

**§ 80.310**

charge of the vessel or the person designated by the master or person in charge to pilot or direct the movement of the vessel. The person standing watch may perform other duties provided such other duties do not interfere with the watch.

[51 FR 31213, Sept. 2, 1986, as amended at 57 FR 61012, Dec. 23, 1992]

**§ 80.310 Watch required by voluntary vessels.**

Voluntary vessels not equipped with DSC must maintain a watch on 156.800 MHz (channel 16) whenever the radio is operating and is not being used to communicate. Noncommercial vessels, such as recreational boats, may alternatively maintain a watch on 156.450 MHz (channel 9) for call and reply purposes.

[57 FR 19552, May 7, 1992]

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 68 FR 46967, Aug. 7, 2003, § 80.310 was revised effective October 6, 2003. For the convenience of the user, the revised text is set forth as follows:

**§ 80.310 Watch required by voluntary vessels.**

Voluntary vessels not equipped with DSC must maintain a watch on 156.800 MHz (Channel 16) whenever the vessel is underway and the radio is not being used to communicate. Noncommercial vessels, such as recreational boats, may alternatively maintain a watch on 156.450 MHz (Channel 9) for call and reply purposes. Voluntary vessels equipped with VHF-DSC equipment must maintain a watch on either 156.525 MHz (Channel 70) or VHF Channel 16 aurally whenever the vessel is underway and the radio is not being used to communicate. Voluntary vessels equipped with MF-HF DSC equipment must have the radio turned on and set to an appropriate DSC distress calling channel or one of the radiotelephone distress channels whenever the vessel is underway and the radio is not being used to communicate. Voluntary vessels equipped with Inmarsat A, B, or C systems must have the unit turned on and set to receive calls whenever the vessel is underway and the radio is not being used to communicate.

DISTRESS, ALARM, URGENCY AND SAFETY PROCEDURES

**§ 80.311 Authority for distress transmission.**

A mobile station in distress may use any means at its disposal to attract attention, make known its position, and

**47 CFR Ch. I (10-1-03 Edition)**

obtain help. A distress call and message, however, must be transmitted only on the authority of the master or person responsible for the mobile station. No person shall knowingly transmit, or cause to be transmitted, any false or fraudulent signal of distress or related communication.

**§ 80.312 Priority of distress transmissions.**

The distress call has absolute priority over all other transmissions. All stations which hear it must immediately cease any transmission capable of interfering with the distress traffic and must continue to listen on the frequency used for the emission of the distress call. This call must not be addressed to a particular station. Acknowledgement of receipt must not be given before the distress message which follows it is sent.

**§ 80.313 Frequencies for use in distress.**

The frequencies specified in the bands below are for use by mobile stations in distress. The conventional emission is shown. When a ship station cannot transmit on the designated frequency or the conventional emission, it may use any available frequency or emission. Frequencies for distress and safety calling using digital selective calling techniques are listed in § 80.359(b). Distress and safety NB-DP frequencies are indicated by footnote 2 in § 80.361(b).

Frequency band	Emission	Carrier frequency
405-535 kHz .....	A2B .....	500 kHz.
1605-3500 kHz .....	J3E .....	2182 kHz.
4000-27, 5000 kHz ...	A2B .....	8364 kHz.
118-136 MHz .....	A3E .....	121.500 MHz.
156-162 MHz .....	F3E, PON	156.800 MHz 156.750 MHz.
243 MHz .....	A3N .....	243.000 MHz.

The maximum transmitter power obtainable may be used.

[51 FR 31213, Sept. 2, 1986; 51 FR 34984, Oct. 1, 1986]

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 68 FR 46968, Aug. 7, 2003, § 80.313 was amended by revising the table effective October 6, 2003. For the convenience of the user, the revised text is set forth as follows:

§ 80.313 Frequencies for use in distress.

\* \* \* \* \*

Frequency band	Emission	Carrier frequency
1605–3500 kHz .....	J3E .....	2182 kHz.
118–136 MHz .....	A3E .....	121.500 MHz.
156–162 MHz .....	F3E, PON .....	156.800 MHz 156.750 MHz.
243 MHz .....	A3N .....	243.000 MHz.

\* \* \* \* \*

§ 80.314 Distress signals.

- (a) The international radiotelegraphy distress signal consists of the group “three dots, three dashes, three dots” (... ---...), symbolized herein by SOS, transmitted as a single signal in which the dashes are slightly prolonged so as to be distinguished clearly from the dots.
- (b) The international radiotelephone distress signal consists of the word MAYDAY, pronounced as the French expression “m’aider”.
- (c) These distress signals indicate that a mobile station is threatened by grave and imminent danger and requests immediate assistance.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 68 FR 46968, Aug. 7, 2003, §80.314 was amended by removing paragraph (a), and redesignating paragraphs (b) and (c) as paragraphs (a) and (b) effective October 6, 2003.

§ 80.315 Distress calls.

- (a) The radiotelegraph distress call consists of:
  - (1) The distress signal SOS, sent three times;
  - (2) The word DE;
  - (3) The call sign of the mobile station in distress, sent three times.
- (b) The radiotelephone distress call consists of:
  - (1) The distress signal MAYDAY spoken three times;
  - (2) The words THIS IS;
  - (3) The call sign (or name, if no call sign assigned) of the mobile station in distress, spoken three times.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 68 FR 46968, Aug. 7, 2003, §80.315 was amended by removing paragraph (a), redesignating paragraph (b) as paragraph (a), and adding a new paragraph (b) effective October 6, 2003. For the convenience of the user, the added text is set forth as follows:

§ 80.315 Distress calls.

- \* \* \* \* \*
- (b) The procedures for canceling false distress alerts are contained in §80.335.

§ 80.316 Distress messages.

- (a) The radiotelegraph distress message consists of:
  - (1) The distress signal SOS;
  - (2) The name of the mobile station in distress;
  - (3) Particulars of its position;
  - (4) The nature of the distress;
  - (5) The kind of assistance desired;
  - (6) Any other information which might facilitate rescue.
- (b) The radiotelephone distress message consists of:
  - (1) The distress signal MAYDAY;
  - (2) The name of the mobile station in distress;
  - (3) Particulars of its position;
  - (4) The nature of the distress;
  - (5) The kind of assistance desired;
  - (6) Any other information which might facilitate rescue, for example, the length, color, and type of vessel, number of persons on board.
- (c) As a general rule, a ship must signal its position in latitude and longitude, using figures for the degrees and minutes, together with one of the words NORTH or SOUTH and one of the words EAST or WEST. In radiotelegraphy, the signal .-.- must be used to separate the degrees from the minutes. When practicable, the true bearing and distance in nautical miles from a known geographical position may be given.

EFFECTIVE DATE NOTE: At 68 FR 46968, Aug. 7, 2003, §80.316 was amended by removing paragraph (a), redesignating paragraphs (b) and (c) as paragraphs (a) and (b), and adding new paragraph (c) effective October 6, 2003. For the convenience of the user, the added text is set forth as follows: