



Department for Planning
and Infrastructure

Changes to Coastal Radio Communication Services



Changes to Coastal Radio Communication Services.

The existing marine safety radio service used by most commercial vessels and some recreational vessels operating in waters off Western Australia is changing. The new system, to be introduced by the Commonwealth on 1 July 2002 will ensure that Australia fulfills its international obligations to commercial shipping.

However, the new system does not require the coastal radio stations around Australia to monitor the distress and calling, frequencies or broadcast the Marine Safety Information (MSI) on the MF/HF and VHF marine working frequencies.

Consequently, the coastal radio network will cease operating on 1 July 2002. On the West Coast, VIP (Perth Radio) and VID (Darwin Radio) will close down.

Replacement Services

These services will be replaced by:

- An integrated network of nine stations operated around Australia by the States and the Northern Territory that will monitor the 4125, 6215 and 8291 kHz 'distress and calling' frequencies and broadcast navigation warning information relevant to their broadcast areas on 8176 kHz. These stations are located in Perth, Port Hedland, Darwin, Adelaide, Melbourne, Hobart, Sydney, Gladstone and Cairns.

The 'distress and calling' frequencies have been re-designated as 'radio telephony distress and safety traffic' frequencies. They will be used by the State/NT Coast Radio stations to receive and work distress or urgency calls and by AusSAR to respond to HF Digital Selective Calling (DSC) alerts.

- A 24 hour, 7 day week service operated from the Water Police Coordination Centre in North Fremantle will monitor the 4125, 6215 and 8291 kHz distress and calling frequencies. This HF service will cover WA coastal waters within 200 nautical miles of the shore from two new transceiver sites, one at Canning Mills in Perth (Callsign COAST RADIO PERTH) and the other at Port Hedland (Callsign COAST RADIO HEDLAND). The Water Police will also broadcast relevant WA navigation warnings from Perth and Port Hedland on 8176 kHz.

The Water Police will also monitor and provide local weather and navigation warning broadcasts on VHF channel 16/67 at 0718 and 1918 hours WST. Severe weather warnings will be broadcast every 2 hours. This VHF service will only cover Perth metropolitan waters within 20 nautical miles of the shore.

- HF Digital Selective Calling (DSC) monitoring stations established at Wiluna WA and Charleville QLD.
- Inmarsat services.



Marine Weather Forecasts

The Bureau of Meteorology will broadcast marine weather information for WA and NT Coastal Waters and High Seas from VMW Weather Australia West at Wiluna WA on 2056, 4149, 6230, 8113, 12356 and 16528 kHz on a 24 hour, 7 day week basis. The Bureau will publicise the scheduled broadcast times.

Some vessels, depending on the age of their HF transceivers, will need to have some or all of these frequencies installed in order to receive the Bureau of Meteorology weather reports for WA and NT waters. This will particularly affect those with old 10 channel crystal radios that, depending on spare part availability, may need to upgrade their equipment. Others with older synthesized radios may need to have their transceivers re-programmed, but the majority should be able to 'dial up' the new frequencies.

Owners should also consider the range of their operating area from the Wiluna transmitter, in selecting frequencies for installation. The lower frequencies may not be appropriate.

The Bureau of Meteorology will broadcast weather information for northern, eastern and south eastern Australian waters from VMC Weather Australia East located at Charleville Qld on the existing working frequencies: 2201, 4426, 6507, 8176, 12365 kHz plus 16546 kHz. These frequencies have been allocated to the Bureau of Meteorology and their use as general working frequencies is no longer practicable.

Recreational Vessels

Recreational vessels are currently required to carry an EPIRB if they are operating 2 nautical miles or more offshore and a marine radio if they are more than 5 miles offshore. In order to establish national conformity, regulations will be changed to require a marine radio to be carried when a vessel is more than 2 miles offshore, but the type of marine radio will not be specified.

However, the owners of recreational vessels that proceed outside the range of shore based VHF or 27 MHz services, are strongly advised to equip the vessel with long range radio or satellite communications equipment. This should be capable of alerting other vessels and the authorities to a distress situation. It should also be capable of providing access to broadcast marine safety information, such as weather forecasts.

The owners of recreational vessels that proceed outside the range of shore based VHF or 27 MHz services should therefore be guided by the following requirements for commercial vessels when selecting the type of marine communications equipment that will be fitted.

Commercial vessels

Commercial vessels will be required, from 1 July 2002, to carry equipment to ensure at least:

- That there are two methods of alerting the authorities to a distress situation on a 24 hour 7 day week basis; and
- One method of receiving weather Marine Safety Information on a 24 hour 7 day week basis.

The equipment required to be fitted to each vessel will depend upon the area for which the vessel is certificated for operation.

One of the methods of distress alerting will be an EPIRB. Whilst most vessels can carry a 121.5/243 MHz EPIRB as one of the means of distress alerting, a 406 MHz EPIRB is required for class 'A' vessels.

The 121.5/243 MHz EPIRB is less accurate, and when activated may take longer to be detected when compared with the 406 MHz EPIRB. Owners should also be aware that in February 2009, satellite monitoring of the 121.5/243 MHz EPIRBs will cease.

