# MARITIME MOBILE SERVICE IDENTITY

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**MMSI Overview**

Maritime Mobile Service Identities (MMSIs) are nine-digit numbers used by maritime digital selective calling (DSC), automatic identification systems (AIS) and certain other equipment to uniquely identify a ship or a coast radio station. Registered MMSIs are used by Coast Guard search and rescue watchstanders to identity vessels or persons in distress and to save lives. Registered MMSIs are MMSIs are regulated and managed internationally by the International Telecommunications Union in Geneva, Switzerland, and nationally by the Federal Communications Commission, just as radio call signs are regulated. The MMSI format and use is regulated in Article 19 of the ITU Radio Regulations and documented in ITU-R [Recommendation M.585-9](https://www.itu.int/rec/R-REC-M.585/en), available from the ITU at no charge.

**Use of inaccurate MMSIs is a violation of FCC rules**

﻿[FCC Enforcement Advisory No. 2016-04](https://www.fcc.gov/document/eb-reminds-mariners-marine-radio-rules-protecting-public-safety) *MARINE RADIO - Enforcement Bureau Reminds Mariners of Marine Radio Rules Protecting Public Safety* notes that “Use of inaccurate MMSIs is a violation of FCC rules , with potential impact upon safety of life and property”. If misuse is intentional or repeated, “﻿Violators may be subject to the penalties authorized by the Communications Act, including monetary penalties as high as $16,000 for each violation. Your radio equipment may also be seized and forfeited to the U.S. Government.”.

Why should I have the correct and current MMSI entered in my DSC radios or AIS units?

DSC distress calls with out of date registrations or invalid/missing positions make a resolution of real distress situations vs. an inadvertent DSC alert much more difficult.

An inadvertent distress must be cancelled via voice or other means.

Vessel sale or online equipment purchase without properly changing or passing on the MMSI is a significant problem.

Vessels are typically categorized as “voluntary” or “compulsory.”

See: <https://www.fcc.gov/wireless/bureau-divisions/mobility-division/maritime-mobile/ship-radio-stations/ship-radio-stations>

# MARITIME MOBILE SERVICE IDENTITY

**MMSIs for Recreational Vessels**

**Obtaining and Registering an MMSI**

Vessels not required to carry a marine radio and who remain in U.S. waters are non-compulsory vessels and do not need an FCC ship station license and can obtain an MMSI through approved organizations such as [BOAT US](http://www.boatus.com/mmsi/) 1-800-563-1536, [U.S. Power Squadron](http://www.usps.org/php/mmsi/home.php), and [Shine Micro](https://www.shinemicro.com/About-MMSI/). You can also voluntarily obtain an [FCC ship station license and get your MMSI](https://www.fcc.gov/wireless/bureau-divisions/mobility-division/maritime-mobile/ship-radio-stations/ship-radio-stations) that way. Each radio on the vessel must use the same, identical MMSI.

If your vessel requires an FCC ship station license, please follow the < MMSIs for Commercial, or State, Local or Tribal Government Vessels> procedures <link to page 3>

**Maintaining your MMSI Registration**

MMSI registration information is sent to the U.S. Coast Guard so that search and rescue responders can identify and locate mariners who are in distress. For that reason, it is necessary to periodically update your registration whenever contact or vessel information changes. MMSI registrants will email you reminders to update and confirm your registration biennially. You can update your contact in formation anytime by logging on to your registrant’s website.

Note that although Sea Tow is no longer accepting new MMSI registrations, they are continuing to maintain existing ones. Contact [SEA TOW](https://seatow.com/marine-services/mmsi/) 1-800-4SEATOW,

**Who registered my MMSI?**

If you do not recall who gave you your MMSI and registered it for you, you can identify that organization by comparing your existing MMSI against those listed in the document [MMSI ship station blocks allocated in the US](https://www.navcen.uscg.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/MMSIAllotments.pdf) (updated 23 December 2022).

**Sailing to Foreign Countries**

If you plan to sail to a foreign country, you will need to apply for an FCC ship station license. Unfortunately, you will need to deleting your existing own-ship MMSI and replace it with the MMSI provided by the FCC as part of your station license. You will need to contact the radio manufacturer for instructions on deleting own ship MMSI. You cannot do it yourself without instruction from the manufacturer. If you travel to a foreign port (e.g., Canada, Mexico, Bahamas, British Virgin Islands), an FCC station license is required. Additionally, if you travel to a foreign port, you are required to have an operator permit.

