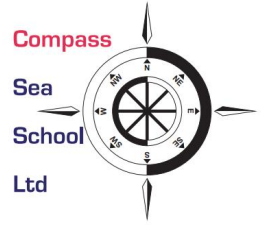




VHF-SRC Radio Course

Pre-Course Reading and
Activities

Welcome



Welcome to Compass Sea School and thank you for choosing us for your training.

To assist with your course we have provided this leaflet containing useful information for your VHF-SRC Course, Pre-reading and the Exam.

Please read it carefully and complete as much of the pre-course activities as possible.

We look forward to welcoming you to the training centre for your course

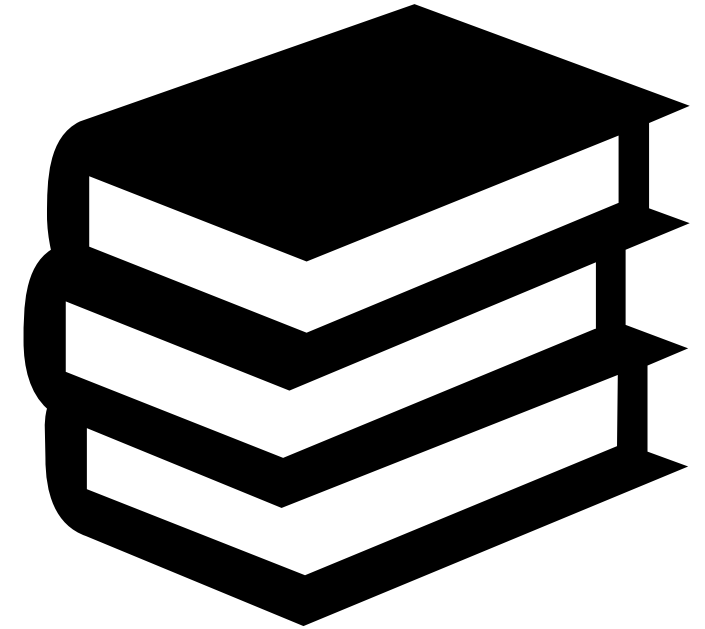
- Training Centre Location

- Inverness Marina, Longman Drive, Inverness, IV1 1SU
- We have ample free parking



Pre-Course Reading and Activities

- It is essential that you complete 3 hours of pre-course reading before attending your face to face VHF-SRC Radio course.
- Please ensure that you have read through Sections 5, 6, 7, and 8 of your VHF course handbook.
- This leaflet also offers some more guidance and links for you to peruse prior to your course – we hope that you will find it helpful.



VHF-SRC Radio Exam

- To qualify for your VHF-SRC Radio licence you must complete both:
 - VHF Radio Course (classroom or online)
 - VHF-SRC Radio Exam

NOTE: If your employer is funding your training/exam you do NOT need to apply for the exam application form

It is essential that you apply and pay for your exam directly with the RYA – please use the link below:

[RYA Marine Radio SRC Exam Payments](#)

The exam fee is currently £76 (2025 Fee)

A passport sized photograph is required to process your licence application

Activities – Click the boxes below to access the material

Distress Messages
– Mayday and
Mayday Relay

VHF Coverage &
Radio Channels

Phonetic
Alphabet

Emergency
Beacons

Useful Links

Pre-Course
Checklist



Sending a MAYDAY

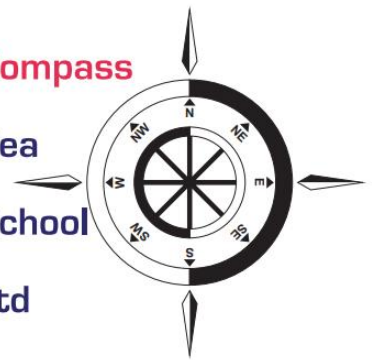
VHF – SRC Radio Course

Compass

Sea

School

Ltd



4 Types of DSC Announcement

1. ROUTINE – General Comms

Individual OR Group call
Select Vessels MMSI to call from directory,
Select Channel (6,8,72,77)
Transmit Call
Wait for response

Call “All Ships”
Select “Urgency”
Select Channel (usually 16)
Transmit Call
Send Voice “Pan Pan”

