



Marine Handheld VHF Radio guide for non-licensed users.

In Ireland all VHF radio operators should be licensed by the Minister of the Marine following training.

A VHF radio is your contact to Race Management, the Coast Guard or other boaters in distress or urgent situations. It also keeps you informed of hazards to navigation and weather and sea conditions.



Use your VHF marine radio for:

- operational and
- routine GSC business messages
- distress, urgent and safety messages (it is preferable this is left to licensed users)

Do not use your VHF marine radio for:

- making false distress calls;
- profane or offensive language;
- causing interference or superfluous transmissions (idle chit chat);
- broadcasting music

Power, signal, channel, volume & squelch:

- When retrieving VHF Radio from charger in race office, ensure it is charged (bars). Switch radio on using ***on/off/volume*** knob at top of radio.
- Select Channel 72 if not already selected, using up and down keys and depress lock key to ***unlock/lock*** channel.
- Adjust your ***signal strength & squelch*** for the appropriate range.
 - ***Signal Strength***: If you are in a harbour talking to a marina, set your radio for 1 Watt of power. If you are in open sea set your radio for maximum range 3 Watts.
 - The ***squelch*** controls the sensitivity of the receiver. Depress the ***squelch*** button (through menu?) Adjust until there is a continuous loud background noise. Adjust ***Volume*** until background noise is at acceptable level. Finally adjust ***squelch*** until background just disappears.

Radio Check : Confirm that your radio is working for both transmission and receiving.

- **Do not use Channel 16** for radio checks - this is for emergency only.
- Listen first to ensure you will not interrupt current transmissions.
- Before transmitting, engage brain and prepare your thoughts and what information you want to convey in concise terms.
- To transmit over VHF radio speak clearly, concisely, use simple and appropriate language. Do not:
 - rush your words
 - shout
 - use personal names or offensive language
 - transmit for conversational purposes

Transmit:

- Call the PRO on channel 72. Press and hold transmit button

GSC Committee Boat.

This is Shoremaster

Radio check

Over Release the transmit button and await a response.

Shoremaster,

This is committee boat.

Receiving.

Out. Indicating end of exchange.

Not 'Over and OUT'

Transmissions during duty:

During the course of your duty you will be required to make contact with the Safety Boat covering launch and recovery and the Committee boat. If you are unsure of which Safety boat this is, your call can be:

Harbour Safety Boat or Safety Boat x

This is GSC Shoremaster

Over await a response

When you receive a response eg:

GSC Shoremaster, this is Safety Boat 2

Go Ahead,

Over

continue with your message:

Safety Boat 2

Capsized Feva in harbour mouth. 2 sailors in water.

Please attend.

Over

Shoremaster.

Will attend/On way

Out.

If you receive a garbled message, and do not know if it was for you, WAIT as it will be repeated.

Overheard communication on the VHF radio, unless directed to 'All Stations', is considered privileged and confidential information and may not be repeated except in cases of emergency.

If required to spell something use the internationally recognized phonetic alphabet for isolated letters.



Phonetic Alphabet

A - alpha

B - bravo

C - charlie

D - delta

E - echo

F - foxtrot

G - golf

H - hotel

I - india

J - juliet

K - kilo

L - lima

M - mike

N - november

O - oscar

P - papa

Q - quebec

R - romeo

S - sierra

T - tango

U - uniform

V - victor

W - whiskey

X - x-ray

Y - yankee

Z - zulu

When transmitting numbers say each number separately - 267 is transmitted as **Two Six Seven**. If letters follow the number, as in a call sign, 267AB becomes **Two Six Seven Alpha Bravo**.

After your duty, return the radio to the charger, hang up the aquapac and ensure the unit is switched off.