

DIGITAL SELECTIVE CALLING (DSC)

At a bare minimum, responsible boaters should be capable of sending a DSC Distress Call as well as taking the correct action when a DSC alarm sounds on their radio. DSC is in place and operating now, especially in US coastal area where RESCUE 21 is operational. This is a huge safety improvement that all boaters should understand and be prepared to use in case of emergency.

MAKING A DSC DISTRESS/MAYDAY CALL. This call is only made when personnel and/or property are in immediate danger and immediate assistance is requested. Press the Red Distress Button on your radio and hold it in for five seconds. Listen for a DSC Distress Acknowledgement. After it is received, or if it isn't acknowledged, shift to the VHF Distress, Safety and Calling Frequency (VHF Ch-16) or a SSB Safety and Hailing Frequency (2182, 4125, 6215, 8291, 12290 or 16420 kHz, USB) and issue a voice MAYDAY, following the format on the DSC Distress Communication Form.

Persons in distress can use any frequency/means to alert other mariners/persons ashore to their plight.

IF YOU HEAR A DSC DISTRESS CALL. Shut the radio alarm off by pressing any button on your radio. Write down the MMSI and position information showing on your radio display screen. Wait 3-5 minutes for an authority to answer the call. If no other station replies attempt to verbally relay the MMSI and position information to USCG. Contact the station in distress if no one else does and go to their rescue, if you are able to do so.

IF YOU ACCIDENTALLY MAKE A DSC DISTRESS CALL. Shut the call off. Get on the VHF Distress, Safety and Calling Frequency (VHF Ch-16) or SSB Safety and Hailing Frequency (2182 kHz, USB) and make an all stations announcement to cancel the DSC Distress Call.

DSC DISTRESS COMMUNICATION (MAYDAY) FORM. A copy of this form should be filled out with boat description ahead of time and posted near each fixed DSC VHF Radio on board. This form can be filled out and used as a script when issuing voice MAYDAY Calls.