

United Kingdom

If you sold your boat equipped with VHF, you must surrender your station license and MMSI. If you have bought a pre-owned vessel equipped with VHF, you cannot transfer the previous license to your name. You will therefore need to apply for a new licence in your name, retaining the call sign and MMSI number of the vessel. The MMSI number stays with a vessel for life.

See [Ofcom ship radio and ship portable website](#).

Canada

If you have sold your boat **with** the radio equipment and MMSI, do not change the MMSI number. The buyer must update their contact information by completing [Form AB](#) (Ship with VHF/DSC only, unlicensed or licensed radio). If your radio is installed on a ship and you're **staying in Canadian waters**, you do not need a radio licence. Complete [Form AB](#) and choose the option "Not Licensed". Form A/B also requires you to select MMSI form type: "Assign a new MMSI" or "Modify and existing MMSI".

See [ISED Maritime Mobile Service Identities \(MMSIs\) and Maritime Identities \(MIs\) webpage](#).

ChatGPT analyzed these various procedures and concluded the following:

- **MMSI follows the vessel; the licence/owner record changes** — UK, Canada, United States, France, Netherlands, Denmark, and commonly Sweden.
- **The existing MMSI can be deliberately transferred/released to the buyer** — Germany, Sweden, Finland, United States, Netherlands.
- **The radio identity is more closely associated with the licence/callsign holder, so transfer requires affirmative action**— especially Finland and New Zealand.

There is no known country other than US that allows more than a single provide assign and register MMSIs with recreational vessels. Although New Zealand allows Approved Radio Examiners assign and register MMSIs, they do not handle MMSIs for recreational vessels.

Comparison of national procedures

Country / authority	What the seller is expected to do	What the buyer does / treatment of existing MMSI
United Kingdom — Ofcom	Surrender the seller's Ship Radio Licence through the licensing portal when the vessel is sold.	Apply for a new licence in the buyer's name, retaining the vessel's existing callsign and MMSI . Ofcom states explicitly that the licence is non-transferable but the callsign and MMSI stay with the vessel for life. (www.ofcom.org.uk)
Canada — ISED	If the boat is sold with the radio equipment and MMSI , the MMSI is not to be changed . ISED's published procedure does not prescribe a separate seller cancellation in this situation.	Buyer submits Form AB , selecting " Modify an existing MMSI ," and replaces the former owner's contact/emergency information with the buyer's. Thus the MMSI effectively stays with the radio-equipped vessel. (ISED Canada)
United States — FCC / authorized MMSI registration agents, with USCG guidance	Seller should contact the MMSI issuer and arrange release/transfer of the MMSI registration to the buyer . USCG alternatively permits the seller to have the MMSI deleted from the equipment and cancel the registration. Any DSC/AIS radio retained by the seller must have the old MMSI removed. (Navigation Center)	Buyer contacts the MMSI issuer to have the existing MMSI registration transferred/updated . FCC expressly says the MMSI programmed into the vessel's radios may be reused by the new owner. For an FCC-issued MMSI, the buyer can request the existing MMSI with the new ship-station licence application; privately issued MMSIs are re-registered through an authorized agent. (Federal Communications Commission)
France — ANFR	Seller should terminate ("résilier") the seller's radio licence when the vessel is sold. ANFR's service specifically provides a procedure/form for a new owner. (ANFR)	Buyer obtains the licence in the new owner's name. ANFR treats the MMSI as an identity assigned to the vessel : one vessel registration corresponds to an MMSI, and an MMSI assigned to one vessel may not simply be moved to another vessel. Thus the ownership/licence information is changed rather than the seller taking the MMSI away. (ANFR)
Germany — Bundesnetzagentur	Seller and buyer may formally request transfer of the number assignment to the legal successor ("Übertragung der Zuteilung auf Rechtsnachfolger"),	Buyer takes over the existing number assignment, including MMSI, through the BNetzA transfer procedure. If additional or changed identifiers are needed, the buyer

