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Spectrum Management and Telecommunications Policy

Client Procedures Circular

# **Maritime Mobile Service Identities (MMSIs)**

Client Procedures Circulars describe the various procedures or processes to be followed by the public when dealing with Industry Canada. The information contained in these circulars is subject to change without notice. It is therefore suggested that interested persons consult the nearest district office of Industry Canada for additional details. While every reasonable effort has been made to ensure accuracy, no warranty is expressed or implied. As well, these circulars have no status in law.

Comments and suggestions may be directed to the following address:

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All spectrum publications are available on the Internet at:

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## **Principle**

Because each ship or coast station needs a unique identifier for safety and telecommunication purposes, the Radiocommunication Sector of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU-R) has recommended the adoption of an international system of automatic station identification. Consequently, the ITU has adopted in its *Radio Regulations* the assignment and use of maritime mobile service identities (MMSIs).

## **Mandate**

Section 5(c) of the *Department of Industry Act* states that the Minister shall exercise the powers and perform the duties and functions in a manner that will increase the international competitiveness of Canadian industry, goods and services and assist in the adjustment to changing domestic and international conditions.

## **Policy**

### **General**

With the new technologies now available, radiocommunication systems must be improved to meet the needs of licensees and vessel owners (the terms 'licensee', 'vessel owner' and 'applicant' are used interchangeably throughout this document). In the maritime mobile service, a vast improvement in the efficiency of radiocommunications can be realized through the use of digital selective calling (DSC), which forms an integral part of the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS). The use of DSC will speed up ship-to-shore and intership communications, as well as communications between ships and the public switched telephone networks (PSTN).

In order to utilize the DSC system, a station must be able to uniquely identify itself and also identify the intended addressee of the call. This identification is accomplished through the use of maritime mobile service identities (MMSIs). In support of this, Industry Canada (IC) will, at the applicant's request, assign a MMSI to Canadian ships and coast stations.

The use of the DSC system and the associated MMSIs allow worldwide access, through the PSTN and INMARSAT, to ship stations equipped with automated radiocommunication systems. Through the use of the DSC system and the MMSIs, ships will be able to place calls automatically and selectively to other ships and coast stations.

Various types of DSC calls are available, generally either distress and safety related calls, or "routine" calls. A routine call may include a public correspondence call or calls related to the operation of the ship, e.g. to port authorities. In the case of VHF, automatic connection to the public network can also be established through suitably equipped coast stations.

It should be noted that IC has in the past issued five digit SELCAL numbers to vessels and four digit identification numbers to coast stations which uniquely identified a specific narrow-band direct printing apparatus (NBDP) operated from a coast station or installed on board a ship. These identities do not form a part of the DSC system or the Global Maritime Distress and Safety System (GMDSS) system and should not be confused with the MMSI which is a nine digit number. With the new technologies, MMSIs have replaced these four and five digit identifiers and IC will not issue these numbers unless substantial justification is provided.

### **Eligibility**

A MMSI may be issued to coast stations participating in automated radiocommunication systems and to ships which are fitted or will soon be fitted with a ship earth station or an automatic radiocommunication system including ships fitted with a DSC radio. It is not necessary that a ship have a radio licence in order to be issued an MMSI.

### **Procedure**

#### **General**

Industry Canada (IC), as the radio licensing body in Canada, is responsible for the issuance and management of the MMSIs. To obtain an MMSI, the applicant must contact their nearest IC office [see Radiocommunication Information Circular 66 (RIC-66), *Addresses and Telephone Numbers of Regional and District Offices*, for addresses of various district offices] and provide the necessary vessel or coast station details. Vessel owners must also provide specific information regarding installed radio equipment and emergency contacts in the case of an emergency. If the vessel is not currently licensed nor exempted from licensing, a radio licence will also be required. It should be noted that vessels not requiring a radio licence may still be issued an MMSI.

In an effort to provide more efficient services in areas of higher demand (such as on Canada's east and west coasts), some of IC's offices are able to provide these numbers immediately over the counter provided vessel and associated information is received. In all cases, regardless of the IC office with which the applicant is dealing, every effort will be made to ensure the MMSI is issued as quickly as possible.

