

MMSI Working Group Summary Report

Sponsored by USCG and RTCM's GMDSS Task Force

Time / Date: Wednesday, 2 September 2026, 1:30 PM to 3:00 PM EDT

Location: Virtual

*Meeting was recorded for notekeeping purposes
Meeting documents available from [MMSI Working Group Repository](#)*

1. Welcome, changes to and approval of the agenda

No changes were made to the agenda.

2. [Summary record](#) and consequential actions from May 6th, 2026 MMSI Working Group meeting, Noting [Action items requiring long term action](#)

The summary record was noted.

3. Action Items from last meeting (updated items in red)

Action Item	Description	Assigned to	Action
70	Clarify processes, terminology and definitions used in MMSI transfer process: - Administrative Change – update of information not changing vessel, owner, or license type (no transfer involved) - Agent Change – transfer of license-by-rule MMSI agent and also FCC - Ownership Change – Transfer of vessel and/or radio to new owner (MMSI user) - Combined Change – Combined administration and ownership changes, including license type change to/from NTIA or FCC Fleet Change – change in fleet ownership of multiple vessels (affects FCC only) - Inactive Vs Cancelled MMSI registration no distinction between terms	Joe Hersey, Ed Thiedeman, Gene Danko, Katie Knox, Mike Brown	Discussed under agenda 4. Only processes #2 and #3 were considered. Currently only BOAT US allows a change in agent. Since The MMSI allotment list does not include changes in agent, one can normally assume BOAT US is the new agent if there's been a change in registrant. Considered in agenda #4 Close action item, but continue in work program.
73	Begin listing needed updates to MMSI MOA. Include MMSI providers decides to withdraw (Long Term AI 4), handling autonomous vessels.	Joe Hersey and FCC	Retain listing in 16 June summary agenda #5, including data changes reflected in agenda #10.
75	Look for “000” MMSIs in LBR registrations CGFIXIT query confirmed Nine.	BOAT US, USPS, Shine Joe	Closed.

4. Clarify processes, terminology and definitions used in MMSI transfer process

- The [MMSI transfer procedures](#) outside US were reviewed, particularly for [Canada](#) and the [UK](#). In both cases, the MMSI stayed with the boat when transferred. The seller would relinquish the MMSI when sold, and the new owner would then register that MMSI. In both countries the change could be done on line, at no charge. If the radios MMSI were reset or the buyer fitted the boat with a new radio, the buyer could request a new MMSI. Like the US, Canada also allowed recreational boats operating only in Canadian water to be licensed by rule. There were however two significant differences which encumbered MMSI transfers in the US, and contribute to the US's 60% inaccurate MMSI distress identity problem:
 - The US allows multiple agents register MMSIs, where in all other countries there is only one.
 - Except for USPS and BOAT US members, there is a cost to register MMSIs in the US. Registration is free in UK and Canada.
- Ownership change (Action Item 70: #3 and #4)
 - A copy of a bill of sale that included the signatures of both buyer and seller was considered sufficient proof in authorizing a change in MMSI registration from one registrant (seller) to the other (buyer).
 - If original owner is unknown, the buyer (new owner) may register the vessels MMSI with the agent which originally registered it. Alternatively, may should arrange for MMSIs to be reset.
 - If transfer of ownership occurred and the registrant learns that the new owner is unknown, then the registrant shall enter "BUYER UNK" placed at the beginning of the Remarks field.
- Agent change (Action Item 70: #2 and #4)
 - Only BOAT US routinely accepts a change in agent.
 - Recognizing that the purchaser of a used boat will need to update the MMSI registration of the radios equipped on that boat, there is a need to be able to identify the registration agent responsible for that MMSI. MISLE might be able to accomplish this. Action Item #77 addresses this.
- Action Item 76 was established addressing whether a vessel owner is allowed to transfer their MMSI from a boat they are selling to a new boat, making that MMSI unavailable to the buyer. An update to the NAVCEN pages will be made regarding that topic, when resolved. The question of further update the NAVCEN MMSI transfer will be deferred to the next meeting.

5. How should MMSI registration made by foreign boaters be handled?

- Foreign registration is prohibited and would normally be stopped during the registration process. Existing foreign registration cannot be expected to be caught during biennial updates.

- [Canada states that](#) “Anyone with a Canadian-owned or Canadian-registered boat can apply for an MMSI.” Action item #79 addresses whether the US-owner of a foreign registered boat can obtain a US MMSI.
- The working group agreed that referral should be made to the Canadian and UK MMSI pages, and to the ITU MARS [Administration Information](#) for other administrations, in the NAVCEN MMSI pages. See Action item #78.

6. Manufacturer IDs for devices using a freeform number identity

- 9₁7₂T₃X₄X₅M₆P₇P₈Y₉Y₁₀Y₁₁Y₁₂ used on AIS Message #14
 - The [Report of the CIRM AdHoc Group of Freeform Maritime Identities](#) (Aug 2026, with permission) was reviewed. Johnny noted that current draft of IEC SART now would transmit a msg 24A with its 12-character Maritime Identity, in addition to msg 14. In msg 24A they will appear as SART/MOB/EPIRBMPMMMSI ON/OFF, eg MOBABC1234 ON. The addition of msg 24A caused some confusion since this application is not included in ITU-R M.1371-6. See Action item #80.
 - It is understood that the CIRM Report will be amended to clarify that the characters M₆, P₇ and P₈ are alphanumeric, not numeric.
 - Updates to the [NAVCEN webpages](#) will be deferred until more information is known as to how these identities will be displayed on AIS.