**What to do when Selling or Disposing your Radio or Radio-equipped Vessel** <link page 12>

**MMSI Format**

All ship MMSIs use the format M1 I2D3X4X5X6X7X8X9 where in the first three digits represent the Maritime Identification Digits (MID) and X is any figure from 0 to 9. (Hint: Ships transmitting with an MMSI not starting with the digits 201-775 are likely doing so improperly, and may be subject to FCC or USCG enforcement action)

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# MARITIME MOBILE SERVICE IDENTITY

**MMSIs for Commercial, or State, Local or Tribal Government Vessels**

**Obtaining and Registering an MMSI**

Vessels required by regulation to carry a marine radio and those who travel outside the U.S. or Canada to foreign ports are compulsory vessels and must apply to the [Federal Communications Commission for a ship station license](https://www.fcc.gov/wireless/bureau-divisions/mobility-division/maritime-mobile/ship-radio-stations/ship-radio-stations) or an amendment to a ship station license in order to obtain an MMSI. State, local and tribal governments can generally obtain an FCC ship station license at no charge. Each radio on the vessel must use the same, identical MMSI. Vessels required to carry AIS need a station license/MMSI.

**Maintaining your MMSI Registration**

FCC ship station license MMSI information is sent to the U.S. Coast Guard so that search and rescue responders can identify and locate mariners who are in distress. For that reason, it is necessary to keep FCC license contact and vessel information up to date whenever information changes prior to license renewal. FCC ship station license renewal is normally every ten years. Information can be updated prior to license renewal without charge.

**Groups of Ships (DSC only)**

Group ship station call identities for calling simultaneously more than one ship use the format 01M2I3D4X5X6X7X8X9, where the first figure is zero and X is any figure from 0 to 9. The MID represents only the territory or geographical area of the administration assigning the group ship station call identity and does not prevent group calls to fleets containing more than one ship nationality.

Users having an MMSI assigned by FCC license, all of which have a trailing zero, may create a group identity by inserting a zero before the identity and removing the trailing zero (e.g. a user having an MMSI of *366123450* is allowed to use the group identity *036612345*).

**What to do when Selling or Disposing your Radio or Radio-equipped Vessel** <link page 12>

**MMSI Format**

All ship MMSIs use the format M1 I2D3X4X5X6X7X8X9 where in the first three digits represent the Maritime Identification Digits (MID) and X is any figure from 0 to 9. (Hint: Ships transmitting with an MMSI not starting with the digits 201-775 are likely doing so improperly, and may be subject to FCC or USCG enforcement action)

The ship MID indicates the flag state or country of registry.

# Groups of Ships (DSC only)

Group ship station call identities for calling simultaneously more than one ship use the format 01M2I3D4X5X6X7X8X9, where the first figure is zero and X is any figure from 0 to 9. The MID represents only the territory or geographical area of the administration assigning the group ship station call identity and does not prevent group calls to fleets containing more than one ship nationality.

No process currently exists to assign non-federal group ship station identities. However, users having an MMSI assigned by FCC license, all of which have a trailing zero, may create a group identity by inserting a zero before the identity and removing the trailing zero (e.g. a user having an MMSI of *366123450* is allowed to use the group identity *036612345*).

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# MARITIME MOBILE SERVICE IDENTITY

**MMSIs for Federal Vessels**

**Obtaining and Registering an MMSI**

Federal users can obtain MMSI assignments from their agency radio spectrum management office in accordance with Section 6.6 of the [NTIA Manual](http://www.ntia.doc.gov/page/2011/manual-regulations-and-procedures-federal-radio-frequency-management-redbook). Agency Spectrum management office contact information can be found in the [NTIA Interdepartment Radio Advisory Committee (IRAC)](https://ntia.gov/page/interdepartment-radio-advisory-committee-irac) Committee membership and contact information. Official DHS and U.S. Coast Guard users can obtain an MMSI through Commandant (CG-672) <link> in accordance with Commandant Instruction M2000.3 series, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary surface vessel operators should request assignment of MMSIs using the same method as a U.S. Non-Federal user. Each radio on the vessel must use the same, identical MMSI.

