THE GOVERNMENT OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Department of Transport

Safety Equipment
Marine Radios
Marine Safety

YOU'RE THE SKIPPER
YOU'RE RESPONSIBLE

Contact details
Email: marine.safety@transport.wa.gov.au
Website: www.transport.wa.gov.au/imarine
Marine Safety Hotline: 1300 863 308

Weather Forecast
Boating Weather: 1900 955 350
Website: www.bom.gov.au/marine

Police
Water Police: 9442 8600

Volunteer Marine Rescue Service
Website: www.vmrwa.org.au

Department of Fire and Emergency Services
Emergency information: 13 3337
Website: www.dfes.wa.gov.au

Australian Coast Radio Monitors WA
Website: acrmwa.org.au

Australian Communications and Media Authority
Phone: 1300 850 115
Website: www.acma.gov.au

Useful websites
VMR services
www.dfes.wa.gov.au/contactus/pages/volunteermarinerescueservices.aspx
ACMA licence guidelines
www.acma.gov.au/theACMA/maritime-ship-licences-guidelines
ACMA VHF Marine Radio
www.acma.gov.au/vhfmarine

For further information go to www.transport.wa.gov.au/radios
or scan the QR code.

Join us at
facebook.com/MarineSafetyWA

The information contained in this publication is provided in good faith and
believed to be accurate at time of publication. The State shall in no way be liable
for any loss sustained or incurred by anyone relying on the information.

VHF repeater stations

A network of VHF repeater stations at strategic
locations along the WA coast significantly extend
the range of VHF radio transmissions out to sea.

To determine if a VHF repeater is available in your
locality you should switch to a repeater channel and
hold the microphone switch down and ask for a
'radio check'.

The nominal range of each repeater is 80km, but
this will vary from repeater to repeater and it should
also be noted that as VHF is essentially 'line of sight',
some areas of coastline might be in a shadow zone.


VHF repeater station locations

Nearest location	Station site	VHF
Wyndham	The Bastion	80
	Lacrosse Island	81
Derby	Koolan Island	81
Broome	The Water Bank Tower	22
	Cape Leveque	82
Christmas Island		80
		81
		82
Cocos (Keeling) Island		20
		28
Port Walcott	5-KP Tower	81
Exmouth	Charles Knife Canyon	21
	Naval Base	22
Coral Bay	Warroora	80
	Ningaloo Station	82
Carnarvon	Cape Covier	81
Denham	Steep Point	22
Kalbarri	Red Bluff	80
Geraldton	Rat Island Abrolhos	81
	Moresby Ranges	82
Jurien Bay	Mount Lesueur	21
Lancelin	Nilgen	22
Perth Metropolitan	Rottnest Island	81
Mandurah	Turners Hill	82
Dunsborough	Mount Duckworth	22
Cape Naturaliste	Radar Hill	80
Augusta	Hillview Golf Course	82
Windy Harbour	Cathedral Rock	81
Walpole	Young's Hill	21
Denmark/Peaceful Bay	Mount Shadforth	22
Albany	Mount Clarence	82
	Two Peoples Bay	81
Bremer Bay	Bremer Bay	80
Hopetoun	Hopetoun	21
Esperance	Howick Hill	21
	6 Mile Hill	22

Volunteer Marine Rescue and ACRM Base services

There are 39 VMR groups situated between
Esperance and Kununurra including Christmas and
Cocos (Keeling) Islands. In addition to the VMR
groups, ACRM Base has a long history of coastal
radio coverage in WA.

Some of the VMR groups provide a log on and log off
service, but not all and each operate at different times
of the day and night. Therefore contact your local
radio base station prior to heading out on the water.
Refer to the contacts page of this brochure and visit
the VMR services website.

If there is no coverage in the area you plan to go
boating, leave your vessel and voyage details with a
responsible person and advise them to contact the
police if you fail to return on time.
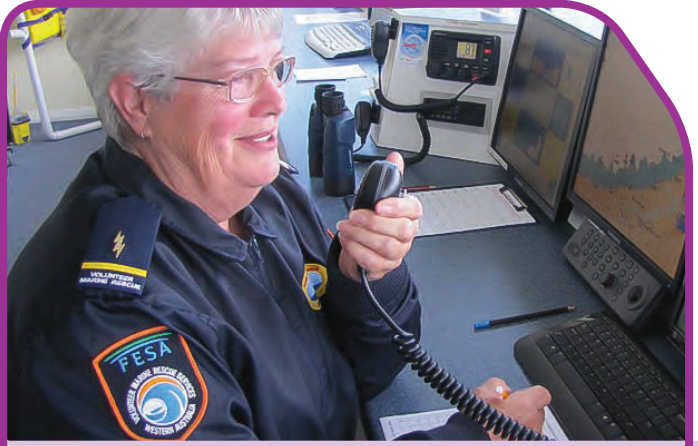
Monitored Radio Channels