All information collected is entered into IC's National Maritime Information Database (NMID) and is forwarded to the ITU for inclusion in the Maritime-mobile Access and Retrieval System (MARS) which currently serves as a temporary repository of International Maritime Information at the ITU. Information contained in the NMID can be accessed via the internet through IC's Strategis Web site. This information is used by the Canadian Coast Guard (CCG) and related search and rescue agencies in the case of an emergency. While the CCG and related search and rescue agencies have access to the full set of information collected, the general public does not have access to emergency contact information in either the NMID or MARS.

## **Obtaining an MMSI**

In order to obtain an MMSI, IC requires that the applicant supply specific information depending on the kind of MMSI requested. There are three kinds of maritime mobile service identities:

- ship station MMSIs;
- ship station group MMSIs; and
- coast station MMSIs.

Each of these kinds of MMSIs requires slightly different information to be submitted.

### **Ship Station MMSI**

This is by far the most common MMSI category. Ship Station MMSIs comprise well over 95% of all MMSIs assigned by IC. The basic assignment principle for Ship Station MMSIs is that the same identity applies to all radio equipment on board the vessel. This consistency has to be maintained to the extent possible.

In the case of any change in the ownership of a vessel (including the radio equipment), the assigned MMSI should not be changed. In other words, the MMSI should remain with the vessel under new ownership.

Individual transfer of any type of radio equipment using a MMSI should require appropriate new programming of the equipment.

It is recommended not to change the MMSI for the vessel as long as there is any part of the equipment kept on board using the previously assigned MMSI. However, if a change of MMSI is necessary as a result of an INMARSAT mobile earth station installation (of standard B, C or M) all remaining radio equipment on board using a MMSI must be re-programmed with the new MMSI.

In order to obtain a ship station MMSI Annex A or B at the end of this document is required to be completed and submitted to IC. In the case of a vessel which does not require a radio licence and is only fitted with a VHF radio(s) the information noted in Annex A is required. If the vessel requires a radio licence or is fitted with additional equipment the information noted in Annex B is required.

Annex E at the end of this document contains information concerning the various ITU codes to be used in completing the relevant Annex.

### **Ship Station Group MMSI**

A Ship Station Group MMSI is typically issued to a group of vessels where it is desirable that a specific group of vessels be contacted at the same time with one call. Each ship in such a group must also have an individual MMSI. One person, acting as contact person for and on behalf of the group, must apply for a Ship Station Group MMSI. In order to obtain this Ship Station Group MMSI the contact person must complete Annex D at the end of this document and submit the noted information to IC.

## **Coast Station MMSI**

A coast station MMSI is typically issued to a coast station which is to be involved with automatic communications with vessels. Generally speaking coast station MMSIs are only issued to CCG stations or other coast stations with large fleets of vessels such as a fishing company or tug boat operation. Any such station would also require a radio licence. In order to obtain a coast station MMSI the appropriate coast station information in Annex C of this document must be provided to IC.

## **Licensee and Vessel Owner Responsibility**

The importance of maintaining current and valid information in the National Maritime Information Database cannot be stressed enough. If information in this database is not valid, rescue efforts in the event of an emergency could be compromised. It is the responsibility of the licensee and vessel owner to ensure that information supplied at the time of applying for an MMSI is accurate. Further, it is the licensee's and vessel owner's responsibility to inform IC should this information change.

For a vessel owner, such additional or update information could include (but is not limited to) information regarding a change of ownership, a vessel name change, a change in the requirement to hold a valid radio licence (ie. the vessel had a valid radio licence but is now exempted), a change in vessel classification or tonnage or some radio equipment making use of an MMSI is being installed or removed from the vessel.

Licensees and vessel owners in possession of an MMSI for use with their VHF DSC radio equipment are urged to also consult IC Radio Standards Specification on Maritime Radio Transmitters and Receivers in the Band 156-162.5 MHz (RSS-182). RSS-182 clearly indicates that MMSIs can only be programmed into VHF DSC radio equipment by qualified radio service/maintenance personnel.