**Groups of Ships (DSC only)**

Group ship station call identities for calling simultaneously more than one ship use the format 01M2I3D4X5X6X7X8X9, where the first figure is zero and X is any figure from 0 to 9. The MID represents only the territory or geographical area of the administration assigning the group ship station call identity and does not prevent group calls to fleets containing more than one ship nationality.

Users having an MMSI assigned by FCC license, all of which have a trailing zero, may create a group identity by inserting a zero before the identity and removing the trailing zero (e.g. a user having an MMSI of *366123450* is allowed to use the group identity *036612345*).

**Maintaining your MMSI Registration or Transferring your Vessel or your Radio**

U.S. Coast Guard search and rescue authorities rely on MMSI registration information whenever the distress button on a DSC-equipped VHF marine radio is pressed. For that reason, it is essential that MMSI registration be kept current. Please notify your spectrum management office or office responsible for MMSIs to notify them whenever the radio is removed from a vessel, transferred to another vessel, surplused or when other significant changes are made.

**Deleting own-ship MMSI** <link page 12>

**MMSI Format**

All ship MMSIs use the format M1 I2D3X4X5X6X7X8X9 where in the first three digits represent the Maritime Identification Digits (MID) and X is any figure from 0 to 9. (Hint: Ships transmitting with an MMSI not starting with the digits 201-775 are likely doing so improperly, and may be subject to FCC or USCG enforcement action)

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Group ship station call identities for calling simultaneously more than one ship use the format 01M2I3D4X5X6X7X8X9, where the first figure is zero and X is any figure from 0 to 9. The MID represents only the territory or geographical area of the administration assigning the group ship station call identity and does not prevent group calls to fleets containing more than one ship nationality.

No process currently exists to assign non-federal group ship station identities. However, users having an MMSI assigned by FCC license, all of which have a trailing zero, may create a group identity by inserting a zero before the identity and removing the trailing zero (e.g. a user having an MMSI of *366123450* is allowed to use the group identity *036612345*).

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# MARITIME MOBILE SERVICE IDENTITY

**MMSIs for VHF Handhelds**

**Obtaining MMSIs for DSC-equipped Marine VHF Handhelds**

A marine VHF handheld transceiver with DSC and an integral global navigation satellite system (e.g. GPS), not intended for dedicated use on a particular ship, is assigned a unique 9-digit number in the format 81M2I3D4X5X6X7X8X9. At present, only [FCC](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=https-3A__www.fcc.gov_wireless_bureau-2Ddivisions_mobility-2Ddivision_maritime-2Dmobile_vhf-2Dhandheld-2Dstations&d=DwMFaQ&c=tnPw9yRHa20_HV5YVoVFtg&r=8E2cIXmA8kEQ0Y13pUYuvGxa2WNLG7JYGgug7imEUro&m=6F5ozR025Gyut_yGZm1R1E1tGUdFMNLsQxsdOk5v9lliVRPwcoLztfvWB76UNCih&s=XwLdsXnDX5xMOGbQYr-eeKcmeHEyD4ZYjvbXrpycLxA&e=) and [Shine Micro](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__www.shinemicro.com_About-2DMMSI_&d=DwMFaQ&c=tnPw9yRHa20_HV5YVoVFtg&r=8E2cIXmA8kEQ0Y13pUYuvGxa2WNLG7JYGgug7imEUro&m=6F5ozR025Gyut_yGZm1R1E1tGUdFMNLsQxsdOk5v9lliVRPwcoLztfvWB76UNCih&s=MkwD9rYkny-oo_Huo7cvBPt5gnyx5Cf6h0e0WjSmoUY&e=) are providing and registering marine VHF handheld MMSIs.