3. URGENCY – Vessel/Person at Risk

2. SAFETY – Navigational Safety

Call “All Ships”
Select “Safety”
Select Channel (usually 16)
Transmit Call
Send Voice “Securitay”

Press Red “Distress” Button
Select Distress Type
Press and Hold Red “DISTRESS” Button
(Usually 3-5 secs)
Send Voice “MAYDAY” call

4. DISTRESS – Threat to Life

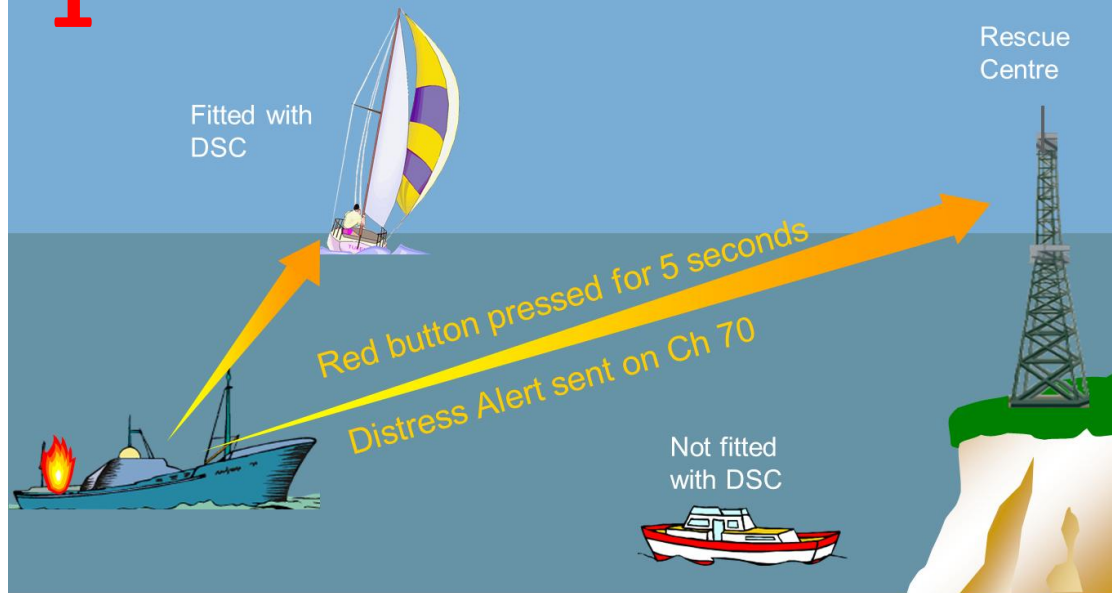


Distress Alert – THE RED BUTTON

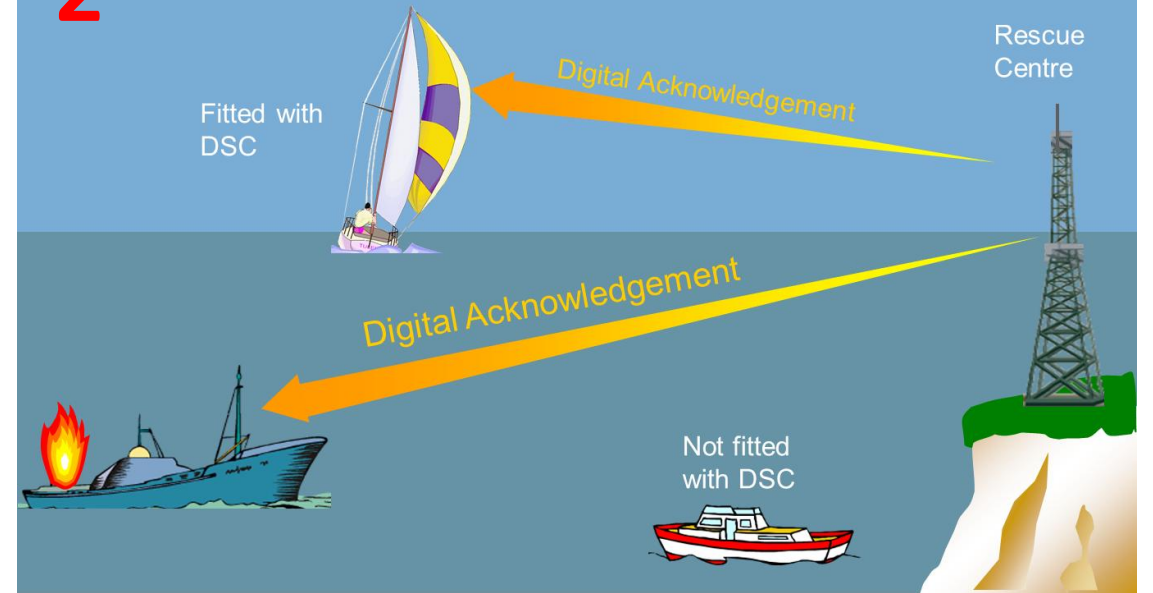
- Lift the Cover
- Press the Button
 - Select your Distress
 - Fire
 - Flooding
 - Sinking
 - MOB
 - Capsize
 - Grounding
 - Piracy
- Press for 3 - 5 secs to transmit
- Wait for Acknowledgement