## Annex A

## MMSI Application Form - Ship Station with VHF/DSC only

**IMPORTANT: Use this application form if the vessel does not require a radio licence and if the radio equipment on board consists of a VHF/DSC radio(s) with or without GPS or LORAN.** In such case, a type 0 MMSI should be issued. If the vessel requires a radio licence or if additional radio equipment is installed, use the application form in Annex B instead.

**Part A - Action:**     Assign a new MMSI     Modify an existing MMSI     Cancel an existing MMSI

**Part B - Information** (✓ denotes *mandatory* fields and ✘ denotes *mandatory* fields if issued or installed):

✓	<u>Applicant Name:</u> Last, First
✓	<u>Applicant Telephone Number:</u> (include country code and area code)
	<u>Applicant Mailing/Postal Address:</u> (include postal code)
	<u>Applicant Facsimile Number:</u> (include country code and area code)
	<u>Applicant Electronic Mail Address:</u>
✘	<u>MMSI:</u> Nine digit Maritime Mobile Service Identity beginning with 316
✓	<u>Vessel Name:</u>
	<u>Ex Vessel Name:</u> (in case of a modification to the vessel name)
✓	<u>Vessel Owner Name:</u> Last, First or Company name
✓	<u>General Classification:</u> Make a selection from Annex E
	<u>Individual Classification(s):</u> Make the appropriate selection(s) from Annex E
✘	<u>Ship Station Group MMSI:</u> (if the vessel belongs to a group)

**Annex A**  
**(Continued)**

<p>✓ <u>Gross Tonnage</u>: Vessel's internal capacity (for pleasure craft of 12 meters or less, see Annex E)</p>
<p>✓ <u>Emergency Contact Person Ashore Name and Address</u>: Name and address of an individual ashore in case of emergency</p>
<p>✓ <u>Emergency Contact Person Ashore Telephone Number</u>: Telephone number of an individual ashore in case of emergency (include country code and area code)</p>
<p><u>Emergency Contact Person Ashore Fax Number</u>: Fax number of an individual ashore in case of emergency (include country code and area code)</p>
<p><u>Alternate 24-hour Emergency Telephone Number</u>: Other telephone number in case of emergency and accessible at any time (include country code and area code)</p>
<p>✓ <u>Capacity for Persons on Board</u>: Maximum number of persons on board</p>
<p>✓ <u>Radio Installation Information</u>: Radio equipment on board (VHF/DSC GPS LORAN) <b>VHF/DSC</b></p>
<p><u>Additional Information and/or Instructions</u>:</p>



**Annex B**

**MMSI Application Form - Ship Station**

**IMPORTANT: Use this application form if the vessel requires a radio licence or if additional equipment is installed on board.** If the vessel does not require a radio licence and if the radio equipment on board consists of a VHF/DSC radio(s) with or without GPS or LORAN, use the application form in Annex A instead.

**Part A - Action:**     Assign a new MMSI     Modify an existing MMSI     Cancel an existing MMSI

**Part B - INMARSAT mobile terminal(s) on board** (select only one):

- The vessel is NOT equipped with an INMARSAT mobile terminal standard B, C or M. (Type 0 MMSI)
- The vessel is, or soon will be, fitted with an INMARSAT mobile terminal standard C. (Type 1 MMSI)
- The vessel is, or soon will be, fitted with an INMARSAT mobile terminal standard B or M. (Type 3 MMSI)

**Part C - Information** (✓ denotes mandatory fields and ⌘ denotes mandatory fields if issued or installed):

✓	<u>Applicant Name:</u> Last, First
✓	<u>Applicant Telephone Number:</u> (include country code and area code)
	<u>Applicant Mailing/Postal Address:</u> (include postal code)
	<u>Applicant Facsimile Number:</u> (include country code and area code)
	<u>Applicant Electronic Mail Address:</u>
⌘	<u>MMSI:</u> Nine digit Maritime Mobile Service Identity beginning with 316
✓	<u>Vessel Name:</u>
	<u>Ex Vessel Name:</u> (in case of a modification to the vessel name)
✓	<u>Vessel Owner Name:</u> Last, First or Company name
✓	<u>General Classification:</u> Make a selection from Annex E
	<u>Individual Classification(s):</u> Make the appropriate selection(s) from Annex E