**Marine VHF handhelds licensed by rule**

If the handheld is only to be used on boats “licensed by rule”, i.e. non-compulsory vessels not required to carry a radio and not going on foreign voyages, the VHF handheld MMSI may be obtained by a license-by-rule provider such as [Shine Micro](https://urldefense.proofpoint.com/v2/url?u=http-3A__www.shinemicro.com_About-2DMMSI_&d=DwMFaQ&c=tnPw9yRHa20_HV5YVoVFtg&r=8E2cIXmA8kEQ0Y13pUYuvGxa2WNLG7JYGgug7imEUro&m=6F5ozR025Gyut_yGZm1R1E1tGUdFMNLsQxsdOk5v9lliVRPwcoLztfvWB76UNCih&s=MkwD9rYkny-oo_Huo7cvBPt5gnyx5Cf6h0e0WjSmoUY&e=). VHF handhelds used for any other purpose must be licensed by the FCC and MMSI obtained from the FCC. MMSIs obtained by any other provider, including BOAT US and USPS, are currently limited to ship station MMSIs and should not be used with handhelds, unless the handheld is kept with and only used with a single vessel.

**Marine VHF handhelds licensed by FCC**

FCC offers two licensing options for Marine VHF Handheld Radios: SA Portable and Coast Station Handheld VHF. Further information can be found in the FCC [VHF Handheld Stations](https://www.fcc.gov/wireless/bureau-divisions/mobility-division/maritime-mobile/vhf-handheld-stations) webpage.

* SA Portable (ship recreational or voluntary equipped portable): Portable, used when operating VHF handhelds from ships, but not a kept on a single ship. Examples include diver’s radios and portables used on various vessels on an as-needed basis.
* Marine Utility Station: VHF handheld intended for use on multiple vessels will be licensed as a portable (SA-Portable) ship station license. Used when operating a VHF handheld ashore. This station operates under the rules applicable to ship stations when the unit is aboard a vessel, and under the rules applicable to private coast stations when the unit is on land.

**Marine VHF handhelds used ashore**

﻿FCC permits use of portable marine VHF radios ashore only in areas adjacent to the water, such as docks and beaches. In addition, onshore communications using such radios must relate to the operational and business needs of the associated vessel, and must be limited to the minimum practicable transmission time (See [FCC Report and Order, WT Docket 14-36](https://www.fcc.gov/ecfs/search/search-filings/results?q=(proceedings.name:(%2214-36%22)+AND+submissiontype.description:(%22REPORT%22%20AND%20%22ORDER%22)))).

**What to do when Selling or Disposing your Radio** <link page 12>

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# MARITIME MOBILE SERVICE IDENTITY

**MMSIs for Craft Associated with a Parent Ship (Launches etc)**

Radios used on craft associated with a parent ship, such as launches, tenders, towed vessels, etc., are licensed under the parent vessel’s ship station license. Consequently, DSC-equipped radios on these craft may use the same MMSI as assigned to the parent craft. However, AIS equipment installed on these craft must have a unique identity separate from the parent ship. DSC equipment on these craft may need a unique identity as well. While the ITU has established a special identity for craft associated with a parent ship, the U.S. has adopted a different approach.

**9182M3I4D5X6X7X8X9**

The ITU has designated the format 9182M3I4D5X6X7X8X9 for craft associated with a parent ship, where the digits 3, 4 and 5 represent the Maritime Identification Digits (MID) and X is any digit from 0 to 9. Most maritime countries have adopted this format. However, no provision currently exists for assigning these identities in the United States.

**MMSIs for Craft Associated with a Parent Ship in the United States**

Since radio equipment on craft associated with a parent ship are licensed by rule under the parent ship’s FCC ship station license, users may obtain a unique ship station MMSI using the same procedures as for **MMSIs for Recreational Vessels** <Link 2>

AIS stations used on such vessels should enter “A” followed by the last 6 digits of the MMSI of the parent vessel onto their AIS Call Sign parameter in lieu of an official call-sign.

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# MARITIME MOBILE SERVICE IDENTITY

**MMSIs for AIS Private Aids to Navigation**

# AIS Aids to Navigation (AtoN)

# AIS used as or on an aid to navigation (AtoN) uses this basic format 9192M3I4D5X6X7X8X9, where the digits 3, 4 and 5 represent the [MID](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-R/terrestrial/fmd/Pages/mid.aspx) and X is any figure from 0 to 9. See [Types of AIS](https://www.navcen.uscg.gov/types-of-ais) and [AIS Frequently Asked Questions #21](https://www.navcen.uscg.gov/ais-frequently-asked-questions#21) for instructions on applying for a Private AIS Aids to Navigation station.

