt of the proword EXECUTE. (<u>Note</u>: Use only with the delayed executive method.)</p>
EXEMPT	<p>The station(s) immediately following this proword is (are) exempted from the collective call or collective address.</p>
FIGURES	<p>Numerals or numbers follow.</p>

Proword	Explanation
FLASH	FLASH message precedence.
FROM	The message originator.
GRID	The following message portion is a grid reference.
GROUPS	This message contains the number of groups indicated by the numeral following.
GROUP NO COUNT	The groups in this message have not been counted.
I AM ASSUMING CONTROL	The transmitting station is assuming control of this net until further notice.
I AUTHENTICATE	The group that follows is the reply to your authenticate challenge.
IMMEDIATE	IMMEDIATE message precedence.
IMMEDIATE EXECUTE	Carry out action on the following message or signal on receipt of the proword EXECUTE. (<u>Note:</u> Use only with the immediate executive method.)
INFO	The addressees immediately following this proword are addressed for information purposes only.
I READ BACK	The following is my response to your instructions to read back.
I SAY AGAIN	Use to repeat all or a portion of a transmission.
I SPELL	Precedes a word spelled phonetically.

Proword	Explanation
I VERIFY	I verify and repeat the following at your request. (<u>Note</u> : Use only in response to VERIFY.)
MESSAGE	The following message requires recording. (<u>Note</u> : Do not use this proword on nets used primarily for conveying messages, but when passing messages on tactical or reporting nets.)
MORE TO FOLLOW	The transmitting station has additional traffic for the receiving station.
NEGATIVE (NEGAT)	No. Cancel message(s) sent by the delayed executive method. (<u>Note</u> : NEGAT can be used to cancel a single message or a group of messages awaiting execution.)
NO PLAY	During exercises, use the proword NO PLAY to distinguish real world activity from messages relating to exercise play (e.g., an actual emergency or casualty). To use, precede NO PLAY with the exercise's code name.
NOTHING HEARD	Use when you receive no reply from a called station.
NUMBER	Station serial number.
OUT	Use to end a transmission when no reply is required or expected.
OVER	Use to end a transmission when a response is required. Go ahead and transmit your reply.

Proword	Explanation
PRIORITY	PRIORITY message precedence.
READ BACK	Repeat this entire transmission exactly as received.
RELAY (TO)	Transmit this message to all addressees immediately after this proword. (<u>Note</u> : Per reference (a) , the address component is mandatory when using this proword.)
RELAY THROUGH	Relay your message through call sign (...).
ROGER	I have satisfactorily received your last transmission.
ROUTINE	ROUTINE message precedence.
SAY AGAIN	Repeat all of your transmission. <u>Note</u> : You can modify this proword to request a repeat of message portions (e.g., SAY AGAIN ALL AFTER (...)/SAY AGAIN ALL BEFORE (...)).
SEND YOUR (...)	I am ready to receive your message, report, etc. (<u>Note</u> : Use only in reply to the offer of a message, report, etc. on tactical or reporting nets.)
SERVICE	The following message is a SERVICE message.
SIGNALS	The following groups are from a tactical signal book. (<u>Note</u> : Do not use this proword on nets used primarily for conveying tactical signals, but when passing tactical signals on non-tactical nets.)
SILENCE (Repeated three or more times)	Immediately cease transmissions on this net. Maintain silence until lifted. (<u>Note</u> : Per reference (a) , this transmission must be properly authenticated.)

Proword	Explanation
SILENCE LIFTED	Silence is lifted. (Note: Per reference (a) , this transmission must be properly authenticated.)
SPEAK SLOWER	Your transmission is too fast. Reduce the speed at which you are speaking.
THIS IS (...)	This transmission is from the station whose designator immediately follows.
THIS IS A DIRECTED NET	This net is directed from now until further notice.
THIS IS A FREE NET	This net is free from now until further notice.
THROUGH ME	Relay your message through me.
TIME	The following is the time, or this message's date time group (DTG).
TO	The addressees immediately following are addressed for action.
(...) TO (...)	The portion of the message to which I refer is all that appears between the groups (...) and (...).
UNKNOWN STATION	Use when trying to establish communications with a station whose designation or call sign is unknown.
USE ABBREVIATED CALL SIGNS	Abbreviate call signs until further notice.
USE ABBREVIATED PROCEDURE	As conditions are normal, all stations must use abbreviated procedures until further notice.

Proword	Explanation
USE FULL CALL SIGNS	Use full call signs until further notice.
USE FULL PROCEDURE	As conditions are not normal, all stations must use full procedures until further notice.
VERIFY	Verify entire message (or portion indicated) with the originator, then send the correct version. (<u>Note</u> : Use only at the discretion of the addressee to which the questioned message was directed.)
WAIT	I must pause for a few seconds.
WAIT - OUT	I must pause for longer than a few seconds.
WILCO	I have received your signal, understand it, and will comply. (<u>Note</u> : Used only by the addressee.) Since the meaning of ROGER is included in that of WILCO, never use these two prowords together.
WORD AFTER	The message word to which I refer follows (...).
WORD BEFORE	The message word to which I refer precedes (...).
WORDS TWICE	Normally used when communications are difficult. Transmit each phrase (or code group) twice. (<u>Note</u> : You can use this proword as an order, request, or as information.)
WRONG	Your last transmission was incorrect. The correct version is (...).