**Annex B**  
**(Continued)**

✘	<u>Ship Station Group MMSI</u> : (if the vessel belongs to a group)
✔	<u>Gross Tonnage</u> : Vessel's internal capacity (for pleasure craft of 12 meters or less, see Annex E)
✔	<u>Emergency Contact Person Ashore Name and Address</u> : Name and address of an individual ashore in case of emergency
✔	<u>Emergency Contact Person Ashore Telephone Number</u> : Telephone number of an individual ashore in case of emergency (include country code and area code)
	<u>Emergency Contact Person Ashore Fax Number</u> : Fax number of an individual ashore in case of emergency (include country code and area code)
	<u>Alternate 24-hour Emergency Telephone Number</u> : Other telephone number in case of emergency and accessible at any time (include country code and area code)
✔	<u>Capacity for Persons on Board</u> : Maximum number of persons on board
✔	<u>Radio Installation Information</u> : Radio equipment on board (i.e. MF/HF MF/HF/DSC VHF VHF/DSC CB CELL PCS MSAT NBDP RTTY DF FAX NAVTEX LORAN INMARSAT-A-B-C-M-Mini-M-M4 EGC GPS SART)
✘	<u>Radio Call Sign</u> : Radio call sign of the vessel as issued by Industry Canada
	<u>Ex Radio Call Sign</u> : (in case of a modification to the radio call sign)
✘	<u>Selective Call Number(s)</u> : Five digit selective call number(s) as issued by Industry Canada between 03200-03299 prefixed with the letter S if used for Sequential Single Frequency Code (SSFC) <i>only</i> or letter T if used <i>also</i> for Narrow-Band Direct Printing (NBDP) or NBDP <i>only</i>
✘	<u>Number of Life Boats</u> : Number of life boats fitted with or without radio apparatus

**Annex B**  
**(Continued)**

✘	<u>Frequency(ies) for EPIRB</u> : Operating frequency(ies) of the EPIRB equipment on board
	<u>Nature(s) of Service</u> : Make the appropriate selection(s) from Annex E
	<u>Service(s) Available</u> : Make the appropriate selection(s) from Annex E
	<u>Service Hours</u> : Make a selection from Annex E
	<u>Telegraphy Frequency Band(s)</u> : Make the appropriate selection(s) from Annex E
	<u>Telephony Frequency Band(s)</u> : Make the appropriate selection(s) from Annex E
	<u>Accounting Authority (AAIC)</u> : The Accounting Authority Identification Code of the entity charged with the accounting for the vessel in respect to the maritime mobile and maritime mobile-satellite services. Make a selection from Annex E
	<u>AAIC Used for INMARSAT</u> : If a separate entity from the above, the Accounting Authority Identification Code of the entity charged with the accounting for the vessel in respect to the maritime mobile-satellite service only. Make a selection from Annex E
✘	<u>EPIRB Identification Code</u> : The fifteen hexadecimal character string, referred to as the beacon 15 Hex ID beginning with A78
	<u>Vessel Identification Number</u> : The six digit Official Number (the national registration number as issued by Transport Canada Ship Registrar) or the seven digit International Maritime Organization (IMO) Number as issued by the IMO
✘	<u>INMARSAT Identity(ies)</u> : INMARSAT Mobile Number(s) (IMN) assigned to each INMARSAT mobile terminal on board
	<u>Additional Information and/or Instructions</u> :