# AIS AtoN Use in the United States

# Alaska 993030000 – 993039999

# General (non-USCG) 993660000 – 993669999

* + US Army Corp of Engineers 993660000 – 993662999

# Private (non-federal) 993663000 – 993666999

# Federal 993667000 – 993667999

# AIS Mobile AtoN 993668000 – 993668999

# US Coast Guard 993670000 – 993699999

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# MARITIME MOBILE SERVICE IDENTITY

**MMSI for Coast Stations**

**Coast Radio Stations (Base Stations)**

All coast or base stations use the format 0102M3I4D5X6X7X8X9, where the digits 3, 4 and 5 represent the MID and X is any figure from 0 to 9. Groups of DSC coast radio stations use the same format.

**DSC Coast Stations**

The combination 0102M3I4D506070809 is used to address all 00MIDXXXX DSC stations within the administration. The combination 010293949506070809 is used to address all VHF DSC 00MIDXXXX stations worldwide. These two special combinations are not used in the United States.

The U.S. Coast Guard DSC group coast station identity is 003669999. DSC test calls received on this identity using VHF or 4207.5 kHz should be automatically acknowledged.

VHF coast stations desiring to use DSC must use a radio designed for coast station use rather than a ship radio. MMSIs can be obtained by adding an attachment to your FCC coast station application in accordance with the FCC instructions described [here](https://www.fcc.gov/wireless/bureau-divisions/mobility-division/maritime-mobile/coast-radio-stations/coast-radio-1).

**AIS Coast Stations**

The U.S. Coast Guard operates AIS coast stations under its [Nationwide Automatic Identification System](https://www.dcms.uscg.mil/Our-Organization/Assistant-Commandant-for-Acquisitions-CG-9/Programs/C4ISR-Programs/nais/) program. The FCC currently does not license AIS private coast stations.

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# MARITIME MOBILE SERVICE IDENTITY

**MMSIs for Search and Rescue Aircraft**

AIS and DSC equipment used on search and rescue aircraft use the format 111213M4I5D6X7X8X9 where the digits 4, 5 and 6 represent the MID and X is any figure from 0 to 9. In the United States, these MMSIs are currently only used by the U.S. Coast Guard.

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# MARITIME MOBILE SERVICE IDENTITY

**MMSIs for Search and Rescue Transmitters, EPIRBs, PLBs, MSLDs and AMRDs**

# AIS Search and Rescue Transmitter (SART)

AIS search and rescue transmitters (SART) use the format 917203X4X5Y6Y7Y8Y9, where the digits 4 and 5 are assigned by the International Association for Marine Electronics Companies (CIRM) and refer to the SART manufacturer, and digits 6, 7, 8 and 9 are sequential digits assigned by the manufacturer identifying the SART.

# Maritime Survivor Locating Devices (MSLDs) using DSC and AIS

The MSLD device that transmits DSC and/or AIS should use an identity 917223X4X5Y6Y7Y8Y9, (where xx = manufacturer ID 01 to 99 assigned by CIRM; yyyy = the sequence number 0000 to 9999. When reaching 9999 the manufacturer should restart the sequence numbering at 0000.The manufacturer ID xx = 00 is reserved for test purposes). Combination DSC - AIS devices will transmit one common user ID.

MSLD devices are described by standards [RTCM 11901](https://rtcm.myshopify.com/collections/standards-for-distress-alerting-devices) and [IEC 62329](https://webstore.iec.ch/publication/65431).

# 406 MHz EPIRB with AIS locating beacons

The EPIRB-AIS should use an identity 917243X4X5Y6Y7Y8Y9, (where xx = manufacturer ID 01 to 99; yyyy = the sequence number 0000 to 9999. When reaching 9999 the manufacturer should restart the sequence numbering at 0000.).

The user identity of the EPIRB-AIS indicates the identity of the homing device of the EPIRB-AIS, and not the MMSI of the ship.

[406 MHz Personal Locator Beacons (PLBs) equipped with AIS locating beacons also use this identity]

Recognizing the differences in the MID for these three devices might be crucial in a Distress/SAR situation.