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Appendix C: Essential Elements of Friendly Information (EEFIs)

As detailed in reference (b), standardized EEFIs identify specific information items which, if acquired by an adversary, degrade the security of military operations, special projects, etc. Each EEFI has an appropriate key word or key number for ease of training and rapid understanding of BEADWINDOW reports (see paragraph 5). If needed, operational commanders can develop additional EEFIs for specific operations or exercises.

BEADWINDOW Code	EEFI Description
Position 01	Friendly or enemy position, movement or intended movement, position, course, speed, altitude, or destination of any air, sea, or ground element, unit, or force.
Capabilities 02	Friendly or enemy capabilities or limitations, force composition or identity. Capabilities, limitations, or significant casualties to special equipment, weapons systems, sensors, units, or personnel. Percentages of fuel or ammunition remaining.
Operations 03	Friendly or enemy operations, intentions, progress, or results. Operational or logistic intentions. Assault objectives, mission participants, flying programs, mission situation reports. Results of friendly or enemy operations.
Electronic Warfare (EW) 04	Friendly or enemy electronic warfare/emission control (EMCON) intentions, progress, or results. Intention to employ electronic countermeasures (ECM). Results of friendly or enemy ECM, objectives of ECM. Results of friendly or enemy electronic counter-countermeasures (ECCM). Results of electronic warfare support measures (ESM). Present or intended EMCON policy. Equipment affected by EMCON policy.

Personnel 05	Friendly or enemy key personnel. Movement or identity of friendly or enemy flag officers, distinguished visitors, unit commanders. Movement of key maintenance personnel indicating equipment limitations.
Communications Security (COMSEC) 06	Friendly or enemy COMSEC breaches: linkage of codes or code words with plain language, compromise of changing frequencies or linkage with line numbers/circuit designators, linkage of changing call signs with previous call signs or units, compromise of encrypted/classified call signs, incorrect authentication procedure.
Wrong Circuit 07	Inappropriate transmission: information requested, transmitted, or about to be transmitted which should not be passed on a circuit because it either requires greater security protection or is not appropriate to the purpose for which the circuit is provided.
08	For assignment, as required.
09	For assignment, as required.
10	For assignment, as required.

Example: COAST GUARD CUTTER MUNRO - THIS IS COAST GUARD SECTOR SAN FRANCISCO - BEADWINDOW ZERO SIX - OVER

COAST GUARD SECTOR SAN FRANCISCO - THIS IS COAST GUARD CUTTER MUNRO - ROGER - OUT

NOTE:

The only permitted response from a unit receiving a BEADWINDOW is ROGER OUT, using proper net call signs.

Appendix D: Common Frequencies

D.1. Distress Frequencies	156.8 MHz (channel 16)	International Distress, Safety, and Calling Maritime Mobile.
	2182 kHz	International Radiotelephony Distress, Safety, and Calling.
	2187.5 kHz	International Distress, Safety, and Calling Digital Selective Calling (DSC).
	4125 kHz	International Radiotelephony Distress, Safety, and Calling (most commonly used in Alaska).
	156.525 MHz (channel 70)	International Distress, Safety, and Calling VHF Digital Selective Calling (DSC).

NOTE:

Per reference (d), a VHF DSC call requires a voice follow-up on 156.8 MHz (channel 16).

4207.5 kHz	International Distress, Safety, and Calling (Other) (DSC).
6215 kHz	International Distress, Safety, and Calling (Other).
6312.0 kHz	International Distress, Safety, and Calling (Other) (DSC).

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8291 kHz	International Distress, Safety, and Calling (Other).
8414.5 kHz	International Distress, Safety, and Calling (Other) (DSC).
12,290 kHz	International Distress, Safety, and Calling (Other).
12,577.0 kHz	International Distress, Safety, and Calling (Other) (DSC).
16,420 kHz	International Distress, Safety, and Calling (Other).
16,804.5 kHz	International Distress, Safety, and Calling (Other) (DSC).
121.5 MHz	Civilian Aircraft Emergency.
123.1 MHz	Aeronautical Auxiliary Frequency (for coordinated SAR operations).
243.0 MHz	Military Aircraft Common Emergency.

**D.2. Common
Working
Frequencies**

2670 kHz Coast Guard Working Frequency.

157.1 MHz (channel
22A) Coast Guard and Non-Coast
Guard Liaison.

156.45 MHz
(channel 9) Use to relieve congestion on
channel 16.

156.65 MHz
(channel 13) Bridge-to-Bridge Navigation.

156.375 MHz
(channel 67) Bridge-to-Bridge Navigation
(Gulf of Mexico).

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