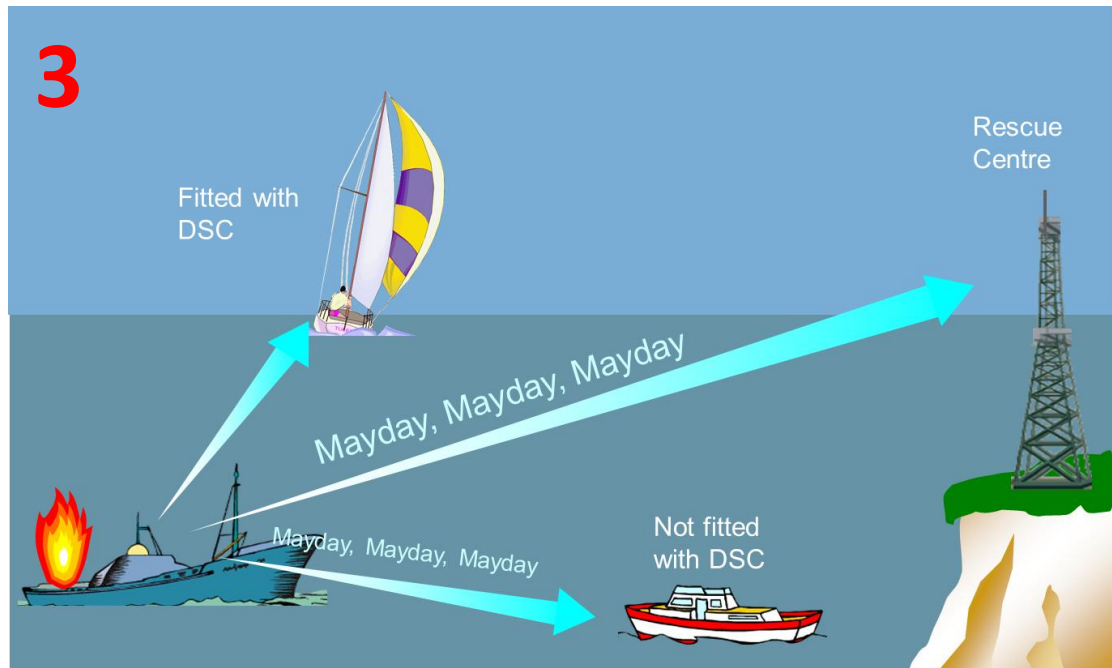
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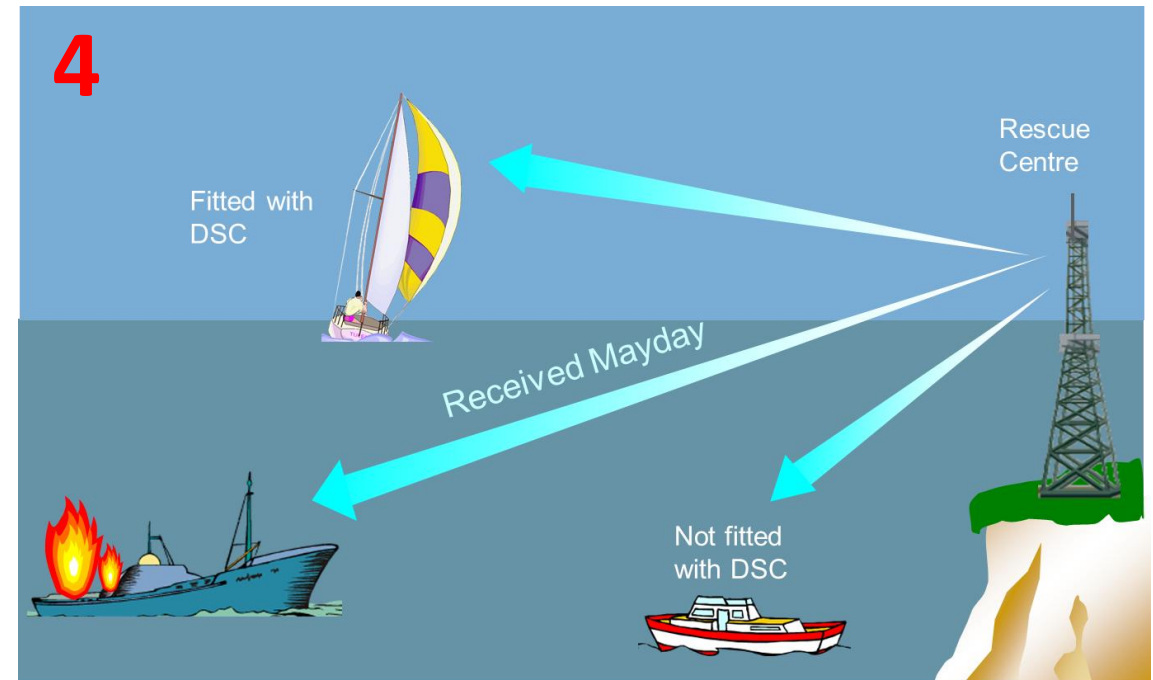
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3



