



Seafarers Sailing Club

VHF User's Guide

Transceivers, Licences, and Channels

The Club has a VHF transceiver (base station) in the signal tower licensed as a Coastal Station. This licence costs £75 pa. The Club also has several hand-held transceivers. These are covered by Ship Portable Licences which are now free although each handset costs approximately £200.

The Club uses Channel P4 (161.425 MHz, known more generally as M2) as this is one of the channels set aside by the United Kingdom administration for matters relating to mooring, berthing and race control. Importantly, it is not necessary for the operator using this channel to hold an operator's certificate.

According to the Ship Licence terms and conditions, in the event of an emergency where there is a risk to life, the radio equipment may be used by any person to summon assistance. This implies that, in an emergency and whether you hold an operator's certificate or not, calls could be made on the distress, safety, and calling channel (#16 - 156.800 MHz). Before using Channel 16 afloat, bear in mind:

- (i) Club protocol is to for the OOD/Shore Coordinator to contact emergency services by phone.
- (ii) If the situation requires you to make the call while afloat, refer to the emergency radio message card displayed in your patrol boat.

Call Signs

The commonly used callsigns within the Club are as follows:

- **Seafarer Shore** – Event control ashore (OOD, DOOD, or Shore Coordinator)
- **Seafarer One** – Patrol Boat 1 (the large red one)
- **Seafarer Two** – Patrol Boat 2
- **Seafarer Tractor** – Tractor Driver
- **Seafarer Beach** – Beach Crew
- **Seafarer Committee** – Race control aboard committee boat

Using Our Hand-held Transceivers



The Club has a number of different types of hand-held VHF transceivers. Illustrated above are an ICOM IC-M25, a Cobra Marine HH500, and an ICOM IC-M37. They are all supposed to be waterproof or “submersible”.

The notes that follow are generic; the details will vary from one model to another:

Setting Up

- (i) Switch transceiver ON.
- (ii) Set/check channel selected P4 (or M2)
- (iii) Set/check transmitter power Low*. (Hi-Lo, H-M-L)
- (iv) Set receiver volume to mid position. (VOL)
- (v) Select squelch (SQL – via CALL/ENT/SETUP on Cobra). Reduce setting until noise heard. Then increase setting until noise stops.
- (vi) Lock the settings. () This will prevent accidental channel changing but will not prevent you from adjusting volume.

* Always have transmitter set to Low power unless you believe your transmissions are not being received. You may then try to establish communication after switching to High transmitter power (Hi) but return to Low power when/if you can.

Test Transmitter and Receiver

Ensure that another Club transceiver is on and manned and establish its callsign. Then carry out a test as follows (assuming you are “Seafarer One” and other station is “Seafarer Shore”):

- (i) Listen before you start transmitting. If others are talking, wait until they have finished.
- (ii) Hold down Press to Transmit (PTT) button
- (iii) Say: “Seafarer Shore, Seafarer Shore, this is Seafarer One. Radio Check. Over.”
- (iv) Release the PTT.
- (v) Expect to hear: “Seafarer One this is Seafarer Shore. Loud and clear. How me? Over.”
 - a. If true, hold down PTT and say: “Seafarer Shore this is Seafarer One. You are loud and clear also. **Out.**”
 - b. If received call weak or distorted, say: “Seafarer Shore this is Seafarer One. You are [weak] [distorted]. **Over.**” Release PTT. Expect to receive another transmission.
 - c. If nothing heard, say: “Seafarer Shore this is Seafarer One. Nothing heard. **Out.**” Release PTT. Then wait a minute or move then try again
- (vi) After test message received, adjust volume setting as appropriate.

On the Water

If transceiver is not attached to a “float”, ensure it is attached by a line to the patrol boat.

Avoid transmitting when on the move.

When transmitting, try to minimise wind blowing across handset.

Finish with Handheld Transceiver

When you have finished with a hand-held transceiver, rinse it in fresh water and dry it. Then return it to the OOD cabinet and ensure it goes on charge. Report any defects to the Rear Commodore or the Bosun.

Using the Base Station Transceiver



The VHF transceiver in the signal tower is an ICOM IC-M401E.

Setting Up

- (i) Switch on electrical power supply (13A wall socket).
- (ii) Switch transceiver ON and continue rotating VOL knob CW to initial (12 o'clock) setting.
- (iii) Rotate squelch (SQL) knob ACW until noise heard. Then turn CW until noise stops
- (iv) Set/check transmitter power Low*. (H/L button)
- (v) Set/check channel selected is P4 (▲▼ buttons)

* Always have transmitter set to Low power unless you believe your transmissions are not being received.

Test Transmitter and Receiver

Carry out a test as follows (assuming station "Seafarer One" is available to receive):

- (i) Listen before you start transmitting. If others are talking, wait until they have finished.
- (ii) Hold down Press to Transmit (PTT) button
- (iii) Say: "Seafarer One, Seafarer One, this is Seafarer Shore. Radio Check. Over."
- (iv) Release the PTT.
- (v) Expect to hear: "Seafarer Shore this is Seafarer One. Loud and clear. How me? Over."
 - a. If true, hold down PTT and say: "Seafarer One this is Seafarer Shore. You are loud and clear also. **Out.**"
 - b. If received call weak or distorted, say: "Seafarer One this is Seafarer Shore. You are [weak] [distorted]. **Over.**" Release PTT. Expect to receive another transmission.
 - c. If nothing heard, say: "Seafarer One this is Seafarer Shore. Nothing heard. **Out.**" Release PTT. Then wait a minute and try again
- (vi) After test message received, adjust volume setting as appropriate.

Finish with Base Station

When you have finished with the transceiver in the signal tower, rotate VOL knob fully ACW to OFF position. Turn off electrical power at socket. Report any defects to the Rear Commodore or the Bosun.

Call Procedures

You (Seafarer One) initiate a call (to Seafarer Shore):

- (i) Listen before you start transmitting. If others are talking, wait until they have finished.
- (ii) Hold down PTT. Pause then say: "Seafarer Shore, Seafarer Shore, this is Seafarer One. **Over.**"
- (iii) Release PTT
- (iv) Listen for response.
- (v) Hold down PTT. Pause then your call: "Seafarer Shore this is Seafarer One. [your message – be BRIEF and CLEAR, avoid speaking too quickly]. **Over.**"
- (vi) Release PTT
- (vii) Listen for response.
- (viii) Hold down PTT. Pause then your call: "Seafarer Shore this is Seafarer One. [continue message]. **Over.**"
OR "Seafarers Shore this is Seafarer One. [end call]. **Out**"
- (ix) Release PTT.

You (Seafarer One) receive a call (from Seafarer Shore):

- (i) You hear "Seafarer One, Seafarer One, this is Seafarer Shore. **Over.**"
- (ii) Hold down PTT. Pause then say: "Seafarer Shore this is Seafarer One. **Over.**"
- (iii) Release PTT
- (iv) Listen for message.
- (v) Hold down PTT. Pause then your call: "Seafarer Shore this is Seafarer One. [your response]. **Over**"
- (vi) Release PTT
- (vii) Listen for response.
- (viii) Hold down PTT. Pause then your call: "Seafarer Shore this is Seafarer One. [continue message]. **Over**" OR
"Seafarer Shore this is Seafarer One. [end call]. **Out**"
- (ix) Release PTT