# Autonomous Maritime Radio Devices (AMRDs)

When implemented, AMRD Group B will describe AIS devices that transmit on 160.9 MHz, VHF channel 2006, and use the MMSI identity ﻿917293Y4Y5Y6Y7Y8Y9. ﻿ This MMSI is not transmitted on Channels AIS1 or AIS2. Y4Y5Y6Y7Y8Y9 is a pseudorandom number, to be determined by the manufacturer. AMRD Group B devices do not enhance the safety of navigation and they deliver signals or information which are not relevant for the navigator of general shipping. They are defined in more detail in Recommendation [ITU-R M.2135](https://www.itu.int/rec/R-REC-M.2135/en).

AMRD Group A devices are used for safety purposes, transmitting on Channels AIS 1 and AIS 2, or Channel 70 DSC. They include the SART, MSLD, EPIRB described above, as well as <AIS Mobile AtoNs.> <link page 7>

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**MMSIs for Vessels Registered or Located Outside of the U.S**

Users outside the U.S. can obtain an MMSI assignment from their telecommunications authority or ship registry, often by obtaining or amending their ship station license. Canadians can obtain an [MMSI from Industry Canada](https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/spectrum-management-telecommunications/en/learn-more/key-documents/procedures/client-procedures-circulars-cpc/cpc-2-3-07-obtaining-identities-maritime-mobile-service).

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# MARITIME MOBILE SERVICE IDENTITY

**What to do when Selling or Disposing your Radio or Radio-equipped Vessel**

**Essential that you delete own ship MMSI, and cancel or transfer your MMSI and registration**

If you decide to sell your radio, dispose it or transfer it to another vessel, or sell your radio-equipped vessel, it is absolutely essential that you either delete own-ship MMSI and cancel your MMSI registration, or arrange to transfer your registration to the new owner prior to completing the sale. If your vessel has more than one MMSI-equipped device, then you cannot transfer MMSI registration when you sell a single radio. You must delete its MMSI.

If you forget to transfer and cancel your MMSI registration, or delete own-ship MMSI and cancel registration, then you could be held liable if and when the new owner transmits a distress alert using the radio, or uses the AIS which you sold or disposed.

**Selling your Vessel**

The MMSI goes with the vessel, not with the user: here is what you need to do.

Option 1: Contact the manufacturer of each and every AIS and DSC-equipped radio on the vessel, and have its own-ship MMSI deleted. Confirm that own-ship MMSI has been deleted by switching on the radio.

Option 2: Transfer your MMSI registration to the new vessel owner at the time the vessel is sold, following the Transferring MMSI Registration procedures below.

If you decide to remove and retain any AIS or DSC-equipped radio from the vessel being sold, the retained radio equipment must have its MMSI deleted.

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**Deleting own-ship MMSI**

ITU regulations prevent you from deleting own-ship MMSI without advice from the radio manufacturer. You will need to contact the manufacturer or its representative to determine how MMSIs are deleted on that particular model, regardless of whether it is DSC-equipped radio or an AIS unit. For some models, deleting is easy, entering a code provided by the manufacturer. For other, it is more difficult, requiring the radio be removed and returned. For that reason, anyone purchasing a DSC-equipped radio or AIS is urged to find out how MMSIs are deleted on that radio prior to purchase.

**Cancelling and Transferring MMSI Registration**

[FCC](https://www.fcc.gov/wireless/bureau-divisions/mobility-division/maritime-mobile/ship-radio-stations/maritime-mobile), [BOAT US](http://www.boatus.com/mmsi/), [U.S. Power Squadron](http://www.usps.org/php/mmsi/home.php), [Shine Micro](https://www.shinemicro.com/About-MMSI/) and [SEA TOW](https://seatow.com/marine-services/mmsi/) allow you to cancel your registration on their website, and will allow you to transfer your registration, at least if the buyer and seller register with the same organization. Transfer must occur by both the seller and buyer either simultaneously, or by showing proof that both parties concur with the transfer. If you do not know which organization registered your MMSI, you can find out [here](https://www.navcen.uscg.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/MMSIAllotments.pdf).

If you purchased a radio and are unable to contact the seller to transfer the MMSI registration, then you must contact the radio manufacturer with proof of purchase, and have the radio’s own-ship MMSI deleted.