4



Acknowledgement of a DSC Alert

- Alerts sent from a Class D Unit can be acknowledged by:
 - Maritime Rescue Co-ordination Centre (MRCC)
 - Class A and B Units (Larger vessels on ocean going passages)

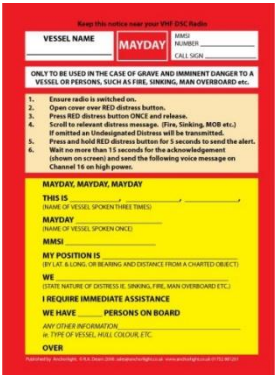


Distress Call and Message

M
I

R
P
D
A
N
I
O

- Mayday Mayday Mayday
- This is Yacht Calamity, Yacht Calamity, Yacht Calamity
- Call Sign - MVYQ7 (Mike, Victor, Yankee, Quebec, Seven)
- MMSI 232089001
- Mayday Yacht Calamity MVYQ7 MMSI 232089001
- My Position is 53° 25'.21N, 003° 57'.33W
- I am Sinking
- I require immediate assistance
- There are 4 POB
- We are wearing lifejackets & abandoning to liferaft with a VHF radio
- Over

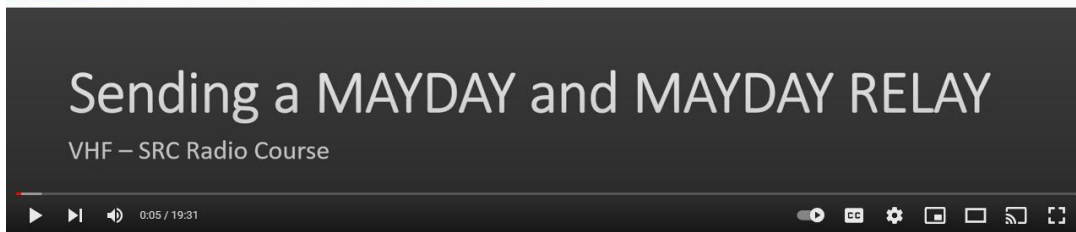


M	Mayday
I	Identity
R	Repeat (Identity Once)
P	Position
D	Distress
A	Assistance
N	Number
I	Information
O	OVER!