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Netherlands — RDI	expressly including transfer from seller to purchaser of a vessel. The seller can instead return the assignment if it will not be transferred. To transfer the radio registration, the seller first terminates the existing maritime registration in Mijn RDI. This releases the callsign, ATIS and MMSI for takeover. (Rijksinspectie Digitale Infrastructuur)	instead applies for a new number assignment. (Bundesnetzagentur) Buyer then applies to take over the existing registration and identifiers. The normal online takeover should be made within three months; thereafter a paper/fee procedure is required. RDI specifically promotes this approach because it avoids having to reprogram the radios. (Rijksinspectie Digitale Infrastructuur)
Sweden — PTS	Seller may transfer the entire VHF permit, including the MMSI, to the purchaser, or may transfer only the MMSI. PTS provides a transfer form/email procedure identifying both parties.	Buyer supplies personal, vessel and equipment information and completes the transfer to the buyer's permit. PTS specifically says it is common for the MMSI to pass from the previous owner and thereby follow the vessel. (PTS) Buyer applies for his or her own radio licence. If the MMSI programmed in the radio was transferred with the equipment, the buyer reports that MMSI in the application. Traficom will not issue the buyer's licence until the former owner has cancelled the old licence and released the MMSI. Interestingly, the recreational radio callsign normally follows the licence holder, whereas the programmed MMSI can pass with the equipment/vessel. (Traficom)
Finland — Traficom	Seller who sells the vessel together with its radio equipment must cancel the seller's radio licence. Cancellation releases the programmed MMSI. (Traficom)	Buyer/takeover is recorded as a change of owner rather than obtaining unrelated identifiers. Danish MMSIs are assigned to ships rather than to individuals, supporting continued use of the ship's existing MMSI following the ownership update. (Danish Maritime Authority)
Denmark — Danish Maritime Authority	An existing Ship Station Licence is changed to reflect the new owner. The Authority expressly lists change of owner among the changes to an existing licence; deregistration is used when the licence is no longer required. (Danish Maritime Authority)	
Norway — Norwegian Maritime Authority (NMA)	Since 2026 the NMA administers maritime radio licences. Its current guidance specifically says that when a radio-equipped vessel is bought or	Buyer reports the ownership change to NMA. The published recreational guidance I found does not state as explicitly as UK

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	sold, the change of ownership must be reported so that the Ship Radio Register contains the correct owner/contact information. (Sdir)	or Canada whether every ordinary sale automatically preserves the MMSI, so I would characterize Norway as an “update the existing radio-registration record” system rather than assert an unconditional MMSI-for-life rule. (Sdir)
Australia — AMSA	AMSA, rather than ACMA, maintains the MMSI function for DSC/AIS-equipped vessels. Its public material emphasizes keeping the MMSI register's ownership/contact information current. AMSA's change-of-ownership guidance states that where MMSI-associated equipment is sold or given away, it needs the new owner's name, address and telephone number. (Australian Maritime Safety Authority)	The MMSI record is updated for the new owner rather than routinely assigning a new MMSI solely because of a domestic ownership change. A significant exception is a change from foreign to Australian flag, for which AMSA expressly requires a new Australian MMSI and reprogramming. (Australian Maritime Safety Authority)
New Zealand — RSM / Coastguard recreational callsign system	The callsign belongs to the existing holder rather than automatically to the vessel. The seller can retain it, in which case the buyer must obtain a new callsign, or give written consent to its transfer. (Boating Education)	Buyer can take over the existing callsign/associated record with the seller's written consent; without consent the buyer obtains a new identity and must ensure any DSC equipment is correctly programmed. RSM's formal ship-licence system likewise assigns a callsign and MMSI to identify the vessel. (Boating Education)

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Transfer process as described in USCG NAVCEN website

Sale situation	What happens to existing MMSI?	Seller action	Buyer action
Whole vessel + all MMSI equipment sold	Normally stays with vessel	Release/transfer registration	Register same MMSI in buyer's name
Whole vessel sold, seller keeps one MMSI radio	MMSI stays with vessel	Erase MMSI from retained radio; release vessel registration	Register existing vessel MMSI
Vessel sold, but parties don't want to transfer MMSI	Existing MMSI terminated	Erase MMSI from all equipment and cancel registration	Obtain/register appropriate MMSI and reprogram
One radio sold separately	Stays with original vessel	Erase vessel MMSI from radio being sold	Program radio for buyer's vessel
Buyer cannot obtain former owner's cooperation	Cannot safely take over registration	—	Have old MMSI erased; obtain/register proper MMSI
FCC-licensed vessel sold	May generally remain with vessel, but license does not	Cancel FCC license	Obtain new FCC license and request old MMSI