7. Federal/NTIA MMSI issues

- NTIA and FCC confirmed that Maritime Administration (MARAD) ships will be licensed, with MMSIs assigned, by the FCC in accordance with 47 US Code 352(a)(2).
- MMSIs for Military Sealift Command ships will be managed by the US Navy, supported by NTIA.
- NTIA now assigns federal coast station MMSIs.
- [NAVCEN webpages](#) will be updated clarifying this information. See Action item #81.

8. MMSI duplicate registrations

- 2026 MISLE LBR duplicate with FCC/ITU (86 total). Most of these were registered to BOAT US and likely transfers from FCC registrants. Two MMSIs ending in triple zero were registered by BOAT US and seven were registered by Sea Tow. It was noted that Sea Tow had assigned 60 MMSIs ending in double zero.
- 2024 MISLE duplicate MMSIs by entity [spreadsheet](#) was considered previously

9. Guidance on registering MMSIs for use by autonomous vessels in U.S. waters

- FCC [FCC Notice DA 25-652](#) is the only known US government notice addressing use of AIS on autonomous vessels
- IMO International Code of Safety for Maritime Autonomous Surface Ships ([MASS Code](#)) was relsed by IMO this year, but addresses neither MMSIs nor AIS.
- There were no updates from USCG Automated and Autonomous Vessel Policy Council addressing MMSIs or use of AIS or DSC.

10. Define what data is needed for a valid MMSI registration (affects MOA)

- ITU BR Circular Letters CM/6 and CM/9 defining MMSI record specifications mandated by current FCC/USCG MMSI MOAs are no longer in force, replaced by [ITU Resolution 356](#). ITU *Data elements for Electronic Submission (ship stations)* is available [here](#).
- Additional data such as recreational boat description and record update dates may also be required.
- The Working Group will maintain a list of needed updates for use by USCG and FCC when the MOA is updated; see Action item #73.
- It was agreed that hull identification number (HIN) need not be included in MMSI registration.

11. Education and reaching out

- USCG Boating Safety announced that DHS had not approved continuation of the Boating Safety Advisory Committee (BSAC) and is consequently on hold.

12. Any other matters

None

13. Action Items for next meeting

Action Item	Description	Assigned to	Action
73	Begin listing needed updates to MMSI MOA. Include MMSI providers decides to withdraw (Long Term AI 4), handling autonomous vessels.	Joe Hersey and FCC	Retain listing in 16 June summary agenda #5, including data changes reflected in agenda #10. Create and maintain a list for use by USCG and FCC in updating the MOA.
76	Is a vessel owner allowed to transfer their MMSI from a boat they are selling to a new boat, making that MMSI unavailable to the buyer? May the vessel	Joe Hersey and FCC	No, allowing a vessel owner to transfer their MMSI from a boat being sold to a new boat is

	owner do this if radio MMSI is reset? FCC DA 12-1989 “If the vessel was licensed by rule, the buyer/transferee may ask the private registration agent for reassignment of the MMSI that had been assigned to the seller/transferor.”		clearly illegal, assuming the seller allows that MMSI to be retained in the radio of the boat being sold. However, such a transfer might be allowed if the MMSI were reset on the vessel being sold, and the seller so affirmed when the registration is revised.
77	Develop data sort process in MISLE to identify MMSIs that have been transferred between registering agents, so that users can identify which agent maintains their MMSI. The purpose is to allow buyers of radio-equipped boats to identify which agent maintains the MMSI encoded in those radios.	Joe	Next meeting
78	Add MMSI webpage identifying where operators of boats registered outside of US can obtain and register MMSIs. Include UK, Canada and ITU MARS Administration information.	Joe	Next meeting, once AI 79 is completed.
79	Can anyone with a US owned but foreign registered boat apply for a US MMSI? Canada states that “Anyone with a Canadian-owned or Canadian-registered boat can apply for an MMSI.” FCC later indicated “For the United States, however, the FCC issues US MMSI numbers to US-flagged vessels; in other words, we do not issue US MMSIs to foreign-registered vessels.”	FCC	Before next meeting.
80	How are AIS msg 14 and msg 24A containing freeform MSLD/EPIRB/MSLD number identity 9 ₁ 7 ₂ T ₃ X ₄ X ₅ M ₆ P ₇ P ₈ Y ₉ Y ₁₀ Y ₁₁ Y ₁₂ handled and shown on a ship’s AIS display?	USCG	Next meeting
81	Update NAVCEN MMSIs for Federal Vessels webpage to include coast stations, responsibility for Maritime Administration and for Military Sealift Command vessels.	Joe	Next meeting

14. Scheduling next meeting: 9 December at 1:30 PM EST

Attendees

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[NAVCEN MMSI website](#)