Sending a Mayday and Mayday Relay



- Get to grips with the Mayday and Mayday Relay call
- View our video on our Youtube Channel
- <https://youtu.be/IOkMc1-VGxg>



VHF Mayday and Mayday Relay

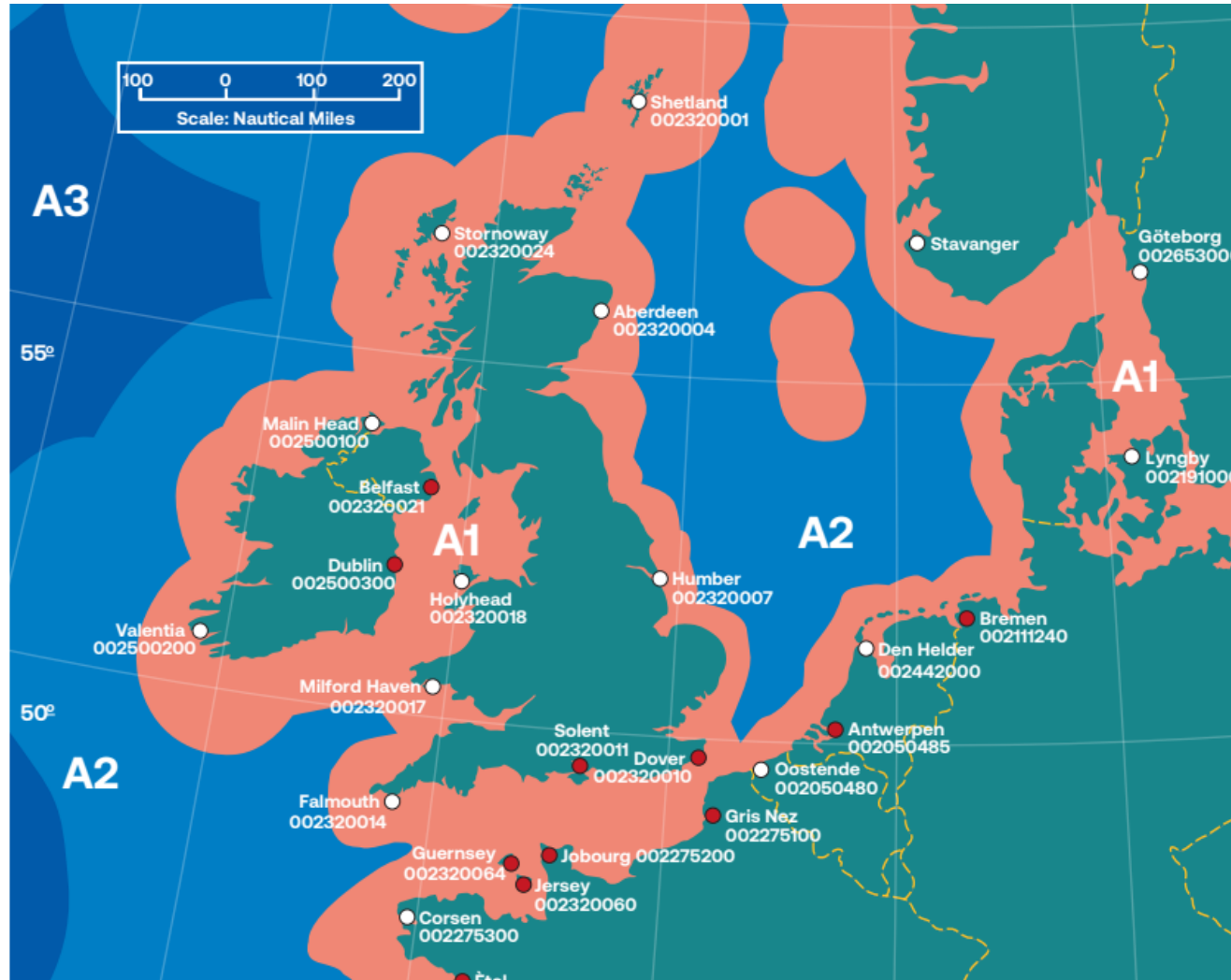
Click to return
to the menu





VHF Radio Coverage and Operating Channels

VHF Radio coverage in the UK



Sea Areas

○ Medium Frequency (MF) and Very High Frequency (VHF) Coast Radio Station

● Very High Frequency (VHF) Coast Radio Station

Sea Area A1

The radiotelephone coverage of VHF coast stations in which continuous alerting by Digital Selective Calling (DSC) is available.

