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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Repeater Name</th>
<th>Latitude</th>
<th>Longitude</th>
<th>Contact Details</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wyndham</td>
<td>The Bastion</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lacrosse Island</td>
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<td>Derby</td>
<td>Aurora Island</td>
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<td>Broome</td>
<td>The Water Dock Tower</td>
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<td>Cape Leveque</td>
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<td>Christmas Island</td>
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<td>Cocos (Keeling) Island</td>
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<td>Port Hedland</td>
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<td>Exmouth</td>
<td>Charles Knoll Carpark</td>
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<td>Derby</td>
<td>Koolan Island</td>
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<td>Broome</td>
<td>The Water Bank Tower</td>
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<td>Cocos (Keeling) Island</td>
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<td>Port Walcott</td>
<td>5-KP Tower</td>
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<tr>
<td>Exmouth</td>
<td>Charles Knife Canyon</td>
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<td>Naval Base</td>
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<td>Coral Bay</td>
<td>Warroora</td>
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<td>Ningaloo Station</td>
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<tr>
<td>Carnarvon</td>
<td>Cape Cuvier</td>
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<td>Denham</td>
<td>Steep Point</td>
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<td>Kalbarri</td>
<td>Red Bluff</td>
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<td>Geraldton</td>
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<td>Two Peoples Bay</td>
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<td>Bremer Bay</td>
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<td>Hopetoun</td>
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<td>Esperance</td>
<td>Howick Hill</td>
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<td>6 Mile Hill</td>
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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 operates 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.

Contact details
Department of Transport
Email: marine.safety@transport.wa.gov.au
Website: www.transport.wa.gov.au/imarine

Boating Weather Forecast
Boating Weather: 1300 659 210
Website: www.bom.gov.au/marine

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.
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 isolated area such as islands or outer reefs.

The choice of radio is up to you, but it may be:
- 27MHz VHF or HF radio
- Digital Selective Calling (DSC)
- FM radio

Which channels to use and when

Always listen on channel 16 (VHF) and if you need to make a call, you can use this channel first even if you select another 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 fitting the DW function.

The first channel must be programmed as your local channel. Once these are programmed, it’s easy to select both channels for use and automatically hear a call coming in on either channel.

Digital Selective Calling

If your vessel has a marine radio with Digital Selective Calling (DSC) capability, then you are advised to refer to the user’s manual to ensure you understand and familiar with how to use the DSC function in an emergency.

DSC is a standard for sending pre-defined digital messages via the high-frequency (HF) and very-high-frequency (VHF) maritime radio systems. It is a core part of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDDS).

DSC should be connected to the vessels GPS (Global Positioning System) so the latitude and longitude coordinates can be sent with the distress message. If you do not have your VHF radio connected to your GPS, you must specify latitude and longitude manually (see simplified distress call procedure).

Licencing requirements and operating procedures

Operators of VHF and MF/HF marine radios do not need to be licensed. Operators of VHF and MF/HF marine radio must hold an operator’s certificate. Courses for this qualification are available at maritime colleges and VMAR groups. A vessel fitted with MF/HF marine radio must always have an individual station licence (including each vessel). This will allocate a radio call-sign to that vessel.

Details of licencing, 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. False indicating distress wastes a lot of time and resources, possibly realising 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 on board their vessel with their nearest radio station. Typically a local 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 and log off on your return.

Logging on procedure

Logging is a simple process and you’ll know you’re talking to someone responsible when you due arrive back and they will take the appropriate action if you haven’t called in by then. To change your planed times, call the radio station again and advise them of your changed plan.

This is an example of the radio call and the details the radio station will need to help find you, along with the number of people on board.

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

VMR will call you 3 times (vessel rego) and say 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: This is our call sign (vessel rego) OVER.

You say: This is [vessel registration] (spoken three times).

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 you desire the call to be transmitted concerning the safety of the vessel or the safety of a person for example, mechanical breakdown, medical emergency or a man overboard.

Pan panic call

The Pan panic 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 procedure

Pan, Pan, Pan, Pan! Pan

“Hello all stations, hello all stations, hello all stations!” This is “[vessel registration]” (spoken three times).

“Position is …” (Details of the vessel’s position).

I require …” (Details of assistance required and other important information)

You say: I am ready to respond to your assistance.

Every trip

If you go more than five nautical miles (nm) from the mainland, you must always have an individual station licence and if you have a marine radio you should probably be licensed to use it.

Remember to

Position it near your radio as a useful reminder.

Media Authority website: www.acma.gov.au

### Making a distress call

#### Distress call procedure

**Mayday call**

- **This is [vessel registration] (spoken three times).**
- "Position is …” (Details of the vessel’s position).
- "I require …” (Details of assistance required and other important information)
- "I am ready to respond to your assistance."

**Pan Pan call**

- **This is [vessel registration] (spoken three times).**
- "Position is …” (Details of the vessel’s position).
- "I require …” (Details of assistance required and other important information)
- "I am ready to respond to your assistance."

### 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 maybe only to be made by a coast station or volunteer marine rescue group and may include important strong weather warnings.

#### Securite safety call procedure

**Securite call**

- **This is [vessel registration] (spoken three times).**
- "Position is …” (Details of your position).
- "I require …” (Details of assistance required and other important information)
- "I am ready to respond to your assistance."

This call can be repeated as often as necessary to have answers. It is answered on receipt of distress frequencies, repeat the call on any frequency likely to attract attention.

#### Emergency procedure

**Emergency call**

- **This is [vessel registration] (spoken three times).**
- "Position is …” (Details of your position).
- "I require …” (Details of assistance required and other important information)
- "I am ready to respond to your assistance."

This call can be repeated as often as necessary to have answers. It is answered on receipt of distress frequencies, repeat the call on any frequency likely to attract attention.

#### Close-up call

**Close-up call**

- **This is [vessel registration] (spoken three times).**
- "Position is …” (Details of your position).
- "I require …” (Details of assistance required and other important information)
- "I am ready to respond to your assistance."

This call can be repeated as often as necessary to have answers. It is answered on receipt of distress frequencies, repeat the call on any frequency likely to attract attention.

#### Announcements

**Announcement**

- **This is [vessel registration] (spoken three times).**
- "Position is …” (Details of your position).
- "I require …” (Details of assistance required and other important information)
- "I am ready to respond to your assistance."

This call can be repeated as often as necessary to have answers. It is answered on receipt of distress frequencies, repeat the call on any frequency likely to attract attention.

### Pan panic call

The Pan panic 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 procedure

Pan, Pan, Pan, Pan! Pan

“Hello all stations, hello all stations, hello all stations!” This is “[vessel registration]” (spoken three times).

“Position is …” (Details of the vessel’s position).

I require …” (Details of assistance required and other important information)

You say: I am ready to respond to your assistance.

#### Pan panic call

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#### Pan procedure

Pan, Pan, Pan, Pan! Pan

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