If you sold the radio and are unable to contact the purchaser to transfer the MMSI registration, then you must update your registration to note the situation and, if possible, identify the purchaser; then cancel the registration. Cancelled MMSI registrations remain in the database and can be useful during search and rescue.

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# MARITIME MOBILE SERVICE IDENTITY

**MMSI Formats**

**Maritime Identification Digits (MID)**

MIDs are three-digit identifiers ranging from 201 to 775 denoting the administration (country) or geographical area of the administration responsible for the ship station so identified. See the [ITU Table of Maritime Identification Digits.](https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-R/terrestrial/fmd/Pages/mid.aspx)

US MIDs include 338, 366, 367, 368 and 369. Are these assigned by CG District? Alaska is 303, Puerto Rico 358, US Virgin Islands 379

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# How to Obtain an MMSI Assignment

In the United States, the National Telecommunications Administration (NTIA) provides MMSIs to federal users, and the Federal Communication Commission (FCC) provides MMSIs to everyone else. NTIA is as Executive Branch agency under the Department of Commerce, and the FCC is an independent agency.

# U.S. Non-Federal User

In order to obtain an MMSI, mariners required by regulation to carry a marine radio and those who travel outside the

U.S. or Canada to foreign ports must apply to the Federal Communications Commission for a ship station license or an amendment to a ship station license. State and local governments can generally obtain an FCC ship station license at no charge.

Mariners not required to carry a marine radio (e.g. recreational boaters) and who remain in U.S. waters can obtain an MMSI through approved organizations such as BOAT US 1-800-563-1536, SEA TOW 1-800-4SEATOW, U.S. Power Squadron, and Shine Micro (primarily for AIS).

# U.S. Federal User

Federal users can obtain MMSI assignments from their agency radio spectrum management office in accordance with Section 6.6 of the NTIA Manual. Official DHS and U.S. Coast Guard users can obtain an MMSI through Commandant (CG-652) in accordance with Commandant Instruction M2000.3F, Section 12.F. U.S. Coast Auxiliary surface vessel operators should request assignment of MMSIs using the same method as for a U.S. Non-Federal user.

# Obtaining MMSIs for DSC-equipped VHF Handhelds

A handheld VHF transceiver with DSC and an integral global navigation satellite system (e.g. GPS) not intended for dedicated use on a particular ship (e.g. a diver’s radio) should be assigned a unique 9-digit number in the format 81M2I3D4X5X6X7X8X9. While currently means do not exist within the U.S. to assign such identities, the Coast Guard has been in discussions with the Federal communications Commission and others on implementing them.

In the interim, VHF handhelds used in the United States should use the MMSI assigned to the ship to which the handheld is primarily associated, even if another radio on that ship uses the same MMSI. Non-commercial users of VHF handhelds not primarily associated with any single ship may use an MMSI provided by an organization such as BOAT US, SEA TOW and U.S. Power Squadron (see above). VHF handhelds should not be used ashore absent FCC or NTIA authorization allowing such use.

# Outside the U.S.

Outside the U.S., users can obtain an MMSI assignment from their telecommunications authority or ship registry, often by obtaining or amending their ship station license. Canadians can obtain an [MMSI from Industry Canada](https://ised-isde.canada.ca/site/spectrum-management-telecommunications/en/learn-more/key-documents/procedures/client-procedures-circulars-cpc/cpc-2-3-07-obtaining-identities-maritime-mobile-service).

# How to Update or Change an MMSI Registration

If your MMSI registration information or contact information changes for any reason, you must update your registration. If you sell your DSC-equipped radio or AIS or the boat these devices are mounted on, you must cancel your MMSI registration and should inform the new owner of the need to reregister the MMSI. This is necessary to ensure that the Coast Guard is able to contact the right persons if a distress situation were ever to occur. These registration changes can be accomplished by contacting the organization or agency which originally registered your MMSI. If you do not know which organization registered your MMSI, you can identify that organization by comparing your existing MMSI against those listed in the document MMSI ship station blocks allocated in the US (updated 29 May 2019).