Group	Call Sign	27Mhz	VHF & Repeater	HF
ACRM Capel	ACRM Base	88	16 & 80/22	By Request
ACRM Denham	ACRM Base	88	16	By Request
Albany	VMR 610	88	16 & 81/82	4125
Augusta	VMR 625	88	16 & 82	No
Bremer	VMR 607	88	16	No
Broome	VMR 650	88	16	No
Bunbury	VMR 634	88	16	4125
Busselton	VMR 640	88/91	16/74 & 80/22	No
Carnarvon	VMR 676	88	16/73 & 81	4125
Christmas Is	VMR 686	No	16/73 & 80/81/82	2182/4125
Cockburn	VH6CL	88/90	16/73	No
Cocos Island	VMR 678	No	16 & 20/28	No
Coral Bay	VMR 679	90	16 & 80/82	4125
Denmark	VMR 613	88/94	16/77 & 22	No
Derby	VMR 694	88	16 & 81	2182/4125
Esperance	VMR 601	88	16 & 21/22	2182/4125
Exmouth	VMR 682	88	16 & 21/22	4125
Fremantle	VN6DI	88/90	16/73 & 81/82	2182/4125
Geraldton	VMR 670	88/91	16/72 & 81/82	4125
Hopetoun	VMR 604	88	16 & 21	No
Jurien Bay	VMR 661	88/91	16 & 21	4125
Kalbarri	VMR 673	88/90/96	16 & 80	4125
Lancelin	VMR 688	88/91	16 & 22	4125
Leeman	VMR 664	88/91	16/73	4125
Mandurah	VMR 611	88/91	16/73 & 82	4125
Margaret River	VMR 628	88	16 & 80	No
Naturaliste	VMR 631	88/91	16/74 & 80/22	No
Onslow	VMR 683	88	16	No
Peaceful Bay	VMR 616	88/96	16/77 & 22	No
Port Denison	VMR 667	88/91	16/73	2182/4125
Port Hedland	VMR 691	88	16	No
Port Walcott	VMR 689	88	16 & 81	No
Rockingham	VN6KC	88/90/91	16/73/81/82	4125
Shark Bay	VMR 675	88	16	No
Two Rocks	VMR 677	88/91	16/73	No
Walpole	VMR 619	88	16 & 21	No
West Pilbara	VMR 685	88	16	No
Whitfords	VJ6LQ	88/90	16/73	4125
Windy Harbour	VMR 620	88/91	16 & 81	2182/4125
Wyndham	VMR 699	88	16 & 80/81	No

Marine radios

In an emergency communication is vital and a marine radio is essential. Mobile telephones, although useful as a backup communications system, cannot replace a marine radio.

When you need to carry a marine radio

You must carry a marine band radio if you go more than five nautical miles (nm) from the mainland, or more than one nm from an island situated more than five nm from the mainland. The choice of radio is up to you, it can be 27mHz, VHF or HF.

Which channels to use and when

Always listen on the distress channel and if you need to make a call, you can use this channel first and then switch to a working channel. When the call is finished, resume listening on the distress channel (and the working channel if needed using the dual watch function).

Using dual watch function

The dual watch (DW) function allows you to pre-program two different channels into your radio and monitor both by hitting the DW button. The first channel programmed should always be the distress channel. The second channel programmed can be your local working channel. Once these are programmed, it's easy to select each for use and automatically hear a call coming in on either channel.

Licensing requirements and operating procedures

Operators of 27 MHz marine radios do not need to be licensed. Operators of VHF and MF/HF marine radios must hold an operator's certificate. Courses for this qualification are available at maritime colleges and VMR groups.

A vessel fitted with MF/HF marine radio must always have an individual station licence (renewable each year). This will allocate a radio call-sign to that vessel.

Details of licensing, including what certificates are required and how to obtain them, can be found on the Australian Communications and Media Authority website: www.acma.gov.au

Unauthorised use of radios

Marine radios have a very serious purpose. Falsely indicating distress wastes a lot of time and resources; possibly weakening the ability to respond to a genuine emergency, and carries a severe penalty.

