

Marine Safety Alert



Alert No: 24

Date: 1st July 2022

Use of VHF Radios with DSC function during vessel operations - Good Practice



What Happened?

There have been cases in the marine industry where communication has been lost during critical operations, when the vessels involved have been using Very High Frequency (VHF) Radio sets fitted with the Digital Selective Calling (DSC) feature and a DSC call was received.

Vessels and Land stations can use the DSC function to ensure that all radios with DSC capability within range receive an alert to switch to a designated channel so that important messages (e.g. distress messages / urgency messages / weather forecasts) can be brought to the attention to all stations.

Mariners engaged in special operations where continuous communication is required on a working channel (including Diving / Towing /Tendering) should:

- Be aware that communications may be interrupted when a DSC call is received.
- Consider using a none DSC VHF for the working channel for these operations
- Have an alternative means of communication available (if practical)