This area relates to a vessel with an antenna 4m above sea level. Where the antenna is lower or it is a portable radio, the area is smaller.

Sea Area A2

The radiotelephone coverage of MF coast stations in which continuous alerting by Digital Selective Calling is available.

Sea Area A3

The coverage of Inmarsat geostationary satellites.

CONTACTS

Ofcom

e-mail: spectrum.licensing@ofcom.org.uk
Tel: +44 (0)207 981 3000
www.ofcom.org.uk

Maritime and Coastguard Agency

UK Technical Services Navigation
e-mail: infoline@mca.gov.uk
Tel: +44 (0)203 817 2000
www.gov.uk/mca



VHF Channel Numbers - Chapter 5



Channel Number	Designation
16	Distress, Safety and Calling
70	Digital Selective Calling (DSC)
13	Bridge to Bridge (Navigations Safety)
06, 08, 72, 77	Inter-Ship Channels
11, 12, 14	Port Operations Channels (these are the most common but check the almanac)
12	Vessel Traffic Services (VTS)
17, 69	Ship Movements
67	UK Small Craft Safety
M1, P1, 37	UK Yacht Clubs (race control and safety boats)
M2	UK Yacht Race Management
80, M1/37A, 12	UK Marinas
0	Emergency Services / UK SAR Assets
15 / 17	On board communications (low power only)

Click to return
to the menu



NATO Phonetic Alphabet

- A guide introduction to the Alphabet letters
- When we expect to use it whilst we are afloat
- A couple of exercises to have a go at prior to your course



Phonetic Alphabet

	A alpha	B bravo	C charlie	D delta	E echo	
F foxtrot	G golf	H hotel	I india	J juliet	K kilo	L lima
M mike	N november	O oscar	P papa	Q quebec	R romeo	S sierra
T tango	U uniform	V victor	W whisky	X x-ray	Y yankee	Z zulu

When do we use it?



The phonetic Alphabet can be used to spell out any words over the radio



It is most often used to spell out:

Vessel Names

Vessel Callsigns

Can also be used to spell out a location if it not familiar to the Coastguard.

Examples – Vessel Names



Vessel ZEBRA

Zulu, Echo, Bravo, Romeo, Alpha



Vessel Sunshine

Sierra, Uniform, November, Sierra, Hotel, India, November, Echo

Vessel Yankee Trader

*Yankee, Alpha, November, Kilo, Echo, Echo
Tango, Romeo, Alpha, Delta, Echo, Romeo*



Exercise – try saying the following out loud

Vessel Names

- Mercury
- Endeavour
- Mischief
- Celtic North
- Aquaholic
- Explorer
- Axiom
- Xtream
- Sailing Queen

Vessel Call Signs

- MG6V3
- XZ4Y
- ABCD8
- WIJ27
- ZEX15
- WRO7
- FHR18



Phonetic Alphabet

	A alpha	B bravo	C charlie	D delta	E echo	
F foxtrot	G golf	H hotel	I india	J juliet	K kilo	L lima
M mike	N november	O oscar	P papa	Q quebec	R romeo	S sierra
T tango	U uniform	V victor	W whisky	X x-ray	Y yankee	Z zulu