Logging on and off

Skippers are advised to log on and off every time they go out on their boats with their nearest radio station. Typically a VMR group, Australian Coast Radio Monitors (ACRM) base or Water Police. The idea being that you log on with a radio station and let them know who you are, where you are going, when you will arrive back and log off on your return.

Logging on procedure

Logging on is a simple process and you'll know you've told someone responsible when you're due to arrive back and they will take the appropriate action if you haven't called in by then. If you change your planned time, call the radio station again and advise them of your change in plans.

This is an example of the radio call and the details the radio station will need to help find you in the event of an emergency:

You say: VMR Station, VMR Station, VMR Station - This is [vessel registration (3 times)] OVER.

VMR Station will reply: This is VMR Station please go to channel xx OVER.

You say: Going to channel xx (Change to channel xx and wait for VMR to call you).

VMR will call you 3 times (vessel rego) and say OVER.

You say: VMR Station this is [vessel rego] I wish to log on and supply them with the:
- vessel's name, registration number or call sign;
- departure time and location;
- destination;
- trip intentions;
- number of people on board;
- amount of fuel carried; and
- estimated time of return.

Logging off procedure

It is very important to remember to log off with the radio station that you logged on with, to avoid a search being initiated.

This is an example of the radio call and the details the radio station will need to take you off their log:

You say: VMR Station, VMR Station, VMR Station - This is [vessel registration (3 times)] OVER.

VMR Station will reply: This is VMR Station please go to channel xx OVER.

You say: Going to channel xx (Change to channel xx and wait for VMR to call you).

VMR will call you 3 times (vessel rego) and say OVER.

You say: VMR Station this is (vessel rego) I wish to log off.

VMR Station will say: Thank you for logging off.

You say: This is (call sign or vessel rego) thanks OUT.

Department of Transport

Remember to LOG ON LOG OFF! Every trip

VHF	Ch 16	Distress & calling
Radio	Ch 67	Safety & emergency
	72, 73, 77	* Recreational & working
VHF Repeaters	21, 22, 80, 81, 82	* Recreational & working
27 MHz	Ch 88	Distress & calling
Radio	Ch 86	Safety & emergency
	90, 91, 94, 96	* Recreational & working

* Contact VMR groups for local information
www.dot.wa.gov.au/contactus/pages/volunteermarinercuesevices.aspx

A Log On Log Off sticker is available from DoT.
Position it near your radio as a useful reminder.

Making a distress call

The distress call 'Mayday' maybe used only if the boat is in grave and imminent danger and immediate assistance is required. The urgency call 'Pan Pan' should be used when use of the distress call cannot be justified but a very urgent message concerning the safety of your boat or a person needs to be transmitted. The safety call 'Securite' should be used if you wish to broadcast an important navigational warning.

A distress call is made on the distress channels; 16 using a VHF radio, 88 using a 27Mhz radio or 4125 using a HF radio.

A Mayday call

A Mayday call on one of the distress channels will attract the attention of land based radio stations and other vessels in your area. Stay calm, and explain your distress information clearly using the 3Ps; position, problem and the number of people on board.

Mayday procedure
"Mayday, Mayday, Mayday"
"This is [vessel registration]" (spoken three times)
"My position is ... [Details of the your position]"
"My problem is ... [Nature of distress]"
"I have # people on board" [Number of people]

This call can be repeated as often as necessary until answered. If no answer is received on distress frequencies, repeat the call on any frequency likely to attract attention.

Pan Pan urgency call

The Pan Pan urgency call should be used when the Mayday distress call cannot be justified but there is an urgent message to transmit concerning the safety of the vessel or the safety of a person (for example, mechanical breakdown, medical emergency or a man overboard).

Pan Pan procedure
"Pan Pan, Pan Pan, Pan Pan"
"Hello all stations, hello all stations, hello all stations"
"This is [vessel registration]" (spoken three times)
"My position is ... [Details of the vessel's position]"
"I require... [Details of assistance required and other information]"

Pan Pan urgency calls can be made on a distress frequency or any other frequency likely to attract attention.

Securite safety call

The Securite (Saycure-e-tay) safety call is used if you wish to broadcast an important navigational warning. However, a safety call is more likely to be made by a coast station or volunteer marine rescue group and may include important strong weather warnings.

Securite safety call procedure
"Saycure-e-tay, Saycure-e-tay, Saycure-e-tay"
"Hello all stations, hello all stations, hello all stations"
"This is .... [vessel registration]" (spoken three times)
"A hazard exists ..... [Details of the warning or announcement]".