# MMSI Format

**Maritime Identification Digits (MID)**

MIDs are three digit identifiers ranging from 201 to 775 denoting the administration (country) or geographical area of the administration responsible for the ship station so identified. See the ITU Table of Maritime Identification Digits.

# Ships

All ship MMSIs use the format M1 I2D3X4X5X6X7X8X9 where in the first three digits represent the Maritime Identification Digits (MID) and X is any figure from 0 to 9. (Hint: Ships transmitting with an MMSI not starting with the digits 201-775 are likely doing so improperly, and may be subject to FCC or USCG enforcement action)

# Groups of Ships (DSC only)

Group ship station call identities for calling simultaneously more than one ship use the format 01M2I3D4X5X6X7X8X9, where the first figure is zero and X is any figure from 0 to 9. The MID represents only the territory or geographical area of the administration assigning the group ship station call identity and does not prevent group calls to fleets containing more than one ship nationality.

No process currently exists to assign non-federal group ship station identities. However, users having an MMSI assigned by FCC license, all of which have a trailing zero, may create a group identity by inserting a zero before the identity and removing the trailing zero (e.g. a user having an MMSI of *366123450* is allowed to use the group identity *036612345*).

The U.S. Coast Guard group ship station call identity is 036699999.

#  Coast Radio Stations (Base Stations)

 All coast or base stations use the format 0102M3I4D5X6X7X8X9,where the digits 3, 4 and 5 represent the MID and X is any figure from 0 to 9. Groups of DSC coast radio stations use the same format.

The combination 0102M3I4D506070809 is used to address all 00MIDXXXX DSC stations within the administration. The combination 010293949506070809 is used to address all VHF DSC 00MIDXXXX stations worldwide. These two special combinations are not used in the United States.

The U.S. Coast Guard DSC group coast station identity is 003669999.

# Search and Rescue Aircraft

AIS and DSC equipment used on search and rescue aircraft use the format 111213M4I5D6X7X8X9 where the digits 4, 5 and 6 represent the MID and X is any figure from 0 to 9. In the United States, these MMSIs are currently only used by the U.S. Coast Guard.

# AIS Aids to Navigation (AtoN)

AIS used as an aid to navigation uses the format 9192M3I4D5X6X7X8X9 where the digits 3, 4 and 5 represent the MID and X is any figure from 0 to 9. In the United States, these MMSIs are reserved for the federal government.

# Craft Associated with a Parent Ship

Stations used on craft associated with a parent ship, such as a launches, tenders, towed vessels, etc. may use the format 9182M3I4D5X6X7X8X9 where the digits 3, 4 and 5 represent the MID and X is any figure from 0 to 9. However, no provision currently exists for assigning these identities in the United States. Thus U.S. craft associated with a parent ship must obtain and use a ships MMSI specifically assigned by the FCC or one of their agents. AIS stations used on such vessels, in lieu of an official call-sign should enter “A” followed by the last 6 digits of the MMSI of the parent vessel onto their AIS Call Sign parameter.

# AIS Search and Rescue Transmitter (SART)

AIS search and rescue transmitters (SART) use the format 917203X4X5Y6Y7Y8Y9, where the digits 4 and 5 are assigned by the International Association for Marine Electronics Companies (CIRM) and refer to the SART manufacturer, and digits 6, 7, 8 and 9 are sequential digits assigned by the manufacturer identifying the SART.

# MOB (Man overboard) (RTCM SC119)

The MOB (Man overboard) device that transmits DSC and/or AIS should use an identity

917223X4X5Y6Y7Y8Y9, (where xx = manufacturer ID 01 to 99 assigned by CIRM; yyyy = the sequence number 0000 to 9999. When reaching 9999 the manufacturer should restart the sequence numbering at 0000.The manufacturer ID xx = 00 is reserved for test purposes). Combination DSC AIS devices will transmit one common user ID.

# EPIRB-AIS (RTCM SC110)

The EPIRB-AIS should use an identity 917243X4X5Y6Y7Y8Y9, (where xx = manufacturer ID 01 to 99; yyyy = the sequence number 0000 to 9999. When reaching 9999 the manufacturer should restart the sequence numbering at 0000.).

The user identity of the EPIRB-AIS indicates the identity of the homing device of the EPIRB-AIS, and not the MMSI of the ship.

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