It is strongly recommended that owners who already carry a 121.5/243 MHz EPIRB consider upgrading to the more accurate and reliable 406 MHz EPIRB.

The second method of distress alerting will be at the owner's discretion, but cannot be a second EPIRB. It must be capable of making 24 hour contact from the operating area for which the vessel is certificated, with rescue authorities and other vessels. A mobile or satellite telephone, although a useful supplementary device will not be acceptable for this purpose because it is not capable of alerting other vessels.

For example:

- A vessel certificated for operation within VHF range of the Water Police Base in Fremantle will need to carry as a minimum, an EPIRB and a VHF marine transceiver.
- A vessel certificated for operation within 200 nautical miles of the WA coast will need to carry as a minimum, an EPIRB; and an HF marine transceiver capable of contacting the Water Police base via its Canning Mills or Port Hedland transceivers and receiving weather information broadcast by the Bureau of Meteorology from Wiluna.
- A vessel certificated for operation more than 200 nautical miles from the WA coast will need to carry as a minimum, a 406 MHz EPIRB and either an HF DSC marine transceiver or a marine satellite communications system such as INMARSAT

Navigation Warnings

The following State/NT Stations will broadcast Navigation Warnings on 8176 kHz at the times stated for the following Austcoast Sea Areas (ASA).

Refer to *Austcoast Sea Areas* map.

Station	Callsign	Nav. Warning Schedules	ASA	Freq.
Darwin	Coast Radio Darwin	1127 and 1927 CST (0157 and 0957 UTC)	G,H,A	8176
Port Hedland	Coast Radio Hedland	1257 and 1657 WST (0457 and 0857 UTC)	F,G,H	8176
Perth	Coast Radio Perth	1457 and 1857 WST (0657 and 1057 UTC)	E,F,G	8176
Adelaide	Coast Radio Adelaide	1327 and 2227 CST (0357 and 1257 UTC)	D,E,F	8176
Melbourne	Coast Radio Melbourne	1257 and 0757 EST (0257 and 2157 UTC)	C,D,E	8176
Hobart	Coast Radio Hobart	1557 EST (0557 UTC)	C,D,E	8176
Sydney	Coast Radio Sydney	1057 and 2357 EST (0057 and 1357 UTC)	B,C,D	8176
Gladstone	Coast Radio Gladstone	0857 and 2157 EST (2257 and 1157 UTC)	A,B,C	8176
Cairns	Coast Radio Cairns	0957 and 2257 EST (2357 and 1257 UTC)	H,A,B	8176

Austcoast Sea Areas

VMW Australia Weather West - Wiluna

Coastal Waters:
VMW Broadcasts coastal weather services for Australian coastal areas between the South Australia – Victoria border and Torres Strait in Queensland including all South Australia, Western Australia and Northern Territory zones

High Seas:
VMW broadcasts services for the Northern, Western and South Eastern high seas areas

VMW broadcasts on frequencies (kHz)

2056
4149
6230
8113
12356
16528

VMC Australia Weather East - Charleville

Coastal Waters:
VMC Broadcasts coastal weather services for Australian coastal areas between Cape Don in the Northern Territory and Eucla in Western Australia, including all Queensland, New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia zones

High Seas:
VMC broadcasts services for the Northern, North Eastern and South Eastern high seas areas

VMC broadcasts on frequencies (kHz)

2201
4426
6507
8176
12365
16546

Marine Weather Services

The Bureau of Meteorology will broadcast marine weather information for WA and NT Coastal Waters and High Seas from Wiluna WA (VMW) on 2056, 4149, 6230, 8113, 12356 and 16528 kHz

Warnings

Schedule

Northern, Western & SE High Seas Areas

Every hour commencing 0000 hours WST

WA, NT, QLD Gulf and SA coastal waters

Every hour commencing 0000 hours WST

Special Announcements

Five minutes to every hour

WA Forecast

Schedule

WA Coastal Waters

0030, 0430, 0830, 1230, 1630, 2030. (WST)

Western High Seas Area

0230, 0630, 1030, 1430, 1830, 2230. (WST)

NT Forecast

Schedule

NT Coastal Waters

0300, 0700, 1100, 1500, 1900, 2200. (CST)

Northern High Seas Area

0230, 0630, 1030, 1430, 1830, 2230. (WST)

QLD Forecast

Schedule

Gulf Coastal Waters

0030, 0430, 0830, 1230, 1830, 2030. (EST)

SA Forecast

Schedule

SA Coastal Waters

0300, 0700, 1100, 1500, 1900, 2300. (CST)

VIC/TAS Forecast

Schedule

South Eastern High Seas Area

0330, 0730, 1130, 1530; 1930, 2330. (WST)

Contact Details

Police

Water Police Coordination Centre..... 08 9442 8600

Department for Planning and Infrastructure

Fremantle Office 08 9216 8999

Marine Operations Centre 08 9239 2400

Website www.dpi.wa.gov.au

AMSA

Main Website www.amsa.gov.au

Radio Communications Website

..... www.amsa.gov.au/aussar/sos.htm

Bureau of Meteorology

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