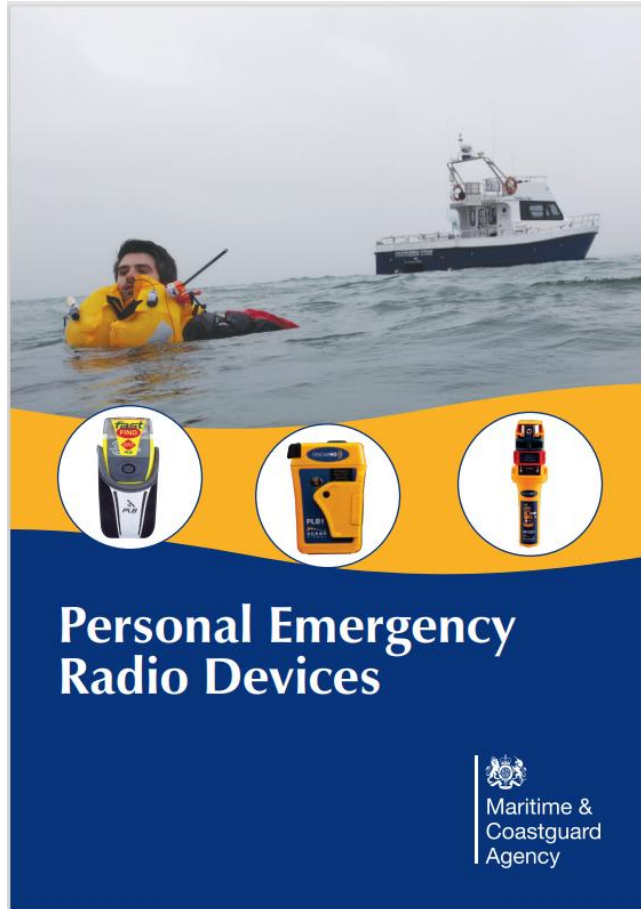
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Personal and Vessel Beacons



Use of Personal Devices



- The Maritime Coastguard Agency have developed a great guide to personal devices – download the leaflet from the link below:

Download Leaflet 

Beacon Registration

- All beacons must be added to your Ship Radio Licence or Ship's Portable Licence click on the logo below for more details



- Beacons must also be registered with the UK beacon Registry – click below for more details

Register a UK 406 MHz beacon

A UK 406 megahertz (MHz) beacon sends a distress signal to alert search and rescue authorities to your location.

Use this service to:

- register a UK 406 MHz beacon
- update your beacon registration details
- update your vessel or aircraft details

You can register the following types of UK 406 MHz beacon:

- Personal Locator Beacon (PLB), for any use
- Emergency Position Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) or Simplified Voyage-Data Recorder, for maritime use
- Emergency Locator Transmitter (ELT) or ELT dongle, for aircraft use

Registering is free and takes around 15 minutes.

Click to return
to the menu



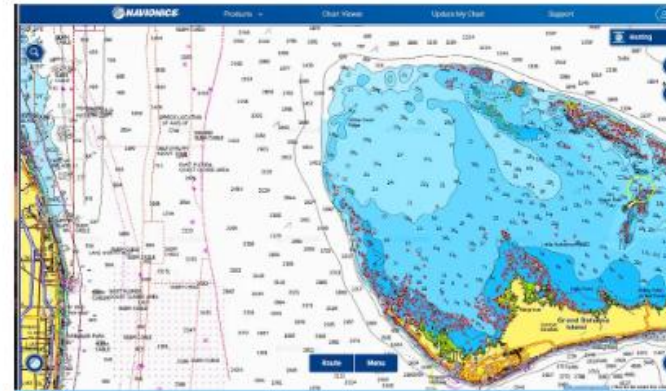
procedures and calling for help in an emergency or you are just brushing up your knowledge our online knowledge to help you out.

Useful Links

- Our website has a range of useful links – click the link to access:
- [VHF Radio Training Tips – Compass Sea School Ltd \(compass-seaschool.co.uk\)](https://compass-seaschool.co.uk)



of having
(EPIRB) on
coupled with



A Survival Story

A fantastic example of the importance of having an Emergency Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) on board if you are travelling offshore – coupled with an ...

[Read More](#)

Successful Yacht Rescue more 500miles off Cornwall

A fantastic example of the importance of having an Emergency Indicating Radio Beacon (EPIRB) on board if you are travelling offshore – coupled with an ...

[Read More](#)

Pre-Course Checklist

- Prior to attending your course please make sure that you have completed the following steps:
 - ✓ Pre-Course Reading
 - ✓ Exam Application
 - not required if your employer has paid for your exam
 - ✓ Exam Application form downloaded and Printed
 - A4 landscape paper
 - ✓ Passport Photograph
 - All applicants must provide, at the time of the exam, a passport size (45mm high by 35mm wide) colour photograph with their name clearly printed on the back)
 - ✓ Photo ID – Driving Licence / Passport