## Annex C

## MMSI Application Form - Coast Station

**Part A - Action:**     Assign a new MMSI     Modify an existing MMSI     Cancel an existing MMSI

**Part B - Information** (✓ denotes *mandatory* fields and ✘ denotes *mandatory fields if issued or installed*):

✓	<u>Applicant Name:</u> Last, First
✓	<u>Applicant Telephone Number:</u> (include country code and area code)
	<u>Applicant Mailing/Postal Address:</u> (include postal code)
	<u>Applicant Facsimile Number:</u> (include country code and area code)
	<u>Applicant Electronic Mail Address:</u>
✘	<u>MMSI:</u> Nine digit Maritime Mobile Service Identity beginning with 00316
✓	<u>Licensee Name:</u> Name of the radio licence holder
✓	<u>Station Location:</u> Name of the geographical location of the radio station
✓	<u>Latitude:</u> Latitude, in degrees, minutes and seconds, of the radio station
✓	<u>Longitude:</u> Longitude, in degrees, minutes and seconds, of the radio station
✓	<u>Company Code:</u> Nine digit company code as issued by Industry Canada
✓	<u>Licence Number:</u> Seven digit licence number as issued by Industry Canada
✓	<u>Call Sign:</u> Radio call sign as issued by Industry Canada

**Annex C**

(Continued)

Additional Information and/or Instructions:

**Annex D**

**MMSI Application Form - Ship Station Group**

**Part A - Action:**     Assign a new MMSI     Modify an existing MMSI     Cancel an existing MMSI

**Part B - Information** (✓ denotes *mandatory* fields and ✘ denotes *mandatory* fields *if issued or installed*):

✓	<u>Applicant Name:</u> Last, First
✓	<u>Applicant Telephone Number:</u> (include country code and area code)
	<u>Applicant Mailing/Postal Address:</u> (include postal code)
	<u>Applicant Facsimile Number:</u> (include country code and area code)
	<u>Applicant Electronic Mail Address:</u>
✘	<u>MMSI:</u> Nine digit Maritime Mobile Service Identity beginning with 0316
✓	<u>Ship Station Group Name:</u> Name as adopted by the group of vessels
✓	<u>Ship Station Group Contact Name:</u> Name of the individual representing the group of vessels with respect to radio communication matters
✓	<u>Ship Station Group Contact Information:</u> Address, telephone and fax number of the Ship Station Group Contact individual (include postal code, country code and area code)
✓	<u>Ship Station Group Contact Vessel Name:</u> Name of the vessel operated by the Ship Station Group Contact individual
✓	<u>Ship Station Group Contact Vessel MMSI:</u> Maritime Mobile Service Identity of the vessel operated by the Ship Station Group Contact individual

**Annex D**

(Continued)

✓	<u>Emergency Contact Person Ashore Name and Address</u> : Name and address of an individual ashore in case of emergency involving a vessel within the group
✓	<u>Emergency Contact Person Ashore Telephone Number</u> : Telephone number of an individual ashore in case of emergency involving a vessel within the group (include country code and area code)
✓	<u>Emergency Contact Person Ashore Fax Number</u> : Fax number of an individual ashore in case of emergency involving a vessel within the group (include country code and area code)
	<u>Additional Information and/or Instructions</u> :

## Annex E

## International Telecommunication Union (ITU) Codes

General Classification of vessels

Fishing vessel	FV	Naval ship	NS	Pleasure craft	PL	River vessel	NF
Merchant ship	MM	Official service ship	GV	Rescue vessel	SV	Unspecified	XX

Individual Classification of vessels**A**

Aircraft Carrier	PTA
Air Cushion vehicle	ACV
Auxiliary ship	AUX

**B**

Banker	MOR
Barge	CHA
Barge carrier	PCH
Bulk carrier	BLK
Buoy ship	BLS

**C**

Cable ship	CBL
Cargo and passenger	PMX
Cargo ship	CA
Cement carrier	CIM
Coaster	CAB
Coast-guard	CGT
Collier	COA
Container ship	CON
Corvette	COR
Cruiser	CRO
Customs launch	DOU
Cutter	CTR

**D**

Despatch vehicle	AVI
Destroyer	DES
Dredger	DRG
Drilling unit	PER
Dry cargo	DRY

**E**

Escort ship	ESC
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**F**

Factory ship	BTA
Fast patrol ship	FPS
Ferry	FBT
Firefloat	PMP
Fishing guard	PHS
Fishing vessel	PH
Floating crane	GRF
Forest-product carrier	TPW
Frigate	FRT
Fruit carrier	FRU

