

23. VHF Procedures

The VHF radio is located at the Skipper desk. Using the VHF radio:

Familiarize yourself with the method for switching channels, and with the squelch and volume controls on your radio. Most radios have a button to instantly select Channel 16 - ensure you understand how this operates or you could end up speaking on Ch. 16 when you think you are on some other channel.

1. Make sure the radio is switched on, volume quite high, power to high unless the station you are calling is very close.
2. Squelch up until loud hissing, and then back a little until the noise *just* stops.
3. Select the channel for calling (Channel 16, unless specified otherwise).
4. Press switch on microphone when speaking. Release immediately.

If no response then wait two minutes and repeat the call. If still no response, wait a further two minutes before trying again. If calling on Channel 16, it is very important to switch to a working channel after the contact is established. Do not use Channel 16 for your conversations - this channel is for hailing and distress only.

Channels to use:

16 - Hailing and Distress

17 - Marinas and Yacht Clubs - for reservations

06 - Ship to Ship - along with Channel 68 and 77 can be used for contact between boats. In the event that your vessel is involved in a non-life threatening incident with an object or with another vessel, it is important that you contact the Nova Eurospectra immediately. Please remember to get as much information as possible about your location, the other vessel's description and what damage has been done to your vessel so that we can best assist you.

Failure to report any accidents or incidents in a timely manner may result in nullification of your deposit.

Types of emergency:

In the unlikely event that you are involved in an emergency stay calm and follow these steps. You will also have an Emergency Procedure card next to your VHF.

Distress: "MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY." This is an International Distress signal and an imperative call for assistance. It is used only when a life or vessel is considered to be in grave and imminent danger.

Mayday Relay: used to summon help for a vessel which is either too far offshore to contact the coastguard directly, without radio capabilities or whose radio has been damaged or destroyed.

Urgency: "PAN-PAN, PAN-PAN, PAN-PAN" This is the International Urgency Signal and is used when a vessel or person is in some jeopardy but is not considered to be in grave and imminent danger.

Medical emergency: "PAN-PAN MEDICO, PAN-PAN MEDICO, PAN-PAN MEDICO" (Pronounced med-ick-oh). This is an International Urgency Signal that should be used when medical advice is needed.

Safety: "SECURITE, SECURITE, SECURITE" (Pronounced Say-cure-it-tay). This is an International Safety Signal and is a message about some aspect of navigational safety or a weather warning.

How to issue an emergency message

Select Channel 16 and press transmit button on handset

Say slowly and clearly 'MAYDAY, MAYDAY, MAYDAY, CALLING ALL STATIONS This is.... (vessel name)....' and repeat vessel name 3 times

.Give position - vessel's position in degrees of latitude and longitude or nautical miles from, and bearing to, a navigational landmark.

Describe emergency - list the problem, the type of assistance needed; number of passengers aboard (boat length, hull colour and type is also useful) Wait 1 minute for a response, repeat message.