**G**

General cargo	GEN
Grain carrier	GRC

**H**

Helicopter carrier	PTH
Hospital ship	HOP
Hydrofoil	VDT
Hydrographic ship	HYD

**I**

Ice breaker	ICE
Inspection ship	INS

**K**

Ketch	DUN
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**L**

Launch	VDO
Lighter	BAR
Lighthouse tender	PHR
Lightship	PHA
Liner	PAQ
Liquefied gas carrier	TPG
Livestock carrier	PBE
Lobster ship	LAN
Lugger	LOU



**Annex E**

(Continued)

**M**

Mine Layer	MOU
Minesweeper	DMN
Motor boat	MTB

**N**

Naviplane	NVP
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**O**

Oceanographic ship	OSC
Ocean-station vessel	OSV
Oil tanker	OIL
Ore-bulk-oil-carrier	OBO
Ore carrier	TPO

**P**

Passenger ship	PA
Patrol ship	SRV
Pilot tender	PLT
Platform	PLE
Pollution vessel	NET
Pontoon	PON
Pusher/Tug	TUG

**R**

Reefer	FRG
Rescue vessel	SAU
Research/Survey vessel	EXP
Rock breaker	ROC
RoRo ship	ROU

**S**

Sailing ship	VLR
Salvage ship	RAM
Schooner	GOL
Ship used by divers	DIV
Sloop	SLO
Solvent carrier	TPS
Standby safety vessel	SEC
Submarine	SMN
Supply vessel	RAV

**T**

Tanker	CIT
Training ship	ECO
Tramp	TRA
Transport	TPT
Trawler	CHR
Tunny ship	THO

**U**

Unspecified	XXX
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**V**

Vehicle carrier	TVH
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**W**

Warship	GS
Waste incinerator	ICN
Weather ship	FRM
Whaler	BLN

**Y**

Yacht	YAT
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**Annex E**

(Continued)

Nature of Service

Station open to official correspondence exclusively	CO
Station open to public correspondence	CP
Station open to limited public correspondence	CR
Station open exclusively to correspondence of a private agency	CV
Station open exclusively to operational traffic of the service concerned	OT

Service Available (for use with Nature of Service CP or CR only)

Radiotelephone calls	C
Radiotelex calls	D
OBS messages (voluntary observing ship)	O
Facsimile communications	P
Radiotelegrams	R

Hours of Service

Continuous service throughout the twenty-four hours	H24
16-hour service provided by a ship station of the second category	H16
8-hour service provided by a ship station of the third category	H8
Intermittent service throughout the twenty-four hours, or station having no specific working hours	HX
Day service	HJ
Night service	HN

Telegraphy Frequency Bands

Frequency bands used in the maritime mobile-satellite service	S
Bands between 110 and 160 kHz	W
Bands between 415 and 535 kHz	X
Bands between 1605 and 4000 kHz	Y
Bands between 4000 and 27500 kHz	Z

Telephony Frequency Bands

Frequency bands used in the maritime mobile-satellite service	S
Bands between 1605 and 4000 kHz	T
Bands between 4000 and 27500 kHz	U
Bands between 156 and 174 MHz	V

Accounting Authority Identification Code (AAIC)

Department of Fisheries and Oceans, International Marine Radio Traffic Accounting	CA01
Stratos Mobile Networks Inc	CA03

(or a foreign Accounting Authority accredited by Industry Canada)

Length Overall vs Gross Tonnage for Pleasure Crafts of 12 Meters or Less

Length overall	Gross tonnage	Length overall	Gross tonnage
less than 8.5 m	5	10 m or more but less than 10.5 m	10
8.5 m or more but less than 9 m	6	10.5 m or more but less than 11 m	11
9 m or more but less than 9.5 m	7	11 m or more but less than 11.5 m	13
9.5 m or more but less than 10 m	8	11.5 m or more but not exceeding 12 m	15